

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

Over the past year we have continued to experience changes in the world around us. Even as our church finds ways to adapt to this changing world, we find hope in the unchanging and always present promise of God's love through Jesus Christ. We change and adapt not to conform to the world but because we believe that the gift of God's Son is for the world, and that our congregations and worshiping communities are places to gather and be sent into the world, where we will tell the story of God's love in word and deed.

The ministries of our congregations, our synods and the churchwide organization provide ways for the church to move beyond the boundaries of structures and geography and to share God's love with people in our neighborhoods, our cities, our country and beyond. We engage in this ministry knowing that our church walks by faith, trusting in God's promise in the gospel, and that we exist by and for the proclamation of this gospel word. In John 15:5, Jesus reminds us, "I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing." We are connected by the promise that we do all through Christ and can do nothing apart from him.

God gives the Holy Spirit, who uses gospel proclamation — in preaching and sacraments, in forgiveness and in healing conversations — to create and sustain this faith. Just as we rely on God to sustain our faith, we rely on each other to sustain the ministries that offer God's love to the world. Through your generosity to each expression

of this church — your congregation, your synod and your churchwide organization — you add to our collective voice proclaiming God's love for all.

I am grateful for your generosity over this last year. My gratitude spreads far beyond your generous financial gifts. You've shared your gifts of time through countless hours of volunteering, serving and accompanying. You've shared the gifts of your voices as we've tried to discover and learn how God is calling us to be the church now and into the future. And, finally, dear church, you have shared the gift of the realness of God's love with the world around you. Be well, dear church, and stand steadfast in the promise of God's love and grace as you take that promise with you into the world.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth A. Eaton".

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

“I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.” —John 15:5

2023 St. James Lutheran Church Annual Report

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Agenda
Annual Congregational Meeting

February 18, 2024

Call to Order	President Gene Giltner
Prayer	Pastor Gordon Putnam
Declaration of a Quorum	President Gene Giltner
Presentation of Annual Reports	President Gene Giltner
Questions and Discussion	
Old Business	
New Business	
Announcements	
Prayer and Adjournment	Pastor Gordon Putnam

Staff

Pastor

Rev. Gordon Putnam

10 Jefferson Court
Waynesboro, VA 22980

434-760-0263
grputnam1949@gmail.com

Supply Pastor

Rev. Carl Trost

134 Shawn Circle
Staunton, VA 24401

910-650-2069
carl.trost1@gmail.com

Pianist

Hannah Pingel

1130 Meridian Circle,
Apt 201
Harrisonburg, VA 22802

540-505-0204
hannahpingel32@gmail.com

Sexton

Glenda Strickler

425 Frontier Drive
Staunton, VA 24401

540-885-3915

Church Leadership

Council Members

2021-2024 Term

Joyce Dull	115 S. Lynhaven Drive Staunton, VA 24401	540-290-4795 joycedull0627@yahoo.com
Anne Putnam Secretary	10 Jefferson Court Waynesboro, VA 22980	434-465-0206 anneputnam55@gmail.com

2022-2025 Term

Ivan Diehl Vice-President	644 Eakle Road Staunton, VA 24401	540-363-5773
Gene Giltner President	1546 Sangers Lane Staunton, VA 24401	414-659-1137 Genne.Giltner@gmail.com

2023-2026 Term

Lynda Diehl	785 Eakle Road Staunton, VA 24401	540-490-1985 ldluvnsam@gmail.com
Paul Rohal	20 Wesleigh Manor Waynesboro, VA 22980	619-888-8200 paulrohal@outlook.com

Trustees

Ivan Diehl	644 Eakle Road Staunton, VA 24401	540-363-5773
John Grove	812 Long Meadow Road Fishersville, VA 22939	540-292-9767
John Wright	533 Miller Road Waynesboro, VA 22980	540-241-4791 2wrights@ntelos.net

Committees

2023 - 2024

Audit Committee

Lynda Diehl
Eleanor Sander

Memorial Committee

A function of the
Women's Open Circle

Property Committee

John Grove, Co-Chair
Paul Rohal, Co-Chair
Joyce Dull
Debbie Snyder
Winston Whitecotton
Cindy Wright

Social Ministry & Evangelism

Joyce Dull, Chair
Ellen McDonald
Flora Williams
Cindy Wright

Stewardship & Finance

Anne Putnam, Fin. Reporter, Chair
Ellen McDonald
Debbie Snyder, Financial Secretary
Winston Whitecotton, Asst. Fin. Sec.
John Wright, Treasurer

Worship, Music, & Altar Guild

Flora Williams, Co-Chair
Ivan Diehl, Co-Chair
Betty Bartley
Lynda Diehl
Sam Diehl
Bambi Straw
Steve Straw
Dawn Whitecotton

St. James Lutheran Church Financial Report
December 2023

DCCU Checking Acct Bal as of 12/1/2023:	\$ 2,223.41
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Receipts Deposited:	<u>December 2023</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Record of Contributions	\$ 6,400.00	\$ 47,508.00
Loose Offering	589.00	2,017.43
*Property Improvement Fund	1,300.00	3,365.00
*Social Ministry	502.00	832.00
*Louis Dixey, Jr. Fund	-	1,000.00
*Transfer from Raymond James Acct	-	15,814.13
*Transfer from DCCU Savings Acct	-	2,000.00
Benevolence	-	3,000.00
Other Special Appeals	-	1,010.91
Dividend/Interest Income	0.53	6.92
Total Receipts	\$ 8,791.53	\$ 76,554.39

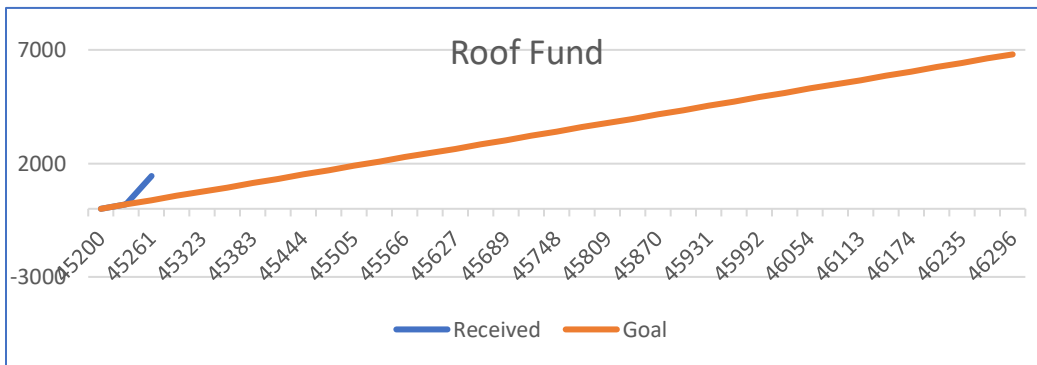
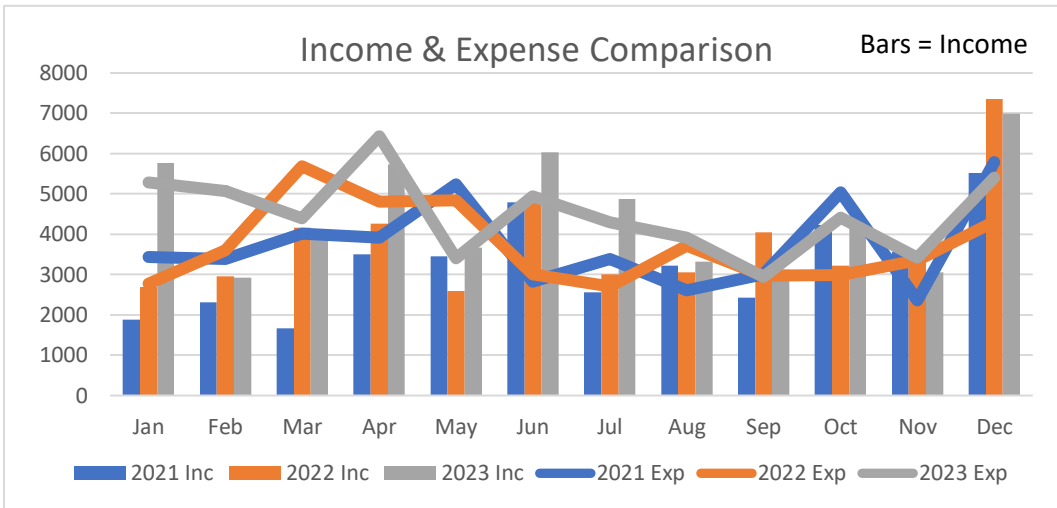
Disbursed:		
Rev. Putnam - Monthly Compensation	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 15,000.00
5 Services @ \$200	1,000.00	6,650.00
210 Miles @ \$0.66/mile	138.60	1,329.54
Rev. Trost		
2 Services @ \$200	400.00	4,775.00
48 Miles @ \$0.66/mile	31.68	384.21
Musician - 0 Services	-	1,250.00
Supply Pastor		200.00
Mileage	-	7.92
Worship Supplies		
- Art Supplies	11.99	143.88
- Annual Bulletin Service	-	398.00
- Church Year Calendars	11.97	11.97
- Communion Supplies	29.40	120.22
- Copy Paper	-	95.98
- Toner	26.27	55.80
- Directory	-	21.00
- Offering Envelopes	171.52	171.52
- Postage	66.00	302.61
- Web Page Renewal	160.70	160.70
- Flowers (Easter)	-	313.90
Hannah Pingel, Pianist - 7 Services	875.00	5,875.00
Betty Bartley, Pianist	-	250.00
Glenda Strickler - Sexton	200.00	2,250.00
Cleaning Supplies	-	74.71
Christmas Gifts	500.00	1,000.00
Bank Safe Deposit Box	-	40.00
Fuel Oil	-	3,146.26
Electricity	110.34	1,294.34
Benevolence	-	3,400.00
Repairs & Maintenance	92.74	1,331.64
Fire & Liability Insurance	412.40	4,575.88
HomeComing Expenses	-	179.51
*Transfer to Raymond James Account	1,222.61	7,866.38
*Transfer to DCCU Savings Account	-	-
*Transfer to Social Ministry	502.00	832.00
*Pavillion	-	6,164.62
*New Roof on Sunday School	-	6,800.00
*Special Appeals	-	200.00
Total Disbursements	\$ 7,213.22	\$ 76,672.59

DCCU Checking Acct Bal as of 12/31/2023:	\$ 3,801.72
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	12/1/2023			12/31/2023
	<u>Beg Balance</u>	<u>Deposits</u>	<u>Withdrawals</u>	<u>End Balance</u>
Dividend/Interest Income				
DCCU Savings Acct Bal as of 12/31/2023:	\$ 1,005.21	\$ 0.03	\$ -	\$ 1,005.24

Raymond James Investment Account	12/1/2023			12/31/2023
	<u>Beg Balance</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Withdrawals</u>	<u>End Balance</u>
Detail of St. James Fund Designations:				
Property Committee Fund	\$ 30,446.59	1,200.00	35.98	31,610.61
Youth Account	2,208.46			2,208.46
James Williams Memorial	264.88			264.88
Linda Diehl Memorial	2,629.18		41.41	2,587.77
Non-Designated Funds	9,489.48			11,519.14
Accrued Int. & Dividends & Change in Value		2,029.66		
Balance as of 12/31/2023	\$ 45,038.59	\$ 3,229.66	\$ 77.39	48,190.86

Operating Budget Barometer	Dec Receipts	Dec Disbursements	Over (Under)
	\$6,989.53	\$5,488.61	\$1,500.92
*Does not include transfers into or out of the DCCU or RJ accounts or the Property Fund, which is a pass-through to the RJ account.	YTD Receipts	YTD Disbursements	Over (Under)
	\$53,543.26	\$53,561.67	(\$18.41)



Auditor's Report - 2023

St. James Lutheran Church

January 12, 2021,

Audit Report year ending December 31, 2023

I, Lynda L Diehl, audited the financial records of the year ending December 31, 2023 for St. James Lutheran Church.

I have found no issues with the financial records and am completely satisfied and am happy to say Anne Putnam has done a great job. Thank you, Anne for all-your hard work!

Sincerely,



Lynda L. Diehl

Co-chair audit committee

On Jan. 29, 2024, I Eleanor Sandu did an audit on St James Lutheran monthly reports, bank statements and all financial records. I find the records all true and correct.

*Eleanor Sandu (w/ltw)
1/29/24*

Pastor's Report - 2023

"In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth" is how the bible starts in Genesis. "An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah," is how Matthew starts his Gospel. Mark starts rather simply, "The beginning of the good news." Luke is more introspective, "Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us." And everyone recognizes John, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God." To the present my last reports started, "It has been a full year in more ways than one," and "It sure has been an interesting year."

Those introductions show excitement, energy and anticipation and I think that, not to overstate it, is what our year at St. James has been. Many new and returning events have happened. We had our first homecoming with over 80 people coming. The oyster dinner was revitalized with over 90 dinners served. We had a new roof put on the Sunday School annex. We built a new pavilion where we held worship. We cleared the brush from the Southwest side of the property. Our Men's Group meets weekly to study the lessons for the following Sunday. The Men's Group also prepared and served a delicious breakfast for all on Easter morning. The Women's Open Circle has grown and was instrumental in organizing many of these events.

Worship has been energized. We are averaging close to 30 people every Sunday. The Choir has an anthem on Sundays. With the new pavilion, our worship outside has developed. Lunch and Fellowship after church has been well attended. Hannah Pingel livens our worship and Pastor Carl has blessed us with his guitar and trumpet.

I have made 65 home visits, seven hospital visits, led 34 services, preparing bulletins for every service during the year. Our average weekly attendance for worship is 25. We have had 12 newsletters this year. At present we have five members who I take communion to every month. There are also times when members are not able to come to church for a few weeks that I visit and take communion. I officiated for two funerals this year.

Having Pastor Carl leading worship and preaching half the time has been a great help and his insights and wisdom are a gift to us. It would be hard to name all who helped and made all of this happen, well I can say, everyone at St. James has actively participated in all parts of our community. You will see that as you read the rest of the reports.

Blessings,

Pastor Gordon

Council President's Report – 2023

Reflections on another year.

Below are highlights of this year. Besides worshipping weekly, we had several special worship services. Our faith education expanded with a Men's Bible Study group. We ended the year again financially in excellent shape.

I want to highlight a few accomplishments we had this year.

- We celebrated a Homecoming.
- We had a very successful annual Oyster Supper and Cake Auction.
- We continue to work on lighting throughout the church.
- We welcomed Lynda Diehl and Paul Rohal to the Church Council. They moved into the roles vacated by Flora Williams and John Wright. Thank you, Flora & John for serving on the Council for the past three years.
- Pastor and Anne attended the Synod Assembly and voted on a new Bishop.
- The Property Committee worked on many projects, including a new roof and new fire extinguishers. Further accomplishments in the Property Committee Report.
- We continue to support the BackPacks Program.
- A new patio was constructed, and the brush cleared out, opening up a view to the SW.
- Work has begun on a rewrite of our Constitution and Bylaws to bring it into current Synod standards.

There are Committee Reports that follow that flesh out these highlights. With God's Grace we shall continue to worship, pray, and continue to be a blessing to our community and each other.

Respectfully submitted,

Gene Giltner

Property Committee Report - 2023

The St. James Property Committee is very pleased to report a successful year in not only maintaining, but also improving the church property. The Committee has completed actions on tasks as major as replacing the schoolhouse roof to as minor as replacing a light bulb.

The year began with a structural and grounds inspection of the church property. The noted discrepancies were prioritized and assigned to Committee members for action. Other discrepancies noted subsequent to the initial inspection were dealt with in the same manner. Many of the noted outdoor discrepancies are pending action due to the weather, but it is anticipated these discrepancies will be resolved in the coming year, 2024.

The following are some of the 2023 action items completed by Property Committee Members and congregation volunteers:

- replaced all fire extinguishers
- installed carbon monoxide detector in Fellowship Hall
- installed wooden railing and post caps around pavilion
- installed metal hand railing leading to the pavilion
- repaired mortar on church entryway bricks
- contracted schoolhouse roof replacement
- contracted removal of large dead trees that presented a safety hazard
- installed LED lighting in Fellowship Hall serving area
- contracted brush removal from southside of church property
- cleared residual brush cuttings from contracted brush cutting
- contracted fall leaf removal
- removed timeworn playground equipment that presented a child safety hazard

Looking ahead in 2024, the Property Committee has the following items on the agenda:

- responsibilities for ongoing deep and routine cleaning of the church
- painting outside and inside
- exterior door locks
- outside lighting near entries and steps
- inside church sanctuary lighting

Property Committee Members (Joyce Dull, Debbie Synder, Cindy Wright, Winston Whitecotton) and congregation volunteers are to be commended for all their generous time and efforts in making 2023 a successful year for this committee.

Respectfully,

John Grove and Paul Rohal, Co-Chairmen

Social Ministry Report – 2023

The Social Ministry Team is alive and well at St. James.

In the spring, we helped a family in need with medical expenses of \$1,000. \$310 was used for the purchase of food for the Homecoming event in August. We also collected \$357 of In-Kind food donations for Homecoming. In the fall, we made a financial contribution of \$250 to the Rise Against Hunger Program.

We continue to support the BackPacks Program through the purchase of food. On average, we provide weekend meals to 19 kids throughout the school year. Thanks to everyone for your food and monetary donations.

Our annual Oyster Supper / Cake Auction was held on November 17th. We served 90+ guests, including take-outs. Our net profit was \$2,025. Thanks to all the cooking/serving team, to those who made items for the auction, and to everyone for attending and supporting this ever-popular fundraising event.

Account Balances as of 12/31/2023	
Checking	\$4,716.55
Savings	360.79
Total	\$5,077.34

Respectfully submitted,
Joyce Dull, Chair

The bank statements and cash disbursements were reviewed for the year ended 12/31/2023. I found the financial records to be in good order. Respectfully, Anne Putnam

Worship & Music Committee and Altar Guild Report – 2023

Thank you to Pastor Gordon and Pastor Carl for leading our worship and providing God's "food for thought" each Sunday. Bambi and Sam are appreciated as our Worship Assistants.

Ivan, Anne, and Flora continue to take care of the altar, changing of the paraments and preparing for communion. Steve ensures that we always have communion bread.

Thank you, Hannah, for serving so beautifully as our pianist. Thank you, Pastor Carl for the Sundays we sing along with you and your guitar. MUSIC – God's gift to us all!

Thank you to our choir members and your dedication to sharing your gifts. A special thank you to Betty B. who accompanies us at practice. We provided anthems January – June and October – December, taking a break for the summer months.

Mid-week Lenten services were held jointly with Grace, Bethlehem, Zion, and St. James. Holy week services at St. James were held on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

Thank you to Debbie and Danny who adorn our outdoor crosses during Lent and Easter. The nativity by the outdoor crosses was also complements of Debbie and Danny.

Your Worship Committee adds beauty to the church on Easter Sunday by taking orders for lilies, tulips, and daffodils that are placed at the altar and in the windows to honor or in memory of a loved one.

June found us back outdoors under the oaks for our services. We worshipped at Barren Ridge Vineyard on Sunday July 9th.

We held Homecoming at St. James on August 5th and 6th with a Vesper Service on Saturday night and a worship service on Sunday morning using our lovely new pavilion.

Advent services were shared jointly with Grace, Bethlehem, and Zion. St. James used the Holden Prayer Service – a first for us.

The church was decorated on Sunday December 10th after enjoying a soup and sandwich lunch.

Christmas services were held on Sunday, Christmas Eve. An 11:00am Advent Service and a 7:00pm Candlelight Service, both with communion.

The choir provided a Christmas Program, "There's a Song in the Air", on Sunday January 14, 2024. Thank you, Debbie, for planning and putting together our program. It was a success!

It has been another busy year!!

Thank you to all who make our worship meaningful.

Respectfully submitted,

Flora Williams, Chair

Stewardship & Finance Report - 2023

On November 12th, the Committee met to review and discuss the 2024 proposed budget. The anticipated expenditures for 2024 are \$53,828. The committee voted in favor of submitting the budget to the Church Council for approval.

On December 24th, the Committee met in conjunction with members of Church Council for the purpose of approving Christmas gifts for staff.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Putnam, Chair

Open Circle Report - 2023

Preparation for our Homecoming on August 5th & 6th was our primary focus for the year. However, there were many more opportunities for service and fellowship; and we took advantage of them all!

We supported six local charities – WARM, Valley Mission, Verona Food Pantry, SACRA, Western State Hospital, and the BackPacks Program - by sponsoring Soup & Sandwich luncheons in the winter months and Salad Luncheons in the summer. The goodwill offerings totaled \$784. Thanks to all for your generosity!

Betty Bartley continues to manage our card ministry. Monthly and special occasion cards are sent to our shut-ins.

Joyce Dull's dedication to the BackPacks Program remains strong. The number of kids that we support through the BackPacks Program has averaged 19.

Cindy Wright created lovely teacup floral arrangements that were delivered to our shut ins at Easter. Anne Putnam created fruit baskets that were delivered for Christmas.

During our church-wide declutter day, we discovered multiple containers of socks that were painted pre-COVID days and intended for Hospice patients. Hospice no longer had a need. Sherie Whiting-Rohal found happy homes for the socks with WARM, Valley Mission, and Embrace.

We collected 106 assorted size batteries, 1 first aid kit, 8 flashlights, 3 laundry baskets, 8 night lights, and 18 washcloths for the Central Valley Habitat for Humanity.

In July we began writing an article about the monthly activities of our Open Circle for inclusion in the St. James Newsletter.

We re-established the tradition of ThankOfferings. In November, we donated \$128.94 to Katie's Fund.

Also in November, we re-established a Quilt Group, spurred on by our recent SVWO Fall Gathering (see below). In addition to a planning meeting, we had two work sessions with six ladies in attendance each time. Our plans for the quilts include Micah Ministries and Habitat for Humanity.

We ended the year with our last meeting on December 5th at the Home Town Grill. 13 ladies enjoyed good food, fun, and fellowship – a great way to end the year!

Now back to Homecoming 2023! So much love went into the planning and preparation of this event. We developed an ever-growing list of invitees, mailed save the date cards & invitations, developed the menu and prepared the food (thanks go to Joyce and her team), created activities – the Timeline, a St. James/Zion Photo, trivia, & scrapbooks, we created name tags and programs, we arranged for valet parking, and we cleaned (and cleaned and cleaned), etc. We also contributed \$525+ to help cover expenses. And, we had help from others along the way – many thanks to everyone.

In the end, 88 people joined us on the evening of August 5th and 38 attended on Sunday morning for worship.

Treasurer’s Report:

Account Balances as of 12/31/2023	
Checking	\$2,609.74
Savings	\$5.02
Total	\$2,614.76

The check register, bank statements, cash receipts, and cash disbursements were reviewed for the year ended 12/31/2023. I found the financial records to be in good order. I commend Sherie for the excellent work she is doing for our Circle. Respectfully, Anne Putnam

Southern Valley Women’s Organization (SVWO):

A Spring Bible Study: “Weave Us Together” (1 Corinthians 12:12-14) was held on May 9th at Salem Lutheran Church. Cindy, Bambi, Sherie, Betty, Flora, and Anne attended. The Bible Study was led by our own Pastor Gordon.

A special event – the showing of the Sight & Sound Theatres movie *Noah* was shown at The Sipe Center in Bridgewater on August 12th. Bambi, Joyce, Anne, and Pastor Gordon attended.

Our Fall Gathering was held on October 8th at Muhlenberg Lutheran Church. In keeping with our VSWO theme, “Weave Us Together”, we enjoyed a presentation about the “Quilts in the Shenandoah Valley” by Alicia Thomas, Director of the Virginia Quilt Museum. Bambi, Cindy Flora, and her friend Marie, Sherie, and Anne attended. (Thus, the need to establish a quilt group was born.)

Virginia Synodical Women's Organization (VSWO):

The 2023 Conference was held at Roanoke College in Salem on July 21st & 22nd. Anne attended, delivering the 35 "Warren" bears made by Sherie, Flora, Bambi, and Anne along with paper towels, toilet paper, garbage bags, and deodorant donated by our group for Project Horizon. Project Horizon has been dedicated to addressing the pervasive problem of domestic and sexual violence in the Rockbridge County area since 1982.

Of particular interest were three awareness presentations.

- Reconciling in Christ – churches welcoming all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Micah Ministries – focuses on those experiencing homelessness.
- Bible Study – "Weave Us Together" (1 Corinthians 12:12-14).

I close by recognizing our officers.

- Cindy Wright, Vice-President
- Flora Williams, Secretary
- Sherie Whiting-Rohal, Treasurer

Thank you for all that you do. I couldn't do it without you!

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Putnam, President

St. James Cemetery Inc. Treasurer's Report – 2023

JANUARY 1, 2023 – DECEMBER 31, 2023

Balance:	January 1, 2023	DCCU Savings	\$1,005.02
		DCCU Checking	<u>694.44</u>
			\$1,699.46
Receipts:	Investment Income	\$1,000.00	
	Contributions	485.00	
	Savings Interest	<u>0.09</u>	
Total Receipts:			<u>\$1,485.09</u>
Accountable Balance:			\$3,184.55
Expenses:	Mowing – 12 times	\$2,100.00	
	Gas, Oil, Repairs	198.92	
	Christmas Gift	150.00	
	Attorney & State Corp Fees	<u>100.00</u>	
Total Expenses:			- <u>\$2,548.92</u>
Balance:	December 31, 2023	DCCU Savings	\$ 5.00
		DCCU Checking	<u>630.63</u>
			\$ 635.63

Summary of Raymond James Investments

Value of Mutual Funds	Jan. 1, 2023	Dec. 31, 2023
American Funds (ABALX)	\$10,643.26	\$11,663.55
American Funds (BALCX)	13,594.51	14,792.08
American Funds (ANCFX)	16,953.88	20,024.71
American Funds (AFICX)	6,059.48	6,020.21
Raymond James Bank Deposit	<u>100.93</u>	<u>26.04</u>
	\$47,352.06	\$52,526.59

St. James Cemetery, Inc. Investments Distributed as:

Rev. Ira Coiner - Permanent Trust	\$30,000.00
Virginia M. & W. Ashby White Memorial – Permanent Endowment	10,000.00
Lucille & Fred Kochersberger Memorial – Permanent Endowment	5,000.00
Available for Mowing, Repairs, General Maintenance, etc.	<u>7,526.59</u>
	\$52,526.59