



**ANNUAL PAROCHIAL
CHURCH MEETING
2 April 2017**

AGENDA AND REPORTS 2016

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AGENDAS 2 April 2017

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 two members for the Deanery Synod
 - 6.3 Election of three members for the PCC
 - 6.4 Appointment of sidespersons
 - 6.5 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 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 21 March 2016**

Vestry Meeting for the Purpose of Electing Two Churchwardens

1. Welcome and prayer

The Rev. Vikki Bisiker opened the meeting with prayer.

2. Election of Churchwardens

Two nominations for churchwardens duly proposed and seconded had been received for Stephen Adams and Barry Parker. There being no other nominations the above were duly elected for the following year.

Vikki Bisiker prayed for Stephen and Barry on behalf of the whole Church.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting: Members Present 17

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Juliet and David Houghton, Jen Burgess, Jan Ford, Rade and Abi Ognjanovic, Heather Shackleton, Mary Williams and Pete Rollins.

2. Minutes of APCM Meeting held on 22 March 2015

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

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Reports

Vikki Bisiker thanked all those who had contributed to the reports and that she had found them very helpful and informative as she got to know both what was going on and who was involved in the various church activities. Vikki also thanked everyone who contributed to the life of the church.

The reports were taken as read with the exception of the item on Page 6 under 'Parish Administrator' the address of the Church office should read 74D Coventry Street.

In addition Ruth Tresidder, treasurer, drew the meeting's attention to the following:

- (i)** the balance of the General Fund at the year-end, £10,900, included provision for outstanding insurance premiums and the five yearly electrical testing amounting to £1,738 so the increase in the General Fund was around £2,000 over 2014,
- (ii)** following the recent budget increases on insurance premium tax our premiums had increased by £215 over two years, and
- (iii)** 'giving' in the first eleven weeks of 2016 had increased, which was particularly good news as the church was committed to increasing its Parish Share by £5,000 and to pay Vikki Bisiker's additional travel expenses between her home and Southam, up to £3,000. Ruth encouraged all to prayerfully consider their level of giving.

5. Elections and Appointments

5.1 Election of Reader

The meeting agreed that Stephen Adams, as Reader at St James, should automatically be appointed to serve on the PCC.

5.2 Election of PCC Members

The meeting noted that St James, under diocesan rules, was entitled to appoint up to nine lay members to the PCC based on an electoral roll of 91. Five 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: Pat Adams, Chris Cooke, Hilary Crosby, Jill Parker and Heather Shackleton.

The meeting further noted that appointments would normally last for three years, but that to complete the move to a system whereby one third of the lay members were elected each year a ballot was undertaken to determine which members served a term of one, two or three years.

As a result of the ballot terms of office would be as follows:

One year – Pat Adams

Two Years – Heather Shackleton

Three years – Chris Cooke, Hilary Crosby and Jill Parker

5.3 Appointment of Sidespersons

Following recent revision the rota of sidespersons was approved and re-elected en-bloc by the meeting. However, Vikki Bisiker viewed the rota for sidespersons, welcomers, readers and intercessors as a 'living document' and invited anyone who was interested to put their name forward. The list would be displayed on the notice board.

5.4 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.

6. Any Other Business

Vikki Bisiker thanked everyone for the warm welcome she had received since arriving on 1 March 2016. Vikki reminded the meeting that whilst appointed to provide full-time stipendiary ministry to St James she had a specific remit of ministry and mission with the 20s – 30s age range. She hoped that over the coming months and years we would all journey together, in God's love. Vikki also drew attention to the changing role of vicars, gone was the time when people 'rolled into church' and whilst some people did still come to church for special services, weddings, baptisms and funerals, etc. vicars now had an outward focus of mission and outreach. There were no items of other business.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Sunday 2 April 2017, immediately after the morning service.

The meeting closed in prayer at 7.55pm

Chairman **Date**

REPORTS

Church Management

**Annual Report and Financial Statements for
the year ended 31 December 2016**

Assistant Curate

Rev. Vikki Bisiker

Parish Administrator

Mrs M Mumford
The Parish Office
74D 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 2016

The PCC co-operates with the incumbent in promoting, within the parish, the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

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:

Revd Vikki Bisiker*	Appointed 1 March 2016
Stephen Adams*	Warden, Reader and Deanery Synod Representative
	Warden, Deanery Synod Representative, Vice Chair PCC
Barry Parker*	and Lay Chair Deanery Synod
Margo Grant	Diocesan Synod Representative
Pat Adams	Elected
Chris Cooke	Elected
Hilary Crosby	Elected
Jan Ford*	Elected, PCC Minute Secretary and Safeguarding Officer
Bill King	Elected
Jill Parker	Elected
Heather Shackleton	Elected
Jenny Thorne	Elected
Ruth Tresidder*	Elected and Treasurer
*Standing Committee members	

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

Following revision there are currently 87 members on the Church Electoral Roll of whom eleven are not resident within the parish (2016:91 with eleven not resident within the parish).

The average Sunday attendance was 68 (2015:67), marginally up on last year, and, as in previous years, average numbers increased at the various festivals and for baptism and thanksgiving services. It was particularly encouraging that increased numbers attending our Advent and various Christmas Services in 2015 was maintained in 2016 solidifying the base from which to work. Although the number of young people regularly attending church on a Sunday remains very low, we are reaching out into the community with our Open the Book team taking bible stories into St James and Southam Primary schools and by running regular 'Messy Church' events.

The statement of the financial activities for the year is set out in this Annual Report together with the Treasurer's Report, see pages 10-15. 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 2016 of £32,096. This was a substantial increase from that paid in 2015 reflecting our commitment to increase Parish Share contributions by £5,000 per year over four years.

The full PCC met on seven occasions during 2016, with an attendance rate of 86%.

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.

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 on March 7 2017 the reports for submission to the APCM and which Vikki Bisiker signed on their behalf.

Review of the Year

When I began at St James in March 2016, I was already aware of how much people were giving to serving at St James and all that they were involved in. I felt blessed by their enthusiasm and faithfulness for what they do, but I was also aware of how tired people were and that the 'workload' was not sustainable without more people stepping forward to serve or reviewing and changing the pattern of services. I was also aware of the task that was before me for the next four years at St James. Just as a reminder of that, this is what the proposal from the Diocese was and is:

- Fulfilment of the Diocesan Mission Purpose of Worshipping God, making new disciples, and Transforming Communities, via the delivery of the 8 Essential Qualities (8EQs).
- There will be 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 (currently Kim Morgan-Jones).

- There will also be 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 for the Deanery/Diocese.

After review and discussion with the PCC, we began trying to lessen the workload across the service leaders team, by implementing a new service and teaching programme. As a church, we looked at our identity, purposes and values which then led into a series on our giving, both of gifts, talents and finances. This series was well received and bore fruit in people. Our financial giving has increased over the year and also during our focus of Renewal of Giving. Disappointingly, the focus on how we serve together was less fruitful, but it highlighted how much people are doing already in the life of St James and a number of people are stretched to the limit. This is not necessarily a healthy place to be, particularly as we look together to develop our outreach to the 20s and 30s and also look together as a PCC at the Diocesan Programme of the Eight Essential Qualities of a Healthy Church. Over the coming months, the PCC will continue discussions in these areas.

PCC members have a number of family and church commitments and so to reduce and release PCC members time from March 2016, the PCC has met every other month instead of monthly. The Churchwardens and I have met in the months in between to pick up items raised at PCC meetings as well as other matters. These meetings have gone some way to improve communication across the leadership team, which I know was a concern prior to my placement.

Over the past year, through a number of baptisms and weddings, I have had the pleasure and privilege to come to know a number of families and some good relationships have been formed. I am hoping that a number of the families will be involved in the new initiative of a half termly Messy Church at St James'. The Open the Book team has continued to have a huge impact and outreach to both St James Primary and Southam Primary. This ministry is also providing a good foundation to build relationships with the parents and be alongside parents and staff pastorally. The opportunity that our foundation governors have at St James Primary is also vital to the life and direction of the school. The current governors are working tirelessly and Jenny Thorne is the lone voice from St James and so there is a great opportunity for three others from St James to join her and support both her and the school.

I have been impressed by two things in particular at St James over the past year. Firstly, is how lots of things just get done in the background as people faithfully serve in the jobs that they do...from Margaret, our administrator, and the team of volunteers in the office, Ruth keeping an eye on our accounts (never a job that I would envy!), people looking after the building, people serving our community including those taking the housebound or the sick communion at home, and especially our Churchwardens who have gone beyond the call of duty on many occasions this past year.

Secondly, is how the atmosphere has changed at St James. Visiting wedding couples and families have commented how they have felt so welcomed and accepted at St James. They have described how hard it is to walk through the door for the first time, but have found an atmosphere of love and acceptance when they have. This is down to each one of

you 'playing your part' of the body of Christ and this has spoken deeply to many individuals. This has been a huge encouragement to many, so thank you for your smiles and love for others.

Rev. Vikki Bisiker

Churchwarden's Report

With Vikki Bisiker not taking up her leadership role at St James until 1 March it was tremendously satisfying to be part of a leadership team that really stepped up to ensure that the impact of not having a leader was minimised. In fact, although a time of increased pressure on all and particularly on those organising, preparing and leading services it was also a time of great fellowship. It certainly made the role and responsibilities of churchwarden that much easier. Many thanks to all who were a part of this.

At the APCM in March, Barry Parker was elected as church warden to join Stephen Adams who was elected to continue. This was the first time since 2013 that we have enjoyed a full complement of two church wardens!

The appointment of Vikki has brought new challenges.

As a church we have agreed to support Vikki as she devotes at least 50% of her time developing ministry and mission to with those in the 20s – 30s age range in the parish. We have also agreed to support Vikki as she leads the church into the change necessary to deliver the Diocesan Mission Purpose via the 8EQs, to increase our Parish Share contributions by £5,000 per year over four years and to become a resourcing church for the deanery. To achieve this change is inevitable. Exciting but challenging times.

We both work very closely with Vikki and have regular meetings, particularly with regard to PCC agendas and reports.

We are both involved with all aspects of church life, but to make life a little easier we have agreed that Stephen would take the lead when it comes to matters appertaining to fabric and Barry on administrative matters. That's not to say that if you have a question on any topic you can talk to either of us.

As we look to the future and in particular as we look at the 8EQs we look forward to seeing further changes in which we can work together as a church family developing and building up the work of St James to fulfil our purpose of Worshiping God, Making New Disciples and Transforming our Community.

Stephen Adams and Barry Parker – Church Wardens

Treasurer's Report

The year has been positive and income for 2016 was higher than 2015; planned giving per month amounted to £2,621.81 compared with £2,437.77 in the previous year. Unfortunately income from loose plate collections decreased by £35.62 per month.

During the year I had hoped that the end of year balance in the General Account would be at least £9,000 to help offset the £5,000 increase in 2017 of the parish share. It is pleasing that the actual balance in the General Account at 31 December was £9,282.68.

Significant items that need highlighting include:

- With the appointment of the Rev Vikki Bisiker our parish share for 2016 was increased by £5,000 to £32,096 and this was paid by equal monthly instalments.
- A replacement rack and CD player for the sound system was purchased at a cost of £169.
- Website redesign costs of £690 were covered by donations.
- Annual maintenance/statutory checks on the gas boilers, lightning conductor, clock, fire extinguishers, and PAT testing amounted to £1,085.40.
- A replacement vestry floor has been laid and ancillary work has been carried out at a cost of £4,188.67 after the VAT had been reclaimed through the Listed Places of Worship Grant Aid Scheme.
- Repairs to the church bells amounting to £1,346, after the VAT had been reclaimed through the Listed Places of Worship Grant Aid Scheme, was offset by a donation from the Bellringers Fund.

Administration costs continue to rise due to the significant increase in the minimum wage. Replacement spotlights were fitted in the north and south aisles prior to the end of the year but the account will be paid in 2017. The Friends of Southam Church have kindly offered to provide a donation towards this work.

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. I realise that this support will no longer be forthcoming if the Town Council embark on providing a new burial ground and so this cost would once again become our responsibility.

I am conscious that without the significant donations we have received during the year the church would be in a worse financial situation than we are at present; even with the donations our expenditure during the year was £4,958.29 higher than our income. Looking ahead to 2017 our parish share has increased to £37,096 and in February there is significant work to be carried out to trees in the churchyard to comply with health and safety requirements.

I 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 it be weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually.

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 2016

		Actual 2016			Actual 2015		
	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	TOTAL £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	TOTAL £
INCOMING RESOURCES							
From Donors:							
Under Gift Aid Schemes	1a	31,594.20	970.00	32,564.20	29,318.08	520.00	29,838.08
Gift Aid recovered	1b	8,645.49	117.50	8,762.99	8,424.75	130.00	8,554.75
Non Gift Aided Income	1c	6,527.30		6,527.30	7,093.66		7,093.66
Fund raising & special appeals	1d	4,002.92	1,233.07	5,235.99	3,445.69	834.50	4,280.19
Sale of surplus assets						465.16	465.16
Legacies	1e	1,000.00		1,000.00			
TOTAL DONATED INCOME		51,769.91	2,320.57	54,090.48	48,282.18	1,949.66	50,231.84
Fees							
PCC	2a	6,132.00	(125.00)	6,007.00	6,146.00	(50.00)	6,096.00
Total regulated fees		6,132.00	(125.00)	6,007.00	6,146.00	(50.00)	6,096.00
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		57,901.91	2,195.57	60,097.48	54,428.18	1,899.66	56,327.84
EXPENSES							
Diocesan costs:							
Parish Share: Current year	3a	32,096.00		32,096.00	25,806.00		25,806.00
		32,096.00		32,096.00	25,806.00		25,806.00
Clergy & Service costs:							
Clergy expenses	4a	1,134.89		1,134.89	1,155.11		1,155.11
Altar supplies	4b	154.48		154.48	132.59		132.59
Music	4c	699.99	690.00	1,389.99	779.63		779.63
Other	4d	536.00		536.00	90.00		90.00
		2,525.36	690.00	3,215.36	2,157.33		2,157.33
Administration:							
Administrator	5a	4,414.80		4,414.80	4,114.00		4,114.00
Office supplies	5b	2,186.12		2,186.12	1,998.66		1,998.66
Other	5c	1,087.31		1,087.31	1,117.16		1,117.16
Office telephone		471.26		471.26	434.29		434.29
Church Office	5d	4,238.90		4,238.90	4,243.37		4,243.37
		12,398.39		12,398.39	11,907.48		11,907.48
Maintenance:							
Utilities	6a	3,579.63		3,579.63	2,999.18		2,999.18
Insurance	6b	6,069.70		6,069.70	5,002.26		5,002.26
General repairs	6c	2,413.95	3,788.03	6,201.98	1,457.02	2,356.00	3,813.02
Churchyard	6d				975.08	160.00	1,135.08
		12,063.28	3,788.03	15,851.31	10,433.54	2,516.00	12,949.54

Accounts for Year Ended 31 December 2016

	Note	Actual 2016			Actual 2015		
		Unrestricted £	Restricted £	TOTAL £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	TOTAL £
Ministry Support:							
Appeals and Charitable Giving	7a	136.88	615.59	752.47	70.00	1,120.20	1,190.20
Children and home mission	7b	299.91	442.33	742.24	154.60	370.04	524.64
		436.79	1,057.92	1,494.71	224.60	1,490.24	1,714.84
TOTAL EXPENSES		59,519.82	5,535.95	65,055.77	50,528.95	4,006.24	54,535.19
SURPLUS/DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR		(1,617.91)	(3,340.38)	(4,958.29)	3,899.23	(2,106.58)	1,792.65
Add: Reserves b/f 1 Jan 2016		10,900.59			7,001.36		
Total Reserves 31 Dec 2016		9,282.68			10,900.59		

RESTRICTED FUNDS MOVEMENTS

Fund Description	Balance 01 Jan 16 £	Receipts £	Payments £	Balance 31 Dec 16 £
Audio/visual/technology		765.00	690.00	75.00
Bees Abroad		52.78	52.78	
Booklets		187.50	162.50	25.00
Building maintenance	3,851.96		3,788.03	63.93
Children ex Infant Welfare Trust	7,473.18		50.93	7,422.25
Churchyard maintenance		620.00		620.00
Flower Fund	37.28	90.00	62.81	64.47
Granny Wagon	165.60		12.50	153.10
He*Brews	876.83		150.24	726.59
Hope 14 Onwards	20.85	49.02		69.87
International	98.68	556.27	500.00	154.95
John Milner Organ Fund	601.22			601.22
"Messy Church"	550.74		66.16	484.58
Wedding Fees in Advance	150.00	(125.00)		25.00
	13,826.34	2,195.57	5,535.95	10,485.96

Liabilities - Agency collections

£
0.00

Liquid funds as at 31 December 2016

Bank	19,768.64
TOTAL FUNDS	19,768.64
Less Restricted Funds held on behalf of others as per above	10,485.96
Less Liabilities - Agency collections	0.00
St James Funds at 31 December 2016 see Receipts & Payments Account	9,282.68

Accounts for Year Ended 31 December 2016

NOTES RELATING TO 2016 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 2015 to 30 September 2016.
- 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 We are very grateful for the legacy of £1,000 received from the estate of Sylvia Machin deceased.
- 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 2016 more of the 2015 income was expended than was received in advance for weddings in 2017.

Expenditure

- 3a Our contribution to Coventry Diocese. Other parishes within Southam Deanery and the Diocese subsidised the Southam benefice by £14,270.
- 4a Clergy expenses and telephone.
- 4b Candles, Communion Wine, etc.
- 4c Unrestricted includes Music Licences for 2016 and audio/visual expenses. Restricted includes website re-design.
- 4d Visiting laity/clergy 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, 5 year electricity test, fire extinguishers, clock and lightning conductor, PAT testing, Bell repairs and replacement of vestry floor and associated work.
- 6d 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 donation to Southam Christmas Lights Association and toilet twinning. Restricted includes expenditure on Christmas and Easter flowers, International and Bees Abroad.
- 7b Unrestricted includes purchase of various booklets and the cost of Christmas postcards. Restricted includes the purchase of "Servant Queen" booklets and books for children who were baptised, expenditure by the Open the Book team and for the Messy Church stall at the Christmas Lights Switch On.

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 2016.

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: 29th January 2017

Giving Report

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

During 2016 a total of 28 people paid by standing order into the church bank account. Giving by this method amounted to £21,431.92 – an increase of £1,310 over the previous year.

During the year 12 people donated through the blue envelope scheme and a total of £6707.20 was given by this method, an increase of £1,037.35 over the previous year. A total of 80 people contributed to the church by yellow envelope, of these 10 gave on a regular basis. Total giving by this method (including one off gift aid donations) amounted to £4,425.08, an increase of £378.77 over 2015.

We received gift aid of £8,762.99 from HM Revenue & Customs, this is an increase of £208.24 over the previous year. Tax is recovered in arrear and covers the period, 1 October 2015 to 30 September 2016.

During the year the number of people who are non-taxpayers who give on a regular basis decreased by one to seven and income decreased by £138.90 to £3,322.60.

Cash collections during the year amounted to £3,204.70 a reduction of £427.46 over the previous year.

Listed below is the equivalent weekly giving during 2016 whether paid by standing order, cheques or the envelope schemes:

£1.00 - £4.99	21 people
£5.00 - £9.99	13 people
£10.00 - £14.99	12 people
£15.00 - £19.99	1 person
£20.00 - £29.99	4 people
£30.00 - £39.99	2 person
£40.00 - £49.99	4 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

Fabric Committee's Report

At meeting of the committee held on 15 August the retirement of three members, Mary Williams, Terence Hill and John Tresidder was announced. At that point no replacement members were in the offing. The retirements were celebrated, unexpectedly, at the harvest supper when a large iced cake made by Heather Shackleton, was presented for their long service to St James and then shared amongst all present.

So far as projects were concerned, consents from the Diocesan Advisory Committee for permission to carry out the replacement of the floor in the Rectors vestry and to do the tree lopping and felling, were made early in the year. The intention being to carry out the floor project in midsummer and the tree work in the early spring of 2017. Our thanks go to John Tresidder for project managing these works.

The floor project went ahead with only one hiccup, the three phase electricity supply cable to the organ was found as soon as the old timber floor was taken up and a temporary cable had to be erected overhead. A replacement supply was then installed on a new route after the floor job was finished. The tree work was also agreed and an order for the work has been placed, to be carried out, hopefully if weather permits, in the first two weeks of March 2017.

Following the successful improvements in the vestry, the new cupboard space has resulted in an ongoing programme of tidying and sorting out of storage throughout the church.

No more has been heard from the Southam Civic Ideas Forum regarding the replacement of the Warwick Street entrance feature so we assume they are still having difficulty

obtaining grant money for the project. St James, of course, is not directly involved in this project.

The north aisle roof LED security flood light has been working well on the dusk to dawn sensor.

The refurbishment of the bell clapper bearings went ahead with the work of dismantlement and refitting being carried out by the bellringers themselves. Most of the cost had been met by way of a donation from the belfry account, the account having been bolstered by individual donations from a number of the bell ringers. VAT was recovered for this work as well as the Rectors vestry floor project.

Early in December the north and south aisle lighting was replaced improving the lighting levels across the church. Our thanks go to the Friends of St James Church for making a generous donation to church funds towards the cost and Bill King for project managing the work.

The south porch doors are in a very sorry state of repair and we are planning to make temporary emergency repairs to improve both security and warmth. This is particularly relevant as the south porch is now being used on a regular basis as a prayer room. The PCC has also recently asked the fabric committee to investigate the cost of repairing and refurbishing the doors.

We are looking for new members so if you think you might be interested in the fabric side of church life you would be more than welcome to join the committee. We meet three or four times each year. Please speak to one of the existing members for more information.

The fabric committee currently comprises: Stephen Adams, John Gwillam, David Hower (Hower Builders), Bill King, Barry Parker and Jenny Thorne.

Stephen Adams, Barry Parker and John Tresidder

Electoral Roll Officer's Report

2 members left

2 members died

0 members added to the roll

The Electoral Roll now stands at 87 members

Margo Grant – Electoral Roll Officer

Safeguarding Officer's Report

The role of Parish Safeguarding Officer has changed over the past four years, with certificate applications being made via the internet. Anyone applying for a new or renewed DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) certificate now completes the application on line. On completion of the first part the reference number together with various ID documents is passed to the Parish Safeguarding Officer so the applicant's authenticity can be verified. This stage is completed by the PSO, on line.

There is provision to update a DBS certificate when it's due for renewal after five years, providing there are no changes. The certificate can also be checked online by further employers, should this facility have been applied for at the time of renewing.

Currently there are about 30 members of St James Church who have DBS certificates covering them for work related to children, young people and vulnerable adults, including Jolly Js, Open the Book, Granny Wagon and Home Communion.

Having been dealing with these applications for the past 15 years, I am delighted to be handing over to Heather Shackleton, whom I'm sure will deal with all aspects of Safeguarding in a swift and efficient manner!

Jan Ford - Parish Safeguarding Officer

Deanery Synod Report

Southam deanery is the smallest deanery in the Diocese of Coventry, currently made up of 18 parishes within a six mile radius of Southam. The Deanery Synod, drawing representatives from each parish, provides the PCC with an important link between the parish, the deanery and the wider structures of the church.

Stephen Adams and Barry Parker sit on the Deanery Synod. Barry Parker is also the Deanery Synod's Lay Chair and a member of the Deanery Standing and Pastoral Committees. Margo Grant sits on the Deanery Synod as a Diocesan Synod representative. All three are members of our PCC.

Recent structural discussions for the deanery have resulted in the creating of the new Offchurch Group which combines four of our small rural parishes (Offchurch, Hunningham, Weston-Under-Wetherley and Wappenbury) into one single entity. In addition the appointments of two part time clergy in the Feldon Group and two House for Duty clergy in the Bridges Group are progressing.

With only a small number of clergy in the deanery it is essential that we work together, especially with mission and training, and new clergy appointed to the deanery will be encouraged to add their gifts to this creative mix. As the clergy team would not be able to function without strong lay teams around them we are looking for ways to develop and strengthen these teams both within individual parishes and deanery-wide.

The deanery has a strong focus on mission and collaborative ministry and a deanery mission team (DMT) that organise evangelistic events under the national Hope banner. They provide high quality occasions we can be confident in inviting non-Christian friends

to. The team includes a number of representatives from St James – see DMT report under Mission and Outreach.

We have a regular deanery prayer meeting at St James, “Kingdom Come”, where people gather from across the deanery to pray for the work of God in our parishes and our deanery focus.

There are also a number of deanery Christian exploration and nurture courses that continue to be run which include; Just Looking, Alpha, Discipleship Explored, Lost for Words, and Table Talk. We have also streamed lectures from the School of Theology based at St Mellitus College in London, which have been both well-received and stretching! We use one of our local pubs for many of these courses.

We are also experiencing huge changes with new housing developments in a number of villages and Southam town itself, so working together and supporting each other, as well as developing new leaders and exciting new ideas for growth will become even more important.

With everything that is going on it is a creative and stimulating deanery to be a part of!

Stephen Adams and Barry Parker

Leading, Service Support & Worship

Audio Visual

Early in the year Rade Ognjanovic stepped down from his PA role in order to worship at the church attended by his wife, Jo. We are sincerely grateful and our thanks go to Rade for all he has done over the years in keeping our rather elderly PA system working.

As reported last year, the CD player had stopped working. This has now been replaced. We have also acquired a new laptop computer, at no cost to the church, to replace the old outdated 'tower' system which has enabled us to more easily use video recordings. This has proved especially useful at baptisms where we have been showing a video featuring Archbishop Justin Welby explaining what baptism is all about. We have also been able to use worship videos when we have been without a music group.

Unfortunately the radio microphone equipment that Rade had previously advised 'was hanging on a thread' is beginning to fail and we are down to one working clip mike. With the help and advice of John Gwillam we are looking at alternatives.

We are keen for others to get to know how to use the PA system, which is used not only at the Sunday services but for other occasions in the church, and if anyone would like to get involved we would be pleased to give you more information. As ever training will be given.

Stephen Adams and Barry Parker

Music Group

This past year the music group has continued to provide and lead the worship songs at the Sunday 10am service, whether the all-in-one communion service or the standard Morning Worship service. Also at special services throughout the year.

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 'older' and 'newish' songs/hymns that everyone is able to join in with, introducing new items from time to time.

Sometimes we haven't had Ann Crutchlow available and this has been overcome with the use of 'video songs'. Much better than relying on a CD and a set of words.

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 Adams and Troy 'Boogie' Hooper – drums, to John Home for singing alongside me and to Margo Grant who also joins us when she is able to.

At the Christmas Carol service once again this year we had a super number of people, 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 continue to happen.

If anyone is interested in joining the group for regular Sunday morning services, or for special occasions only, that would be brilliant. It doesn't have to be a weekly commitment or taking on a singing role. Musicians of any sort are very welcome!

Just let me know.

Hilary Crosby – Co-Ordinator

Tower Report

During the last year the ringers have rung regularly for most of the services that were held throughout the year. We had very good attendance over the Christmas period and had some good ringing for all of the services. We were unable to ring for New Years Eve due to a shortage of ringers.

We rang for a number of weddings and hosted three bands of visiting ringers one of those being the Warwick ringers who rang the mop peal this year.

We did quite a major repair job on the bells this year. It involved the ringers removing the clappers from the bells, taking them to John Taylors Bell Foundry at Loughborough to have bearings machined and rebushed and then collecting them two weeks later. They were then refitted back into the bells. The cost of this work, £1,346, after the VAT had been reclaimed, was offset by donations from the bellringers fund which included donations from members of the congregation and a £200.00 grant from The Coventry Diocesan Bell Restoration Fund.

We did not have an annual outing again this year but we did arrange a conducted tour of the bell foundry after we had transported the clappers to Loughborough. This was a very interesting tour seeing where the bells are cast and retuned.

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

During the last year Jane Ballinger decided to join the band again. We welcome her back and hope she will enjoy many more years ringing with the band.

We are still looking to recruit new members into our team. Almost all of our band are now pensioners and our youngest ringer is now forty two years old, so unless we can recruit some new blood into the band the future looks very bleak. To be able learn the art of Church Bellringing 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

Over the last 12 months the numbers of children attending church on a Sunday morning has, unfortunately, remained low. We have, however, managed to continue to provide something for the children whilst the adults have their own teaching.

The refurbishment of the Vicar's Vestry, currently used to teach the children, has made the room all the more welcoming but it is not ideally situated and can be a little disruptive if folk need access to the kitchen or toilet. It would be great if we had a devoted space just for the children.

Our thanks go to John Hedge who faithfully provides a range of fun, bible activities each week. We also enjoy it when the children, with John, share what they have been learning that morning. Often a mini-sermon in itself, John! Our thanks also go to Pat Adams and Jill Parker who have helped John. If you would like to be part of this valuable and satisfying ministry please have a chat with any of us.

As with last year the child-friendly services held in the church at Easter and Christmas have proved popular. With the success of Massive Messy Church and the Open the Book teams visiting both Southam Primary and St James CoE Primary schools together with three schools in the Bridges Group and the church's involvement with Jolly J's we are reaching an increasing number of children providing. This is very encouraging and should provide the ideal base from which to reach out to the 20s – 30s age range.

Barry Parker - Vice Chair PCC

Open the Book

"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?"

It seems fitting to start this year's report with the closing words of last year's. The answer to that question is "Into another three schools"!

I, with several team members, have developed relationships with Rev Gillian Roberts from the Bridges Group of churches, through Deanery Mission Team and Messy Church. Gillian and her very small team have three schools all requesting Christian assemblies so when she asked if the OTB team could perhaps help occasionally, it seemed that God was presenting us with our next challenge. Three assemblies on one day in three different villages, moving personnel and props as we go, requires a certain level of detailed planning and commitment! But all of this is quickly put out of our minds when we are warmly welcomed by pupils and staff at The Prior School, Napton and Stockton Schools. At present we visit the Bridges schools once each half term and it is planned to continue this into 2017.

It was a great addition to the team when Rev Vikki joined us – especially as she sometimes brings Rev Martin Green and his guitar as well! Vikki has incorporated OTB

storytelling into several 10am services, notably Baptisms, and these have been well received especially when children attending recognise team members from school visits.

Members of the team have acted as welcomers at services held in church by both Southam Primary School and St James School. We feel that it is important for the children to see familiar faces as they enter what is for many an unfamiliar building. It is also a privilege to speak with parents and grandparents, some of whom may once have had connections with the church.

December 2016 gave us another opportunity to take God's love into the town as we provided Christmas craft activities at the Southam Lights switch on. Participants – both children and adults – made decorations to display on the Christmas tree to be sited in church for the season. In return for their decoration, each child was given a "Bauble book" telling the Nativity story from a character's point of view. Our final storytelling of the year was at the afternoon Family Service on Christmas Eve.

When we started OTB at St James School two and a half years ago I don't think that any of our then team of four (now 14!) envisaged us being regular visitors at five schools so quickly. As 2017 starts, we have been asked to share a storytelling session at Lillington School. There is some interest by one of their governors in growing a new team there.

So this year we would ask you to pray that God will be with us as we help to develop new teams, as well as providing us with the enthusiasm and resources to continue His work in Southam.

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 (and occasionally sunshine) 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. Should anyone feel inclined to join our rota, please do get in touch – you will be most welcome.

Chris Cooke and Jan Ford

Chill

CHiLL is a home based youth group (yr7 to yr13) for both Christians and non-Christians to build friendships, learn about Jesus, discuss "stuff" and just chill. The group is hosted by Vikki at The Vicarage on a Sunday evening. We sometimes get a little competitive in the games we play, but we love catching up, chatting and chilling and there's always some sort of food involved somewhere! This past year, we've discussed and learnt about lots of topics including Baptism, Blessings and most recently Lent when we all shared our favourite toppings for pancakes!

Rev. Vikki Bisiker

Jolly J's

Jolly J's continues to work in conjunction with the NCT, meeting every week, apart from Bank Holidays, from 10am to 11.30am. This partnership works well with some of the ladies from Church supporting the young mums from the NCT. Jolly J's is a very busy and vibrant group with generally between 35 and 45 children, with parents or carers attending. 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. However we are not all available every week and so at times we are stretched to meet the needs of this active group! Extra help from any Church members who have some spare time and a heart to serve would be most welcome. If you love children a fun time is guaranteed! We all receive far more than we give. To find out more please chat to one of the ladies named below.

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

Homegroups

The Monday Evening Homegroup

We are a term time only small homegroup who use a range of ways to further our understanding of the Bible. We use the CWR Cover to Cover Studies for small groups most often, and at present we are on the Names of God study.

In our evenings together there is study of the bible, prayers and music on our evenings of fellowship together. We support each other in prayer, and share each other's challenges.

We have meditative evenings and a few socials this year as we have had a few memorable birthdays so a few meals out were in our program.

Streams in the Desert is used by the ladies of the group and the men support the men's breakfast. Please feel free to talk to me if you want to come and look at our group.

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.

Over the past year we have completed an in-depth study of the Lord's Prayer. We use teaching material including a DVD for each session led by Pete Gregg (the founder of the 24/7 Prayer Movement) and we found this very helpful and a springboard for some very practical and frank discussions. Following on from the Lord's Prayer we spent a few weeks studying some of the Parables that Jesus taught. We all found this really interesting, thought provoking and useful in helping us to consider our own Christian lives, set against the benchmarks that Jesus set. More recently we have begun a series studying 'Women of the Bible'.

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. Unless you try out a homegroup you won't appreciate the benefits of being part of such a group. Several members of the group have also been attending the Deanery 'Table Talk' group held monthly at the Green Man in Long Itchington, simply because of the friendship and fun that we have being together. Please do come along and 'give us a try'. You will be made most welcome! The official starting time is 7.45 and the official end time is 9.45.

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

While Sunday morning gatherings at St James allow us to praise and hear the preaching of the Word, our fortnightly home group gatherings give us a place to understand the Bible and life better and to work out our faith in practice. It is a place to ask questions, participate in discussions, and hear others share their insights and illustrations of the biblical truths they are trying to grasp.

The New Testament instructs us to love one another, pray for one another, encourage one another, bear one another's burdens and build up one another; in other words building community and that is exactly what happens at our home group. A safe place where confidentiality, honesty and acceptance are core values so both good times and hard times are shared.

We continue to meet fortnightly at 'Sheepfold' the home of Margo Grant starting at 7.30pm with a catch up time and refreshments - usually tea & coffee, occasionally wine and nibbles to celebrate a birthday! We aim to finish around 9.30pm. Our bible studies follow various formats including DVD's or short sets of bible studies, sometimes following a theme or a whole book from the Bible. During Lent 'News of the Hour', 10 studies on Mark's Gospel gave us new insight into familiar scripture, an overview of the whole Gospel.

If you would like to know more about our group or home groups in general please don't hesitate to contact me.

Jill Parker

The Thursday Afternoon Homegroup

Another year has passed, time for another Report for the Church Annual Report. The membership of the Group has not changed over the past year. We are still a group of 12 older members of the Congregation, eleven meet alternate Thursday afternoons and one member is visited regularly by two members of the Group.

Our meetings are held in the Home of one of the Group members.

Our programme has been quite varied during the past year. We began by looking at Psalms then after Easter started looking at some of the Prayers in the Old Testament which took us into the autumn. For the final few weeks we used a Tear Fund Course which linked in to the Theme of the Sunday morning Services. In December we had a Christmas Lunch at the home of one of the members of the Group and our final session was an afternoon of Readings with a Christmas Theme.

However changes are taking place in the Group. Two of the members hope to be moving in the next few months so we will be hoping for new members. Come and join us - or come and see if you think you might like to join us. Phone Averil Brown - 817138 or Jen Burgess 810454 to find out when and where we are meeting. A welcome awaits.

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 again joined forces at the Christmas Light switch-on, providing refreshments in exchange for donations to the Christmas Lights as well as 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 Christmas tree for display in church.

It was good to see the illuminated Nativity scene in a prominent position again outside the Tithe Lodge: we were delighted that due to new wiring for all the lights, our Nativity scene stayed lit up for the whole of the festive period.

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. This will be repeated this year.

Jan Ford

St James C of E Primary School, Southam

2016 was the first complete year since the collaboration between St James Southam and Long Itchington schools was formed. Under the very capable leadership and guidance of Mrs Phyllis King (Executive Head) and Mrs Kathy Palmizi (Head of School), St James has continued to flourish and develop.

The anticipated but ill-timed arrival (very early in the Autumn Term) of OFSTED inspectors did not truly reflect the progress made by the leadership team in further developing the happy and caring environment where children receive quality education, based on Christian principles, that St James School provides. Unfortunately OFSTED's judgements are largely based on performance in tests and gave a judgement of "Requires improvement." This does not in any way reflect the outstanding reputation that St James School has, particularly for nurturing children with special needs of varying kinds. All of the staff, including several new to the school, are continuing to work very hard to address any weaknesses and when the Inspection team return after approximately six months they cannot fail to be impressed by what has been achieved.

Working in collaboration with Long Itchington School has provided additional benefits for the pupils and staff at both schools. Several very successful joint ventures have taken place; Robot Day, a visit to Coventry Cathedral for a Christingle service, a party for the Queen's 90th birthday are just a few examples. And, of course, the sharing of expertise

and the mutual support which occur when dedicated staff from two schools work in partnership.

St James School has welcomed Vikki in on several occasions – to lead assemblies and as a member of the Open the Book team. Pupils and staff have also held their Christmas and Easter services in the church. The Open the Book team have visited fortnightly throughout the year and plan to continue this in 2017.

In 2017 the school will receive a visit from SIAMS – a team of inspectors who monitor how well schools are performing as Church Schools. Under the leadership of Mrs King, Mrs Palmizi and Mrs Wickens – the recently retired RE co-ordinator – the school will undoubtedly be judged a good place for young people to learn how the Christian ethos is so important in daily life and how to put it into practice.

As a church, we should be grateful that there is such a dedicated team of teachers and other adults in St James School helping to shape our children's lives. Supporting them, from the church family, are the Foundation Governors who have an active and responsible job in assisting with decision-making on a day to day and longer term basis.

At the moment the number of Foundation Governors is two fewer than it should be so, if this is something that you might be interested in doing, please speak to me about what is involved.

Jenny Thorne – Foundation Governor and Vice-chair of Governors

Mission and Outreach

Southam Deanery Mission Team

Southam Deanery has a strong focus on mission and collaborative ministry and here at St James Church we have a strong team of representatives on the Deanery Mission Team (DMT).

The DMT have continued to organise various outreach and training events on behalf of all 18 churches in the Southam Deanery. These high quality events come under the national HOPE banner and it has been exciting to see the number of folk from St James getting involved with helping at events and bringing non-Christian friends along.

Perhaps the highlight event of the year for St James was the Candlelit Christmas Jazz Evening, all tickets sold, the building transformed with candles and lights and amazing music from the Fonix Duo.

Massive Messy Church at the Grange continues to attract more families ranging in age from grandparents to babies! The introduction of a cafe for adults at Messy Church has also enabled the team to have some good conversations with families about faith and Jesus.

A second Alpha course was held at the Green Man in Long Itchington and a new venture called Table Talk meets once a month, also at the Green Man, where we can engage with each other's views and explore these in the light of the Christian faith; conversations about things that really matter in life.

Kingdom Come is the Deanery prayer meeting and takes place in St James at the heart of the Deanery. People from across the deanery gather to pray for the work of God in our parishes and our deanery focus. It would be a great encouragement to see more folk from St James attending.

The Breathe newsletter and prayer sheet is now published quarterly and contains information of upcoming events, testimony and prayer points. Posters and flyers for upcoming events can be found on the Hope notice board at the back of church.

If you would like more information your St James DMT Representatives are:

Vikki Bisiker, Pat Adams, Margo Grant, Barry Parker, Jill Parker and Jenny Thorne.

Fundraising – including Summer Fete and Christmas Fayre

In 2016 our Summer Fete raised £682.30 and our Christmas Fayre raised £1,340.80 for church funds; and part proceeds of the Nifty Fingers stall at the Fete and Fayre raised £52.78 for Bees Abroad.

Holloways of Banbury held a very successful Valuation Day which raised £252.00 for our church.

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

Dates for your diary in 2017:

- Saturday 20th May – Refreshments for Southam Heritage Collection Local History Fayre
- Saturday 17th June – Summer Fete
- Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd July – Southam in Bloom open gardens
- Saturday 2nd 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 Tresidder tel. 813524 if you would like to help raise funds for our church.

Ruth Tresidder

Friends of St James Church

Over the past few years “The Friends” have organised our Harvest Supper. This event has proved to be very successful, with a hot supper and entertainment.

We are extremely happy to have now been able to make a substantial contribution towards the cost of new church lighting in the North and South aisles, which is now being enjoyed by congregations and all who use the church.

If you would like more information as to what we are doing and/or to join or get involved with “The Friends”, please have a word with me.

Rose Evans Chair - Friends of St James Church

Home Communion and Services at Southam Residential Homes

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

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 2016 have continued to be successful with a regular group enjoying each other’s company for coffee and cake between 10.30am and 12 noon. The church being open gives a chance for visitors, some who wish to be quiet or maybe find a listening ear and a chance to pray – all are welcome.

We raised £556 during the year and sent £100 to the Samaritans Purse 'Turning on the Tap' appeal, £200 to the Mothers' Union Relief Fund and £200 to Ministry Aviation Fellowship.

The Cross of Nails prayers are said at mid-day with prayers for news items around the world. Thank you to all who help and to Alex who helps with washing up and adds to our prayers.

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! Ian Crowther, as team leader, has also done us proud with the quality and variety of speakers. The team also comprises Tony Brown, John 'toast master' Home and Barry Parker together with any who can lend a hand to tidy and wash up afterwards!

The 2016 season began with Paul Gask, an ex Police Detective. 'Gasky' as he is more popularly known, is the Regional Director for England (North) of a national movement, CVM (Christian Vision for Men). We listened to his amazing story of how God took an unbelieving Police Detective by the scruff of the neck, saved him from the brink of suicide and set him on a journey to reach a million men for Christ. Telling only 'half' his story Paul returned later in the year to give us part two of his interesting journey with CVM.

In February our very own Councillor Bob Stevens gave us a very interesting insight into "The work of the British Legion" and in particular the history of Galanos House.

In May we welcomed Georgina Hale whose talk "Shipwrecked in Antarctica" told us the story of when the Explorer cruise ship she and her husband were travelling on struck an iceberg and sank. Georgina spent four and a half hours in an open lifeboat in freezing temperatures before she and her fellow passengers were rescued.

Su McClellan (aka wife of Harbury vicar Craig Grocock) joined us in June describing her work as Regional Manager of 'EMBRACE the Middle East', a charity founded in 1854. Sue made her first trip to the West Bank in 1991 and has had a heart and passion for the region ever since.

In July, Mark Gee, a former member of the Spanish Foreign Legion, regaled us with a moving and powerful account of his transition from Spanish Foreign Legion Mercenary and 'Bridegroom of Death', to Son of God while serving in 'Pelotón', the infamous and phenomenally vicious penal work section of the legion. His book is well worth reading.

In the autumn Revd Chris Knight from St Mary's in Leamington Spa and Ian Crowther went head to head in an 'Oxbridge' style debate. Billed as Ufton's very own version of an Oxford Union Debate Ian Crowther argued a tongue-in-cheek belief in Buddhism and reincarnation which was destroyed by Revd Chris Knight in a masterful fashion!

For the third year running, we held a 'Men's Breakfast' Christmas Dinner at the White Hart, Ufton where over twenty of us again not only celebrated a great year of fun and fellowship, but that we had been able to send £490 in donations to worthy charities of our

speakers' choice and also to swell Ufton Church's coffers by £60; all in all, another excellent year!

New members are always welcome, just give me a call on 01926 811254 or email champagnebuff@gmail.com.

Barry Parker

Mothers' Union

The Mothers' Union year for 2016 got off to a good start with members meeting at the Great Western Hotel for lunch. This was the first meeting under the leadership of Rose Evans who was elected in September 2015. As usual subscriptions of £21 were collected.

The February meeting was hosted by Heather Shackleton in her home. Members brought items that represented 'Customs and Traditions' and explained their significance and stories behind the items. Heather gave an interesting talk on the traditions of pancakes.

It was a real treat when Roderick Clark led us in a meditation service in Church in March.

In April, Jenny and Spike Thorne, who are members of the 'Warwickshire Wildlife Trust', spoke about their voluntary work with the Trust.

'Reflections on a Journey' was the theme of the May meeting. Hilary Crosby, Margo Grant, and Jill and Barry Parker spoke about their experiences on a recent trip to the Holy Land.

Members enjoyed an outing to Stratford Garden Centre in June and a Strawberry Tea in July.

The AGM meeting in September received the annual report from Rose and a financial statement submitted by Treasurer, Annie Lane. Officers and Committee were elected. The meeting was preceded by Holy Communion in Church.

The work of the Salvation Army was the theme of the October meeting. Project Manager, Jonathan of the 'Way Ahead Programme' and volunteer Gerry Barrat gave us an overview of this challenging and vital work.

Richard and Pauline Higginbottom gave an interesting and amusing talk entitled 'Everything but the Kitchen Sink' at the November meeting.

The year's programme ended as usual in December with a service of carols and readings.

During the year the members participated in Mary Sumner's Day, the Church summer and Christmas Fairs and the Women's World Day of Prayer. Highlights of the year included the enrolment of Gwenda Gaffney at the Members Day service at St. Nicholas Church, Warwick and the presentation of a certificate for 65 years of membership to Phil King by the MU Worldwide President.

Mothers' Union offers much more than a monthly meeting. It provides fellowship and friendship and is open to all. We welcome new members.

Averil Brown - Mothers' Union Secretary

St James Strollers

This is the first report of our activities although we have met, with one exception, monthly since we first ventured forth in July 2015.

At that time, when the pattern of church services changed there was to be only one service on the first Sunday of each month, and, aware that several members of our congregation were walkers of varying enthusiasm, I floated the idea of our meeting in informal fellowship by way of a "stroll" on the afternoon of that day each month. This duly came to pass and others joined our number during the rest of the year.

In 2016 we met on each first Sunday except December (a weekend on which many were involved in other events) and our numbers varied from five to twenty-nine.

Several of our number were also able to join Bishop Christopher for some of the local sections of his pilgrimage walk "Cloud and Fire – from Ascension to Pentecost".

Some memories of our "strolls" in 2016 include negotiating the River Cherwell in flood - spring lambs on Brailes Hill - the "bluebell woods" at Badby, followed by a cream tea - a lovely circuit of four Northants villages in mid-summer - a shorter local walk finishing with tea hosted by one of our number - the Compton Verney estate and warm Autumn sunshine on the hills at Shuckburgh and Flecknoe.

We look forward to creating more pleasant memories during 2017 and, if you'd like to join us, put a note in your diary for the first Sunday of each month at 2pm at Wood Street car park.

A notice is displayed in church and in the weekly Church Bulletin giving any further specific details of each month's "stroll".

"Spike" Thorne – Southam 814468.

Bees Abroad in Kenya

Once again it has been a busy time for the Bees Abroad team in Kenya. They had the opportunity in February and November to continue to network with our contacts at the National Beekeeping Institute.

Our UK DFID (Department for International Development) funded BPED (Bee Products Enterprise Development) project was coming to a close and we were seeking further support for a proposal we had submitted the previous November. In February we visited the British High Commission with Mr Robin Mbae Kenya's Deputy Agriculture Minister and David Njuguna who is our Kenyan project leader. This was quite an experience particularly going through security and then spending valuable time with Elizabeth who is responsible for DFID funding coming into Kenya which led later in the visit to a meeting with ACT who have the responsibility of selecting and managing the DFID funded work. They were of the opinion that our previous work was of a high quality and of benefit to the rural farming community in Kenya particularly women. We are now awaiting their decision regarding further support.

One of the projects Bees Abroad has been actively involved with is with the African Inland

Mission Cheptebo Rural Development Centre (CRDC) in the Kerio Valley in central Kenya.

CRDC (<http://www.cheptebo.org>) has grown from small beginnings over the past 28 years providing much needed employment with conference facilities used by a wide range of organisations undertaking training.

The Centre's aim in recent times has been to become an Agricultural Training Centre (CATIC) farming God's Way. In July 2016 the centre was formally opened with places for 50 students planning to undertake a general one year agricultural course once accreditation has been formally approved. The centre will specialise in agricultural production particularly relevant to semi-arid areas. Training includes classroom instruction but course participants will spend most time on practical learning within the project farm including beekeeping.

Currently the centre is providing training based on five-day residential modules. These are suitable for Kenya's small-scale farmers. Beekeeping is one subject covered only by a short power point presentation.

Bees Abroad project leaders John and Mary Home have been involved with beekeeping development in the Kerio Valley using the facilities for training and observing with interest the development of the farm providing food for the conference centre. The staff planted vegetables and introduced fruits such as mangoes, paw-paws, bananas and avocados. Subsequently, they added a tree nursery for various fruit varieties; this proved to be a profitable venture.

Some five years ago, Bees Abroad established a four-hive demonstration apiary at the centre, which was well-fenced with wire and a hedge. The honeybees aid the pollination of the fruit trees, and provide a visual demonstration to visitors of their importance in food production.

The next step is that the students in full time training who opt for the livestock production modules will have beekeeping included in their curriculum which Bees Abroad have been invited to undertake. This training will thus reach many subsistence farmers and focus them on the value of beekeeping as an additional source of income.

Currently Bees Abroad have plans to expand the beekeeping on the farm with the help and support of the enthusiastic farm manager and are seeking funds in the UK.

Further information regarding Bess Abroad can be found on the church or Bees Abroad websites.

Mary and John Home