



**ANNUAL PAROCHIAL  
CHURCH MEETING  
21 March 2016**

**AGENDA  
AND  
REPORTS  
2015**

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## **AGENDAS 21 March 2016**

### **Vestry Meeting Agenda**

1. Opening Prayer
2. Minutes of last year's Vestry Meeting (see page 4)
3. Election of Churchwardens
4. Closing Prayer

### **Annual Parochial Council Meeting Agenda**

1. Opening Prayer
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Minutes of Last Year's Annual Parochial Church Meeting (see page 4)
4. Matters Arising
5. Reports (see below)
6. Elections and Appointments:
  - 6.1 Election of Reader (Stephen Adams) to PCC
  - 6.2 Election of five members for the PCC
  - 6.3 Appointment of sidespersons
  - 6.4 Appointment of Independent Examiner of the Accounts  
(Note: Mrs Elizabeth McBride is willing to continue)
7. Any Other Business
8. Date of Next Meeting
9. Closing Prayers

### **Parochial Church Council Meeting Agenda**

To elect the following officers:

1. Vice Chairman
2. Secretary
3. Treasurer
4. Electoral Roll Officer
5. Members of the PCC Standing Committee  
*Note: The PCC must appoint a Standing Committee of at least five people. The Incumbent and churchwardens are members ex-officio. The PCC must appoint at least another two PCC members, one of whom will normally be the Treasurer. The Standing Committee has the authority to carry out PCC business between PCC meetings, but is accountable to the PCC.*

**ST JAMES CHURCH, SOUTHAM**

**MINUTES OF VESTRY MEETING and  
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING 22 March 2015**

**Vestry Meeting for the Purpose of Electing Two Churchwardens**

**1. Welcome and prayer**

The Rev. John Armstrong opened the meeting with prayer.

**2. Election of Churchwardens**

John Armstrong thanked Hilary Crosby, who was not seeking re-election (and is also standing down from the PCC for a year) for all her hard work over the past year; (gratitude by way of applause was given by all present.)

One nomination for churchwarden had been received: for Stephen Adams, duly proposed by Jenny Thorne and seconded by Mary Williams. There being no other nominations the above was duly elected for the following year.

Rev. John Armstrong prayed for Stephen on behalf of the whole Church.

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting: Members Present 28**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from John Cherry, Peter Rollins and Julia and Brian Cobb

**2. Minutes of APCM Meeting held on 23 March 2014**

The minutes were agreed as a correct record and signed by the chairman.

**3. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising

**4. Reports**

John Armstrong thanked all those who had contributed to the reports and encouraged everyone to read them. These reports were taken as read with the exception of the item on Page 7 under '*Parish Administrator*' the address of the Church office should read **74D** Coventry Street.

**5. Election of Diocesan Synod Representatives**

John Armstrong confirmed that:

- (i) Barry Parker and Stephen Adams are continuing as Deanery Synod Representatives and thanked them for their continued dedication.
- (ii) Margo Grant's term on the Diocesan Synod comes to an end in June and she is not seeking re-election. Thanks were extended to Margo for her dedicated work in this area.

John Armstrong informed the meeting that the Deanery are working on a long term plan which has not yet been finalised. Prayers continue to be given for the Church in the wider area and to the Clergy and other representatives.

**6. Appointment of Independent Examiner of Accounts**

The meeting noted that Elizabeth McBride was prepared to continue in this role and was duly re-elected; proposed by Ruth Tresidder and seconded by Margo Grant.

**7. Election of PCC Members**

The meeting noted that St. James was entitled to appoint up to nine lay members to the PCC based on an electoral roll of 94. Currently there were six vacancies. Three nominations duly proposed and seconded had been received and on the basis that no other nominations were forthcoming the following were duly elected to serve on the PCC. Jan Ford (proposed by Barry Parker and seconded by Margo Grant); Margo Grant (proposed by Pat Adams and seconded by Chris Cook); Bill King (proposed by Jan Ford and seconded by Rade Ognjanović). It was agreed that the terms of office for the three new members (i.e.) Jan Ford, Margo Grant and Bill King will be three years (until 2018) (proposed by Ruth Tresidder and seconded by Pat Adams). John Armstrong declared them elected Pat Adams (until 2016), Ruth Tresidder (until 2017) and Jenny Thorne (until 2017) continue to serve as elected members.

John Armstrong stated that Noreen Nutt and Iris Lloyd were not seeking re-election after one year as Lay members and that Shirley Hurley is stepping down. Thanks were given to them on behalf of members, together with thanks to Margaret Mumford for taking on extra administrative duties over the past year.

**8. Re-election of Sidespersons *en bloc***

The current rota of sidespersons was approved and re-elected *en bloc* with the addition of Esther and Jeff Greaves being proposed by Betty Phillips and seconded by John Tresidder.

**9. Any Other Business**

**Vote of Thanks**

John Armstrong thanked everyone who had contributed to the Ministry in this Church with special mention to:

- (i) John Tresidder for his outstanding and dedicated hard work over the years which has been considerable in the areas of the fabric of the church building and grounds. (Applause was given by the Church).
- (ii) Rade Ognjanović who works quietly behind the scenes and is invaluable. (Applause was given by the Church)
- (iii) John Hedge who faithfully and tenaciously has not given up on his teaching in the area of 'Children's group;' even though there is a lack of attendees. (Applause was given by the Church)

**10. Date of Next Meeting**

As the equivalent date next year was Palm Sunday, it was decided that on this occasion the date of the next meeting would be Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2016 at 7.30pm following the service of Compline at 7.00pm.

**The meeting closed with Grace 11.30am**

**Chairman** ..... **Date** .....

**REPORTS**

**Church Management**

**Annual Report and Financial Statements for  
the year ended 31 December 2015**

**Priest-in-Charge**

Rev. John Armstrong (to 15<sup>th</sup> November 2015)  
The Rectory  
4 Park Lane  
Southam CV47 0JA

**Parish Administrator**

Mrs M Mumford  
The Parish Office  
77D Coventry Street  
Southam  
CV47 0EA

**Bankers**

Lloyds TSB Bank plc  
6 High Street  
Southam  
CV47 0HA

**Independent Examiner**

Mrs Elizabeth McBride ICMA  
1 Park Lane  
Harbury  
CV33 9HX

**Annual Report for 2015 - continued**

**Background**

The PCC co-operates with the incumbent (Rev. John Armstrong for the period 1 January – 15 November 2015) in promoting, within the parish, the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

**Membership**

The PCC is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission in the Southam Deanery in the Diocese of Coventry. Members of the PCC are either ex officio or elected by the annual parochial church meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

The PCC has no connected charities.

The PCC employs one part-time member of staff.

No member of the PCC, or any connected person, has benefited financially from the PCC. Expenses incurred on behalf of the PCC have been reimbursed.

During the year the following served as members of the PCC:

John Armstrong*	Incumbent – Resigned 15 November 2015
Stephen Adams *	Warden, Reader and Deanery Synod
Pat Adams	Elected
Jan Ford*	Elected and PCC minute secretary
Margo Grant	Elected and Diocesan Synod
Bill King*	Elected
Barry Parker	Deanery Synod and Vice Chair of PCC
Jenny Thorne	Elected
Ruth Tresidder *	Elected - Treasurer
	Total 9

\*Standing Committee members

The PCC also has maintenance responsibilities for the fabric of the church and of the churchyard.

**Church Attendance**

Following revision there are currently 91 members on the Church Electoral Roll of whom 11 are not resident within the parish (2015:94 with ten not resident within the parish).

The average Sunday attendance was 67 (2014:67), but, as in previous years, average numbers increased at the various festivals and for baptism and thanksgiving services. It was particularly encouraging that numbers attending our Advent and various Christmas Services was well up on recent years, an encouraging base from which to work. The numbers of young people attending the church under the age of 16 remains very low.



## Review of the Year

The Reverend John Armstrong announced that he was leaving to help the Parish of St John's, Kenilworth, taking up a post in an evangelistic and pastoral capacity. John's last day of service was 15 November 2015.

As a consequence, the PCC had a number of discussions with Archdeacon Morris Rodham who, with others in the Diocese and our Deanery, had spent some considerable time considering how mission and ministry at St James could develop and flourish. This being against a background of St James having not being able to pay c£110k of parish share in recent years and insufficient funding to afford a full-time stipendiary minister.

The proposal, that I am delighted to say has been agreed and is set out below, was formally announced on 24 January 2016 and is based on Rev. Vikki Bisiker, who knows the area, providing full-time, interim stipendiary ministry to St James for a period of four years with effect from 1 March 2015. The focus of the interim ministry being:

- the fulfilment of the Diocesan Mission Purpose of Worshipping God, making new disciples, and Transforming Communities, via the delivery of the 8 Essential Qualities (8EQs),
- a particular emphasis on the development of ministry and mission with those in the 20s-30s age range in the parish. At least 50% of Vikki's time will be spent reaching this age range, including ministry on the new housing areas in Southam. Vikki will be accountable for this aspect of the work (funded by the Acceler8 project) to the leader of the 20s-30s work in the Diocese, and
- an emphasis on helping St James to become a 'resourcing church' for the Deanery and wider diocese. This will include financially and in the development of lay training in Southam available for the Deanery and even wider Diocese to access.

Vikki will not be responsible for mission and ministry at Ufton, which will become a wider Deanery responsibility. She will continue to live in the vicarage in Radford Semele with her family who will continue to worship at St Nicholas. For her first year Vikki will continue as a curate followed by three years as a full-time stipendiary Interim Minister, subject to annual review.

As a church we have committed to:

- supporting Vikki as she leads the whole church into the change necessary to deliver the Diocesan Mission Purpose via the 8EQs,
- support the emphasis on 20s-30s ministry and the role of the church as a resourcing (rather than resourced church),
- paying all of Vikki's legitimate working expenses. Travel expenses (up to a limit of £3,000) from Radford Semele to Southam whilst on placement as a curate will be covered by St James, and whilst as an interim minister will be covered by the Diocese, and
- increasing parish share contributions by £5,000 per year over the four years, as a sign of commitment to long-term sustainability and becoming a resourcing church, recognising that others (Acceler8, Radford Semele, Bishop's Mission Fund) will also be financially investing in this next phase in the life of St James.

With the above plan in place a positive proposal will be put to the Diocesan Finance Group (DFG) that if the financial target as set out above is reached and all payments have been received by April 2020, the Diocese will 'write off' the £100,000 arrears of St James. It is interesting that at a PCC meeting in April 2015 Canon Simon Lloyd representing the Diocesan Finance Group accepted that the amount of unpaid parish share was demonstrably not payable given the circumstances of the church. This plan addresses that issue.

Since John's departure and we entered a time of vacancy I have been delighted with the way members of the church family have stepped forward to ensure that the church and the services we provide have continued to be delivered with both quality and professionalism. It is often quoted that in times of vacancy 'churches' and 'individuals' within those churches grow and we have seen positive evidence of this at St James. We can only look forward in anticipation of what God has in store for us....

The statement of the financial activities for the year is set out in this Annual Report together with the Treasurer's Report, see pages 11-17. With the guidance and assistance of our treasurer, Ruth Tresidder, we maintained a very strict control over church expenditure and fully met our agreed Parish Share commitment for 2015 of £25,806, although as previously stated this is well below the cost of a full-time stipendiary minister.

The full PCC met on twelve occasions during 2015, with an attendance rate of 85%, and included four extraordinary meetings. Of the four, at two the PCC considered the 8 Essential Qualities (8EQS) of Healthy Growing Churches and agreed that it would be beneficial for the whole church to complete a survey in accordance with the 8 EQs in order to determine a baseline for the church. The PCC also decided that we should await the outcome of the Deanery Pastoral Committee's review of the deanery structure before starting. A special meeting was held in March to consider how St James might celebrate VE Day and one in November to start considering those matters which would be impacted by the vacancy.

The PCC also agreed that following completion of a three month trial we should continue to hold one service, being communion, at 9.30am on the first Sunday of each month.

The PCC is supported in its duties by a Standing Committee, to enable urgent decisions which have been properly delegated to be taken between PCC meetings and a Fabric Committee to look after the church buildings, etc. The minutes and reports of their meetings were received by the full PCC, in particular the quinquennial inspection of the building, and discussed where necessary.

The PCC is fully aware of the risk factors involved in the running of church affairs and continues to ensure that all our properties are adequately insured, including public liability.

Mrs Elizabeth McBride, has again kindly agreed to examine the Accounts and the PCC is very grateful to her for the time she has spent on this.

The PCC is also grateful to Margaret Mumford for the smooth running of the church office and a particular vote of thanks goes to those volunteers who help cover the church office each Tuesday and Friday morning, and when Margaret is on leave. A special vote of thanks also goes to Ruth Tresidder who organises the rota. More volunteers are always welcome so if you would like to help please have a word with Ruth.

Copies of the PCC minutes are displayed on the noticeboard at the back of church after each meeting.

As you would expect, a lot of the detail of what is discussed at the PCC meetings is covered in the following reports. In addition detailed reports of other groups and activities associated with St James are set out in this Annual Report.

The members of the Parochial Church Council approved the reports for submission to the APCM on February 21 2016 which Barry Parker (Vice Chair) signed on their behalf.

## ***Barry Parker – Vice Chair - PCC***

### **Churchwarden's Report**

Having served on the PCC for many years due to being a Reader at St James it has been very interesting to be also Churchwarden this year.

Little did I know that when I took on the role that it would be a year of such change. As one of St James's Deanery Synod reps I was aware that the Deanery had to reshape itself and that the Deanery Pastoral committee had spent many, many hours looking at how to structure ministry for the future in the face of the funding issues.

However it came as a great surprise to me and the PCC that other changes were then put forward by Archdeacon Morris Rodham and we learnt of the plan for Rev John Armstrong to move to minister at St John's Kenilworth.

As the only Churchwarden and the Reader I was initially concerned that my workload would greatly increase following John & Vicki's departure but we have such a good team with the PCC and other active members of St James, and everyone has worked together to maintain ministry at St James.

So whilst I have found myself doing new things – e.g. dealing with office and fabric matters, writing thought for the month, taking "Thanksgiving for Children" services etc., I have been so well supported and guided in my role as Churchwarden that it has not been as onerous a task as I feared. So thank you to everyone who has helped the novice Churchwarden!

Now as Church we know the outline of plans for the coming year and we welcome Vikki Bisiker to lead St James and I for one look forward to see further changes in which we can continue to work together to build up St James and fulfil our purpose to Worship God, Make Disciples and Transform our Community.

***Stephen Adams – Church Warden***

## **Treasurer's Report**

Yet another year has gone by and we have been fortunate that the church has not incurred any major expenditure.

General income for 2015 was slightly lower than 2014 but planned income per month was higher and amounted to £2,437.77 compared with £2,200.11 in 2014. Loose plate collections and income from yellow envelopes decreased to £596.53 per month compared with £749.75 in the previous year, but, as noted in the Giving 2015 Report, this was partly offset by the increase in money contributed through the blue envelope scheme.

Our end of year balance in the General Account of £10,900.59 includes money retained to cover the cost of the 5 yearly electrical inspection that was undertaken in December 2015, invoice awaited, and £1,000 for two months insurance premium that is now collected over twelve months rather than by ten instalments in the past.

Significant items that need highlighting include:

- Sale of the Magic Lantern and slides that realised £465.16 after deduction of commission.
- A replacement mixer unit for the sound desk at a cost of £243.
- Annual maintenance/statutory checks on the gas boilers, lightning conductor, clock, fire extinguishers, PAT testing and 5 yearly tree inspection amounted to £1,755.
- Work on the north aisle, choir vestry, chancel and south and north porch roofs and downpipe replacement cost £2,200 after the VAT had been reclaimed through the Listed Places of Worship Grant Aid Scheme.
- £435 was spent on replacement of high level bulbs and 4 spotlights. Due to the height of the fittings contractors were required to undertake this work.
- Earlier in the year it was necessary to replace the churchyard skip with a second hand one at a cost of £300.

The PCC thank Southam Town Council for their continued support of including the churchyard grass cutting in their mowing contract and their paying for emptying the church skip throughout the year.

Looking ahead we had already committed to paying £27,096 towards our parish share for 2016 prior to the wonderful news that the Rev Vikki Bisiker is to join us in March. In order for us to have the benefit of Vikki's ministry in Southam we are required to provide an additional £5,000 to the diocese each year as well as Vikki's working expenses (not exceeding £3,000). In reality we need additional income of £125 per week to cover our costs. I appreciate we hope and pray that

congregation numbers will increase over time but we must all very seriously consider whether our own present giving to St James is realistic.

I would like to thank everyone who contributes to our church finances especially all those who give to the church on a regular basis, whether by standing order, through our various envelopes schemes or through the collection plate – every penny really does count.

If you would like more in depth information about our accounts please do contact me.

***Ruth Tresidder – Treasurer Tel. 813524***

## Accounts for Year Ended 31 December 2015

	Note	Actual 2015			Actual 2014		
		Unrestricted £	Restricted £	TOTAL £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	TOTAL £
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>							
From Donors:							
Under Gift Aid Schemes	1a	29,318.08	520.00	29,838.08	28,272.65	252.50	28,525.15
Gift Aid recovered	1b	8,424.75	130.00	8,554.75	8,188.20	188.13	8,376.33
Non Gift Aided Income	1c	7,093.66		7,093.66	7,515.78		7,515.78
Fund raising & special appeals	1d	3,445.69	834.50	4,280.19	3,906.96	994.97	4,901.93
Sale of surplus assets	1e		465.16	465.16			
Legacies					1,300.00		1,300.00
<b>TOTAL DONATED INCOME</b>		<b>48,282.18</b>	<b>1,949.66</b>	<b>50,231.84</b>	<b>49,183.59</b>	<b>1,435.60</b>	<b>50,619.19</b>
<b>Fees</b>							
PCC	2a	6,146.00	-50.00	6,096.00	5,887.00	(508.00)	5,379.00
<b>Total regulated fees</b>		<b>6,146.00</b>	<b>-50.00</b>	<b>6,096.00</b>	<b>5,887.00</b>	<b>(508.00)</b>	<b>5,379.00</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES</b>		<b>54,428.18</b>	<b>1,899.66</b>	<b>56,327.84</b>	<b>55,070.59</b>	<b>927.60</b>	<b>55,998.19</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>							
Diocesan costs:							
Parish Share: Current year	3a	25,806.00		25,806.00	25,000.00		25,000.00
		<b>25,806.00</b>		<b>25,806.00</b>	<b>25,000.00</b>		<b>25,000.00</b>
Clergy & Service costs:							
Clergy expenses	4a	1,155.11		1,155.11	1,595.30		1,595.30
Altar supplies	4b	132.59		132.59	167.60		167.60
Music	4c	779.63		779.63	493.45		493.45
Other	4d	90.00		90.00			
		<b>2,157.33</b>		<b>2,157.33</b>	<b>2,256.35</b>		<b>2,256.35</b>
Administration:							
Administrator	5a	4,114.00		4,114.00	3,993.08		3,993.08
Office supplies	5b	1,998.66		1,998.66	2,902.94		2,902.94
Other	5c	1,117.16		1,117.16	1,217.10		1,217.10
Office telephone		434.29		434.29	422.63		422.63
Church Office	5d	4,243.37		4,243.37	4,226.41		4,226.41
		<b>11,907.48</b>		<b>11,907.48</b>	<b>12,762.16</b>		<b>12,762.16</b>
Maintenance:							
Utilities	6a	2,999.18		2,999.18	2,755.26		2,755.26
Insurance	6b	5,002.26		5,002.26	6,205.32		6,205.32
General repairs	6c	1,457.02	2,356.00	3,813.02	2,572.20	6,215.49	8,787.69
Churchyard	6d	975.08	160.00	1,135.08	1,740.00	760.00	2,500.00
		<b>10,433.54</b>	<b>2,516.00</b>	<b>12,949.54</b>	<b>13,272.78</b>	<b>6,975.49</b>	<b>20,248.27</b>

## Accounts for Year Ended 31 December 2015

	Note	Actual 2015			Actual 2014		
		Unrestricted	Restricted	TOTAL	Unrestricted	Restricted	TOTAL
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Ministry Support: Appeals and Charitable Giving Children and home mission	7a	70.00	1,120.20	1,190.20	132.50	295.58	428.08
	7b	154.60	370.04	524.64	652.39	1,164.22	1,816.61
		<b>224.60</b>	<b>1,490.24</b>	<b>1,714.84</b>	<b>784.89</b>	<b>1,459.80</b>	<b>2,244.69</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>50,528.95</b>	<b>4,006.24</b>	<b>54,535.19</b>	<b>54,076.18</b>	<b>8,435.29</b>	<b>62,511.47</b>
<b>SURPLUS/DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>3,899.23</b>	<b>(2,106.58)</b>	<b>1,792.65</b>	<b>994.41</b>	<b>(7,507.69)</b>	<b>(6,513.28)</b>
<b>Transfers from General Fund</b>		<b>7,001.36</b>			<b>6,006.95</b>		
<b>Add: Reserves b/f 1 Jan '15</b>		<b>10,900.59</b>			<b>7,001.36</b>		
<b>Total Reserves 31 Dec 2015</b>							

### RESTRICTED FUNDS MOVEMENTS

Fund Description	Balance 01-Jan-15 £	Receipts £	Payments £	Transfers £	Balance 31-Dec-15 £
Bees Abroad	39.98	88.45	128.43		-
Building maintenance	4,967.80	1,240.16	2,356.00		3,851.96
Children ex Infant Welfare Trust	7,583.84		110.66		7,473.18
Churchyard maintenance	125.00	35.00	160.00		-
Flower Fund	100.90	28.15	91.77		37.28
Granny Wagon	165.60				165.60
He*Brews	991.00		114.17		876.83
Hope 14 Mission	116.06		95.21		20.85
International	440.78	557.90	900.00		98.68
John Milner Organ Fund	601.22				601.22
"Messy Church"	600.74		50.00		550.74
Wedding Fees in Advance	200.00	(50.00)			150.00
	<b>15,932.92</b>	<b>1,899.66</b>	<b>4,006.24</b>		<b>13,826.34</b>

### Liabilities - Agency collections

Children's Society boxes	£ 1,339.50
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### Liquid funds as at 31 December 2015

Bank	£ 26,066.43
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### TOTAL FUNDS

Less Restricted Funds held on behalf of others as per above	13,826.34
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Less Liabilities - Agency collections	1,339.50
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<b>St James Funds at 31 December 2015 see Receipts &amp; Payments Account</b>	<b>£ 10,900.59</b>
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**Accounts for Year Ended 31 December 2015**

**NOTES RELATING TO 2015 ACCOUNTS**

***Breakdown of totals Receipts and Payments Account***

**Income**

- 1a All tax reclaimable giving from standing orders paid into bank account, weekly numbered envelopes and yellow envelopes.
- 1b Tax reclaimed from above and from the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (unrestricted) and from Special Appeals (restricted) from 1 October 2014 to 30 September 2015.
- 1c Planned giving that may not qualify for tax relief and loose plate collections.
- 1d Unrestricted includes proceeds from Summer Fete and Christmas Fayre, one off donations, income received for incidental charges at weddings and insertions in the Book of Remembrance. Restricted includes Bees Abroad, International, donations for the churchyard and church flowers.
- 1e Proceeds of sale of Magic Lantern and associated slides.
- 2a Restricted Wedding Fees in Advance may be carried over from one year to another. The deficit shown on this year's accounts is due to the fact that in 2015 more of the 2014 income was expended than was received in advance for weddings in 2016.

**Expenditure**

- 3a Our contribution to Coventry Diocese. Other parishes within Southam Deanery and other deaneries subsidised the Southam benefice by £19,622.
- 4a Clergy expenses and cost of Rectory telephone.
- 4b Candles, Communion Wine, etc.
- 4c Includes Music Licences for 2015, Music Group and audio/visual expenses.
- 4d Visiting laity undertaking funerals.
- 5a Salary and Tax for Administrator. The Office is manned on Tuesdays and Fridays by volunteers.
- 5b Rental, maintenance and ink for photocopier, stationery, book of remembrance.
- 5c Bank charges, fund raising and refreshment expenses and administration of weddings and funerals.
- 5d Rental of Church Office and associated utilities.
- 6a Gas and Electricity supplies and Water rates for St James Church.
- 6b Insurance of buildings, contents and public liability.
- 6c Routine maintenance including statutory testing of gas boilers, fire extinguishers, clock and lightning conductor, PAT testing, roof and valley repairs and replacement lighting.
- 6d Both unrestricted and restricted expenditure relates to cost of a replacement skip and the 5 yearly tree inspection undertaken in July 2015. We are grateful to Southam Town Council for including mowing and strimming the churchyard in their grass cutting contract and paying for emptying the skip.
- 7a Unrestricted includes donations to Southam Christmas Lights Association and a contribution to Southam Deanery. Restricted includes expenditure on Christmas and Easter flowers, International and Bees Abroad.
- 7b Unrestricted includes Thanksgiving and Baptism expenses and the cost of Christmas postcards. Restricted includes expenditure by Jolly J's, the Open the Book team and booklets for distribution at Christmas.



Accounts for Year Ended 31 December 2015

**Independent Examiner's Report**

**Independent examiner's report to the Parochial Church Council of St James, Southam**

I report on the accounts of St James' Church, Southam for the year ended 31 December 2015.

*Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner*

The charity's trustees, that is, the members of St James, Southam PCC, are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. My examination includes a review of the accounting records kept and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Elizabeth McBride 1 Park Lane, Harbury, Leamington Spa

Date: 14th January 2016

**Giving Report**

It is wonderful that the vast majority of our income is now eligible for tax relief, so that we can receive 25p from HM Revenue & Customs for virtually every £1 donated.

At the beginning of 2015 a total of 31 people paid by standing order into the church bank account, this reduced to 29 by the end of December. Giving by this method amounted to £20,121.92 – an increase of £1,025 over the previous year. During the year twelve people donated through the blue envelope scheme and a total of £5,669.85 was given by this method, an increase of £1,341.90 over the previous year.

77 people contributed to the church by yellow envelope, of these ten gave on a regular basis. Total giving by this method (including one off gift aid donations) amounted to £4,046.31, a decrease of £1,053.97 from 2014; this is offset by the increase in people contributing by the blue envelope scheme.

We received gift aid of £8,554.75 from HM Revenue & Customs, this is an increase of £178.42 over the previous year. Tax is recovered in arrear and covers the period 1 October 2014 to 30 September 2015.

During the year the number of people who are non-taxpayers who give on a regular basis decreased by one to eight but income increased by £485 to £3,461.50.

Listed below is the equivalent weekly giving during 2015 whether paid by standing order, cheques or the envelope schemes:

£1.00 - £4.99	20 people
£5.00 - £9.99	17 people
£10.00 - £14.99	11 people
£15.00 - £19.99	0
£20.00 - £29.99	8 people
£30.00 - £39.99	1 person
£40.00 - £49.99	2 people

Irrespective whether you are a taxpayer or not please do have a word with me if you would like more information on methods available to contribute to St James on a regular basis, whether it be weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually.

***Ruth Tresidder - Gift Aid Secretary Tel. 813524***

## **Fabric Committee Report**

The purpose of this report is to highlight achievements of the past year and set out proposals for the immediate future. Failures are also mentioned to remind everyone at St James that the fabric committee needs serious revitalisation if the church building and the surroundings are to be maintained to a safe working standard in the future. I can only repeat a couple of sentences from last year's report – 'The fact that we do not have a fabric secretary and are unable to find anyone to undertake the role.' (Not through lack of trying for the last two years), and 'Neither do we have any members who now wish to take on future project management'. (Several of us would be only too pleased to hand over the reins to new people). Only one fabric meeting took place during the year on 25 November.

The completed projects for 2015 were the repairs to the tearoom/toilet roof to stop the water getting in and general gutter/valley cleaning and roof tile replacement – again to keep the building dry. The only other item was the Rector's vestry floor inspection which was carried out in September which resulted in a proposed replacement floor report being sent to PCC. (This was agreed to proceed). Two statutory five yearly inspections took place during 2015, the full electrical test (results not yet to hand as at 22 January 2016) and the churchyard tree inspection. The latter item requires work to be carried out to a number of trees and PCC agreed we proceed with the necessary planning paperwork (this is ongoing).

A report on proposed internal and external church building projects was passed to the PCC in January 2015 covering the period up to 2020. However, these all need new people and money to carry them through and therefore no decisions have been taken as yet.

The churchyard skip (which had rusted away after almost 30 years) was replaced with a second-hand one. We changed to a cheaper (and more efficient) fire extinguisher testing firm during the year. The sound desk mixer failed just before Easter and had to be replaced and then the CD unit failed just before Christmas (replaced on 21 January 2016). Several small jobs were undertaken during the year; the (stolen) kissing gate replaced into the recreation ground; the bier house door padlock failed in the locked position and had to be ground off and a number of trees needed minor trimming. Due to a burglary adjacent to the church office some additional security measures are under consideration. Thanks must go to a number of volunteers who have helped during the year with hedge trimming and clearing up tree trimmings also litter picking and bin emptying around the churchyard.

Finally, the world has changed (strictly this is 2016). On the first of January a new online faculty application system will now apply to every diocese in the country. (This only came to light at the last moment when making the application for the new Rector's vestry floor a few days ago). I thought the C of E had moved from the medieval to the 21st century, perhaps it has, but I have not. I failed with the online system and did it longhand in the end, (as in the past). The immediate future is therefore just to clear faculty and other consents to allow the Rector's vestry floor project and the tree work to proceed in 2016.

No other forward new projects are on the books. ***John Tresidder - Verger***

### **Electoral Roll Officer's Report**

4 members left

5 members died

6 members added to the roll

The Electoral Roll now stands at 91 members

### ***Margo Grant – Electoral Roll Officer***

### **Deanery Synod Report**

The Deanery Synod provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church.

Two members of the PCC sit on the Deanery Synod, Stephen Adams and Barry Parker. Barry Parker was also appointed as the Deanery Synod's Lay Chair during the year and is a member of the Deanery Standing and Pastoral Committee. Margo Grant, also a member of the PCC, sits on the Deanery Synod as a Diocesan Synod representative.

In June 2015 Rev Martin Green stepped up as Acting Area Dean to cover for Rev Captain Craig Grocock who stepped back due to personal reasons and who has now officially resigned as Area Dean after four years. At the end of the year Rev Bob Clucas retired from parish ministry and Rev John Armstrong completed his ministry at Southam and Ufton to take up a new role in Kenilworth.

In May 2015 the Deanery Pastoral Committee presented its draft pastoral scheme for the Southam Deanery for consultation and consideration across the parishes. The initial draft reflected and attempted to address the financial challenges facing the deanery, the retirement of incumbent clergy and the desire to capitalise on positive developments within growing parishes. There was an acceptance that the proposals were not without some risk. Following positive discussions it was agreed that the parishes of Offchurch, Hunningham, Weston-Under-Wetherley and Wappenbury be united. The matter of clergy cover was subject to ongoing discussion. In addition, a decision by the Feldon group of churches to appoint two House for Duty posts each covering three parishes was progressing.

The Deanery Synod also received regular Deanery Mission updates together with reports and updates from the Diocesan Synod and General Synod.

### ***Stephen Adams and Barry Parker***

## **Leading, Service Support & Worship**

### **Audio Visual**

The sound mixing console was replaced because it was faulty. Thank you to John Gwillam and John Tresidder for helping to buy and fit the new one. The old one has been repaired at no cost to the church and is kept as a backup. There have been very few routine maintenance and repair tasks carried out at no cost to the church. The CD player has also recently stopped working.

Thank you to Oliver for helping with the sound and vision on Sunday mornings.

### ***Rade Ognjanovic***

### **Music Group**

Since the last APCM, the music group has continued to provide and lead the worship songs at the 10am service – 9.30am on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month, as well as at special services throughout the year. Our numbers have been unexpectedly depleted this past year. With the Armstrong's leaving St. James in early November we became a singing member less (Vicki), Abigail, our flautist, went off to university and the passing away of John Cherry was sad. He and his trombone have been greatly missed.

The music is chosen as far as possible in keeping with the theme of the Sunday or with the readings. We aim to have a mix of 'old' and 'newish' songs/hymns that everyone is able to join in with. Comments from the congregation are always listened to and taken on board as much as possible.

A big thank you to Ann for her keyboard skills, Stephen and Troy – drums, to John Home for singing alongside me and Rade for his technical excellence.

At the Christmas Carol service John and I were joined by 11 others, both male and female, to make up a really sound choir for the event. It was great to work with so many and I hope it will happen again.

If anyone is interested in joining the group for regular Sunday morning services, or for special occasions only, that would be great. Please let me know.

### ***Hilary Crosby – Co-Ordinator***

### **Tower Report**

This year has been a rather special year for the Belfry. Four of our Ringers received Certificates for serving 50 years membership of the Coventry Guild. They were Mary Williams, John Thorne, Michael Hill and Terence Hill. These were presented at the Advent Carol Service.

During the last year the Ringers have rung regularly for most of the services that were held throughout the year. We did have difficulty ringing over the Christmas period due to several ringers being away and some being ill. We have maintained regular practice sessions throughout the year.

We rang for Four Weddings; we had no visiting ringers this year. One Quarter Peal was rung and one full peal was rung to welcome the annual Mop to the town again this year.

We did not have our annual outing this year due to some of our ringers being on holiday at the time of year that we normally arrange this.

The Christmas meal was as usual organised by Iain and Loraine and held at the Bowling Green. This was attended by about twenty people including several of our ringing friends from other Towers in the area.

During the last year we have managed to recruit Bennie who has recently moved to Southam and we welcome him into our band.

We were all very sorry to hear of the death of Derrick Ballinger who rang with us a few years ago. We all offer Jane and the family our condolences. We hope to ring a Quarter Peal in remembrance of Derrick early in the New Year.

We are still looking to recruit new members into our team. Almost all of our band are now pensioners; our youngest ringer is now forty one years old so unless we can recruit some new blood into the band the future looks very bleak.

To be able to learn the art of Church Bell ringing is very rewarding and very good exercise for the body and mind.

If anyone is interested in learning to ring do please come along on a Tuesday evening between 7.30pm and 9.00pm or speak to someone in the Belfry on a Sunday. Ideally any candidate should be at least 14 years of age.

## ***Terence Hill***

## **Children and Youth Work**

### **Pre-School and Children's Groups**

During the past year the number of children attending the church on a Sunday morning has remained very low. We have, however, continued to provide something for the children whilst the adults have their own teaching.

Our thanks, in particular, go to John Hedge who has faithfully provided a range of fun, bible-based activities week by week.

On the plus side the child-friendly services at Easter and Christmas have proved very popular. Taken together with the success of Massive Messy Church held at the Grange Hall and the Open the Book teams visiting Southam Primary school and St James C of E Primary school we are reaching an increasing number of children with the gospel message. We need to build on this for the future.

### ***Barry Parker - Vice Chair PCC***

## **Open the Book**

The second year of Open the Book for the team from St James' has been even more exciting than the first, seeing an expansion in our ministry to Primary school age children in Southam. In September 2015 we began visiting Southam Primary School fortnightly on Thursday afternoons. We do our storytelling at the beginning of the Key Stage Two assembly (for 7–11year olds) and are then privileged to remain for the sharing of personal successes and achievement awards. There is a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere to the whole session and the team look forward to these visits.

St James' C of E Primary School, now under new leadership (see more in the report for the school) continues to welcome us on Wednesdays, fortnightly. Children and staff alike are getting to recognise the different members of the team – now eleven of us! – and it is always lovely to receive a beaming smile or cheery "Hello" as we meet in town.

As well as doing Open the Book in the schools, we have also shared God's word with these young children at a variety of services in St James' Church. St James' school asked if we would tell the story of Palm Sunday as part of their Easter Service in church, attended by friends and parents as well as all of the pupils.

This was followed a few days later by the team telling the Good Friday story as part of St James' Children's service at 10.00am on that day. Finally, the team were encouraged by the large number of families who attended the Family Service during the afternoon of Christmas Eve. It was wonderful to share this time with visiting and local families as we retold the "Good news" and "Bad news" connected with the story of Jesus' birth.

Of course, ministry to children doesn't happen only in school and church – it happens at home and in the High Street! At the annual Southam Town lights switch-on, the team – as part of the Combined Churches presence – offered Messy Church activities to children walking past. The giant collage pictures of Nativity scenes were great fun to do and impressive to look at. All children helping us on the stall were given a copy of "The Christmas Poem", a delightful child-friendly book of Bible stories. These were subsidised by The Bible Society who promote Open the Book. Team members reported holding thoughtful conversations with older siblings/parents/grandparents as the youngsters were busy crafting. The books were very well received by adults and children alike so hopefully God's word would be heard or discussed in a few more homes last Christmas.

At the end of last year's report I invited you to pray, with us, that His word would be spread to more children in Southam during the coming year, through Open the Book. God is indeed good, and is answering our prayers already. Who knows where the next year will lead the team? Please continue to pray with us and for us, and be part of our journey.

***Jenny Thorne – Team Leader***

**Granny Wagon – Friday Night hot chocolate in the park**

Huge thanks to our stalwart team of seven, who have turned up in wind and rain every Friday evening for up to an hour and a half (though haven't always emerged from their vehicles if no-one else was in the park!)

We continue to serve a variety of drinks – though mainly hot chocolate – custard creams and pink wafer biscuits. Our customers are generally between 11 and 16 though we welcome anyone. Often in the summer, dads and small children are regulars, as well as dog-walkers and curious passers-by.

It's a great pleasure to offer drinks to all and sundry, and interesting conversations often ensue, on a whole range of subjects – including from time to time, Jesus, God and the church. We would be happy to welcome any new volunteers to the team. Please do get in touch with either Chris or Jan.

***Chris Cooke and Jan Ford***

**Jolly J's**

Jolly J's continues to work in conjunction with the NCT. The group meets every week, apart from Bank Holidays from 10am to 11.30am. Numbers attending have steadily increased over the year with a bumper attendance of 93 children and around 60 adults for the Christmas party. (Generally there are between 40 and 50 children). Jolly J's is a very busy and vibrant group. Friendships have developed and young Mums are supported. The group changes regularly as children move up to school and new Mums join us.

The role of the Mother's Union within Jolly J's is very important, serving the parents, carers and children with drinks and snacks throughout the session. We also have a termly theme where we try to link a craft activity and story each week with some focus on the various aspects of God's love.

The NCT mums are always very appreciative of the support given by St. James Church but for those of us involved we receive far more than we give! If you have a couple of hours to spare occasionally on a Monday morning and would like to come along and see what goes on (and maybe get involved with helping) then do please have a chat with one of us. If you love children a fun time is guaranteed!

***Chris Cooke, Rose Evans, Pam Gilkes, Sylvia Barratt and Pat Adams***



## **Homegroups**

### **The Monday Evening Homegroup**

Our group meets weekly during Term Time only. We meet between 8-00pm and 10-00pm.

Due to circumstances we are now a smaller group, meeting regularly to study the bible with the help of CWR Cover to Cover study books. On completion of each study we share a meal out together.

We feel that we have grown friendship, fellowship and support of each other and others as we participate in many of the St James Church other groups and other activities' to enable our learning.

Whilst studying 1Peter we are coming to the conclusion that we are involved in many of the different parts of our church life. Also we enjoy being part of other groups that widen our fellowship; groups like Men's and Lady's breakfasts, Streams in the Desert and Napton Informal.

We are very happy to add to our numbers. If you are interested in joining us, please speak to myself, Juliet, or ask Gary at whose home we meet, or Annie and Roger for more information.

Please contact Juliet on 01926 812104 for more information.

***Juliet Houghton***

### **The Tuesday Evening Homegroup**

We meet on alternate Tuesday evenings at the home of Stephen and Pat Adams - 6, Sycamore Grove, at 7.45pm. The group is fairly small, very friendly, with members at various levels of faith and understanding. We enjoy exploring and discussing the Bible together (no question is ever too simple!) and we hope that the things we learn together are helping us to reflect Jesus in our communities. During each homegroup we spend some time praying together for topical issues and for each other. Homegroup provides a safe environment where we can experience the love and support of others at a time when we might be finding life difficult.

We use a variety of material for our studies. Over the past year we have completed John Ortberg's video series on 'God is closer than you think'. We all found this so encouraging in our day to day experiences.

In the Autumn we joined the Deanery Series of Discipleship Explored. This was held at Harbury weekly and comprised of delicious puddings, a video (high quality and extremely interesting) followed by discussion groups and a time of prayer. The evenings were so enjoyable everyone was happy to meet weekly. We are currently studying the Lord's Prayer. We want our prayer lives to grow as our understanding increases.

If you don't, as yet, belong to a homegroup and are interested in finding out more then please talk to Stephen and Pat or telephone them on 813753. One of our 'newer' members said recently, "A while ago I wouldn't have wanted anything to do with a homegroup but I really enjoy it!" Please feel free to come along and 'give us a try'. You will be made most welcome! The official starting time is 7.45pm and the official end time is 9.45pm. However, the group is very flexible and the kettle will always be ready for anyone arriving early or able to stay later.

## ***Stephen and Pat Adams***

### **The Wednesday Evening Homegroup**

We aim to meet fortnightly usually on a Wednesday evening at Sheepfold the home of Margo Grant starting at 7.30pm and finishing at approximately 9.30pm. Our membership has increased over the year and we now number ten if everyone can make it.

With refreshments available at the beginning of the evening it is a safe, relaxed, informal, friendly place where we can be real with each other and develop deep fellowship and friendships. Our home group provides an environment where we can support, love, encourage and pray for one another to live for God through the hard times as well as the good. A place where God's word can really be applied to the reality of each of our lives.

Each time we meet we spend time exchanging news, discussing important events and praying for each other and our community. We are never short of "chat"; but it makes us a friendly and interactive group. For our bible studies we have again used a wide range of resources and materials including DVD based discussion courses and topic based written bible studies. It is a great, fun way to learn and there is no such thing as 'a silly question' We are currently following a series called Fruitfulness On The Frontline looking at how we show and share Christ's wisdom and love with the people we meet out in the places we usually find ourselves.

As a group we joined the Deanery Discipleship Explored course in the Autumn and together with others attending enjoyed a great social evening with delicious puddings and stimulating challenging discussions based on Paul's Letter to the Philippians.

Once again Saturday breakfast at our house was the group choice for a social catch up time and we also enjoyed Christmas lunch at the Clarendon in Leamington Spa.

If you want to know more about our group or home groups in general please don't hesitate to contact me. I'm sure all our home group leaders would love to see everyone in the St James family joining a home group and would help facilitate new ones if necessary to meet people's needs!

***Jill Parker***

### **The Thursday Afternoon Homegroup**

How quickly the time to write the Home Group Report for 2015 seems to have come round. We are almost the same group as last year, we still have our house-bound member that is visited by other group members. But sadly during the year we lost Cynthia Cherry and then only a few weeks later John Cherry, an associate member as well. Then, in the Autumn we welcomed a new member.

Our programme has followed a pattern similar to previous years, beginning the year with the York Course for Lent 2015. From there we moved on to use a booklet called 'Really' looking at some of the issues that concern us in today's world and seeing what the Bible says about them. For our final few weeks of the year we looked at 1 Peter.

However its not all serious 'stuff'. Our meetings begin with a time of chat, catching up with each other, and end with a cup of tea and sometimes cake and sometimes biscuits.

Our meetings are held on the 1st and 3rd Thursday afternoons of the month from 2.30 to 4.30ish. We meet at the home of one of the members of the Group. If you would like to come and join us please speak to one of the members of the Group or myself. Lifts can be arranged.

***Jen Burgess***

### **Church Liaison**

#### **Combined Churches**

Representatives of the four churches meet bi-monthly to exchange information and discuss the possibility of joint events.

This year, we joined forces at the Christmas Light switch-on, providing refreshments and information on the Christmas services to be held in each of the four churches. Both were equally well received! The 'Open the Book' team were alongside providing a 'Messy Church' opportunity for the younger children to help complete a Nativity picture for display in church.

It was good to see the illuminated Nativity scene in a prominent position again outside the newly opened Tithelodge, albeit briefly, as the connection to the power supply failed on Christmas Eve.

The Good Friday Walk of Witness was instigated over 30 years ago by Southam Community Church and has been held every year since then. Starting at the Grange Hall, participants follow the cross which is carried down the High Street, stopping en route for prayer, reflection and a hymn and ending outside the Police Station for a brief service. Large numbers of hot cross buns are given to shoppers and passers-by as we go. It is hoped we will repeat it this year.

***Jan Ford***

## **St James C of E Primary School, Southam**

2015 has seen great change in the staffing and leadership at St James School. New class teachers have strengthened the team and the education provided for the pupils throughout the school remains very good. A hardworking group of committed and well-qualified Teaching Assistants work alongside the teaching and administrative staff.

However, the greatest change has been at leadership level, following the retirement of Mrs Hilary Wankling in July 2015. Mrs Wankling had been a respected and well-loved head teacher for six years and was going to be a hard act to follow! The governors embarked on the task of finding her replacement at the beginning of the year. In consultation with the Diocesan Board of Education, it was decided to consider entering into a collaboration with Long Itchington C of E (VC) Primary school. This meant that both schools would have their own Head of School but Mrs Phyllis King (at the time, head teacher at Long Itchington) would become Executive Head of both schools – sharing her time equally at both.

Three of the Foundation governors – John Armstrong, Dave Howell and Jenny Thorne – were involved in the information gathering and decision making processes of the delegated small group of governors that lead up to the appointment. After Mrs King took up post in September, a joint committee of governors from Southam and Long Itchington continue to meet regularly to assess the progress and success of the collaboration. Dave and Jenny represent St James Church on this group.

Being a Foundation governor in a successful and popular school such as St James is a privilege. Whatever your interests, skills or expertise there is an opportunity to develop them in partnership with the staff, pupils and other governors. The church is currently seeking to appoint new foundation governors to replace John and Vicki Armstrong. If you would like to know more, please contact me for a chat about what being a governor entails.

The Open the Book team maintains good links between school and church, and the school holds services in church at Christmas and Easter. Children and staff have attended (and enjoyed) several Massive Messy Church sessions organised by the Deanery Mission Team – so much so that two members of staff have now become Messy Church activity leaders!

At a time when religion is often side-lined or even deemed irrelevant by so many of the population, it is vital that the Christian character and ethos of schools such as St James (and Long Itchington) is upheld and developed. Under the strong Christian leadership of Mrs King and Mrs Kathy Palmizi (Head of school at St James) there is no doubt that this is happening and will continue to do so.

The Foundation governors would like to thank them, and the staff, for making St James a school where pupils can be themselves and “let their light shine”, growing in confidence and knowledge within the context of Christian teachings beliefs, and the love of God.

***Jenny Thorne – Vice-chair of Governors***

## Mission and Outreach

### Southam Deanery Mission Team

Our HOPE14 mission week in September 2014 has given rise to a year of evangelistic events across the deanery. To support this work we continue to publish the Breathe Prayer newsletter and a Deanery wide prayer meeting Kingdom Come has been established where we can join together to pray for our clergy and leaders, our church families and our communities.

The Deanery Mission Team has continued to deliver new initiatives, including deanery wide an Alpha course held in the Green Man at Long Itchington and a Discipleship Explored course run in Harbury village club. There was a lot of fun for children and families at a number of 'Massive' Messy Churches and an all age Family Barn Dance with Graham Nunn as guest speaker.

Three of the evening events stand out as being particularly powerful. Paul Bell, a singer songwriter from Derby came to St Nicholas Church, Radford Semele as a pre-mission taster and returned as part of the week. Playing guitars and keyboard, and singing his own self-penned songs, he treated us to evening of reflection and laughter - indeed a number found themselves crying with laughter during one song!! His wonderfully dry sense of humour and clever lyrics led us through part of his personal journey in a gentle, easy way.

Paul Kerensa is a comedian and writer, credited on such shows as "Miranda" and "Not Going Out". He came a couple of times too. Once on his own and once with some friends to do a Comedy and Carols evening. His style was so easy and friendly and his comedy both gentle and incisive, and again he had us roaring with laughter. He told his story too, in a relaxed, easy fashion, drawing people into a place where talking about faith was natural.

Steve Parsons drove down from Cheshire with a guitar and a keyboard to perform a simply stunning evening of music and testimony. He works part time as an Assemblies of God minister, and his story flowed around his powerful songs and challenging lyrics. People left that night having felt they had encountered God, yet without anything really being preached.

There are two important lessons we have learnt from these and other events:

- that events need to be of the highest quality so that people are confident in inviting friends, and
- that faith is shared through stories and people are interested to listen

We have found people have started coming back when events are put on, even though they have a Christian label to them, because they are really good and enjoyable. We pray that through these stories, and maybe even through the sharing of ours, new steps of faith may be taken and lives changed... And that is our hope for 2016.

***St James DMT representatives are:  
Margo Grant, Jenny Thorne, Barry and Jill Parker***

**Farmers' Market Prayer Stall**

For most of the year the Prayer Stall has continued to be part of the monthly Farmers Market. Over the year we have had many interesting and valuable discussions with visitors to the market and the stall holders themselves, with the opportunity to pray for many and varied needs as presented to us.

During the past year, particularly whilst the 'Town enhancement' scheme was being implemented, the location of the Farmers Market has varied. This resulted in fewer people shopping at the Farmers Market and consequently it did not continue to be a viable proposition for some stall holders to continue to come. Some were only just managing to 'break even'. When the Farmers Market moved to the car park of the Factory Shop the footfall reduced further and it seemed our original vision of praying on the street had been side lined to the edge of the shopping area.

In October when John and Vicki Armstrong announced that they would be leaving St. James Church, it was felt that, at least for the time being, the prayer stall in its present form had come to an end.

Over the six years the Prayer Stall has been running we have seen God working in the lives of people locally. We still visit the Market to maintain contact and friendship with the remaining stall holders and still help by putting up and taking down their advertising signs around the town.

We thank God for the privilege of serving Him in this way and wait to see what opportunities He might open up in the future.

***Stephen and Pat Adams***

**Fundraising – including Summer Fete and Christmas Fayre**

In 2015 our fundraising was limited to the Summer Fete which raised £574.11 and our Christmas Fayre that raised £1,319.72 for Church funds; and half the proceeds of the Nifty Fingers stall at the Fete and Fayre raised £78.45 for Bees Abroad.

Thank you to everyone who came along to these events, it is lovely that townfolk and visitors from the surrounding villages support us on these occasions.

**Dates for your diary in 2016:     Saturday 18 June – Summer Fete  
   Saturday 3 December – Christmas Fayre**

Look out for posters around the town and regular updates in the church bulletin once more information is available.

Please contact Ruth if you would like to help raise funds for our church.

***Ruth Tresidder Tel. 813524***

### **Home Communion and Services at Southam Residential Homes**

A small group of licensed lay people take communion to any housebound parishioners who request it, on a regular basis.

The fortnightly communion service at Galanos House has now reverted to three or four weekly, mainly because there are so many other activities going on there with which we compete! Wattons Lodge also has a monthly communion service and we hold regular Sunday services at Galanos House and Newstead Lodge, on a monthly rota, in conjunction with the three other Southam Churches. These services are always well received, and we would be pleased to welcome others to join us in running them.

***Jan Ford***

### **International**

The Friday coffee mornings in 2015 have continued to be successful with a regular group enjoying each other's company for coffee and cake, 10.30am – 12noon.

The church being open for the morning gives a chance for visitors, some who wish to be quiet or maybe to find a listening ear and a chance to pray, all are welcome.

We donated £600 to three causes, Ministry Aviation Fellowship, Mothers' Union relief appeal and to Canon Andrew White for his work for reconciliation in the Middle East.

The Cross of Nails prayers are said at mid-day with prayers for news items around the world.

Please drop in for coffee on a Friday morning!

***Chris Cooke***

### **Men's Breakfast**

It has been another successful year – with our numbers continuing to grow and Roger Lane's "Full English for a Fiver" going down a treat!

At our first event of the 2015 season, we welcomed Sue Oldham, Pathway Manager at St Mary's Church in Leamington. She came to talk to us about Pathway, a mentoring programme that helps people with unstable lifestyles, primarily but not exclusively related to drug/alcohol abuse and/or offending behaviour, to overcome the difficulties from their past and begin a new life.

In April our speaker was our very own Henry Marriott whose talk was entitled "From ploughshares to pints" and described the story of how a farming family started the Thornley's Brewery in Radford Semele. A truly fascinating insight into local family history.

Barry Jackson, Vicar of St Peter's in Kineton came to talk to us in May describing his transition from curacy to vicar and the different set of challenges he faced.

Our June Speaker was a bit of a scoop – Sara Board, Warwickshire County Council's HS2 Project Manager came along to give us an up to the minute briefing on HS2 now that the new government was in power. Her encyclopaedic knowledge of the subject was clearly evident and, working on the basis that HS2 would go ahead, the thrust of her talk and our discussion focussed on how we might influence and minimise the scheme's local impact, for example in respect of the movement of construction traffic. In Roger's absence Nigel Briggs seamlessly stepped in as chef, thank you Nigel!

Following our summer break, Gwen Zanzottera entitled her talk "Topless in Stratford". Taking us on her journey as a tour guide, particularly on the topless buses in Stratford, Gwen thoroughly entertained us with her experiences, both good and bad, and with a series of hilarious anecdotes!

October was a different type of event, with Ian Crowther outlining - and those in attendance discussing - a possible vision for the future of St Michael and All Angels Church, Ufton.

At our last breakfast in November we welcomed another speaker from within our group, Ufton's very own "JT" – John Taylor! An experienced international guide/leader John entitled his talk "The perfect Walking Guide and the perfect Client".

For the second year running, we held a 'Men's Breakfast' Christmas Dinner at the White Hart where over twenty of us again not only celebrated a great year of fun and fellowship, but that we had been able to continue to send £170 in donations to worthy charities of our speakers' choice. In addition, we were also able to swell Ufton Church's coffers by a similar amount; all in all, an excellent year!

New members are always welcome, just give Barry Parker a call on 01926 811254 or email [bp47@gmx.com](mailto:bp47@gmx.com).

## ***Ian Crowther and Barry Parker***

### **Mothers' Union**

2015 started as usual for members of the Mothers' Union with lunch at the Great Western Hotel. Nineteen members gathered together in January for this convivial occasion. Subs were collected as is the custom at this time.

In February members assembled in the Parish Office and enjoyed seeing slides of castles, churches, abbeys, minsters, etc. presented by Chris Cooke. Those present were invited to name the pictures depicted and succeeded with some moderate accuracy.

Mary Home talked to us at our March meeting about her time with Mothers'



Union in Kenya. In April Chris Cooke led a devotional service using slides showing images of the resurrection.

The outing this year was to the Old Dairy Farm at Weedon in May.

At the June meeting Craig Grocock spoke of his work with the Church Army.

A strawberry tea, hosted by Rose and Derrick Evans in their garden, was enjoyed in July. Sadly at that meeting Chris Cooke gave us the news that Joyce Basson, long time treasurer of Mothers' Union, had died. Members expressed their sadness at this news.

The AGM in September comprised reports, elections, etc. Chris Cooke announced her decision to stand down as Branch Leader at the end of the year. Rose Evans was elected as future Branch Leader.

The October meeting began with tributes, given by members, of Joyce Basson, as part of a thanksgiving service led by Betty Phillips. A flavour of the "Open the Book" team followed.

Jackie Grey told us of her work with the Food Bank at the November meeting. Members learnt how the Food Bank started in Bulgaria by the Trussel Trust in 1997.

The year's programme ended with a carol service in church during December.

Heather Shackleton was welcomed to the branch during the year. Heather was formerly leader of a branch in Yorkshire until she moved to Southam. Heather was subsequently elected to the Mothers' Union committee.

Members have taken part in many activities during the year including Lady Day service, Lenten lunch, knitting for premature babies and twiddle mitts for Poppy Lodge patients. Members continue to be involved with Jolly J's, Granny Wagon and prison visiting.

If you would like to know more about the work of the Mothers' Union, and/or join in you would be very welcome.

***Averil Brown - Mothers' Union Secretary***

## **Bees Abroad in Kenya**

### **BEE PRODUCTS ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (BPED)**

It has been nearly three years since Bees Abroad secured major funding from the UK Department for International Aid (DFID) for a three-year project to alleviate poverty through advancing beekeeping skills and supporting bio-conservation and bio-enterprise in the arid and semi-arid land (ASAL) in the Kenyan district of Laikipia.

The project, the Bees products enterprise development project (BPED), has been

overseen by Mary and John Home and has been a great success. So much so that Mary and John are returning to Kenya for two weeks at the beginning of February 2016 to work on potential funding for a further three years.

## **What has been achieved?**

**Project Outcome:** 900 pastoralist and agro-pastoral households in the Arid and Semi-Arid Land of Kenya in Laikipia County and Parts of Lower Samburu County including a proportion headed by Most Vulnerable groups to diversify livelihoods and increase their income

## **Key Achievements**

- Recruited and actively working with 1245 beekeeping households all are applying the skills acquired
- 574 households are now owning at least 5 individual owned hives
- 523 households have increased household income by more than 15% from a baseline average of £89.93 per month to an average of £102.85 per month
- 971 households making hive products for sale
- 458 households have planted at least 5 new bee friendly trees/shrubs
- Beekeepers in the area of operation organized into four cooperative societies where two are already registered and the other are in the process of being registered. An existing dormant beekeeping cooperative has also been revived through the project
- Four business plans developed for the four cooperatives (proposed and registered)
- Bee products market survey undertaken and the findings used to establish 15 regular outlets
- 11 beekeepers groups have been facilitated to acquire standardization mark from KEBS trading standard and can now sell through shops

## **Challenges**

- Climatic variation leading to frequent unpredicted droughts
- Limited financial resources to cater for all the demands from existing and prospective beekeepers
- Terrain and vastness of the project area sometimes limiting effective follow up

## **Lessons Learnt**

- Bee keeping is a potential alternative source of livelihood for the pastoral communities in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands if well harnessed
- Although beekeeping is seemingly a male domain, women, if given a chance, can also actively engage and adopt the same The numbers are 51% women and 49% men are involved
- An integrated approach to beekeeping is necessary for sustainability.

Thank you to St James for all your love and support.

***John and Mary Home***

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