ST JAMES
SOUTHAM

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
18 March 2018

AGENDA AND REPORTS 2017

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AGENDAS 18 March 2018

Vestry Meeting Agenda

1. Opening Prayer
2. Minutes of last year's Vestry Meeting (see page 3)
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 3)
4. Matters Arising
5. Reports
6. Elections and Appointments:

   6.1 Election of three members for the PCC
   6.2 Appointment of sidespersons
   6.3 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 2 April 2017

Vestry Meeting for the Purpose of Electing Two Churchwardens

1 Welcome & Prayer
The Rev Vikki Bisiker welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with a prayer.

2 Minutes of Vestry Meeting held on 21 March 2016
Proposed Chris Cooke, seconded Ruth Tresidder, the minutes were agreed as a correct record and signed by Vikki Bisiker.

3 Election of Churchwardens
Vikki proposed a vote of thanks to Barry Parker and Stephen Adams, the current Churchwardens, who had both agreed to stand for re-election. There being no other nominees, Barry and Stephen were returned unopposed, proposed by Chris Cooke, seconded by Ruth Tresidder.

Vikki prayed for Barry and Stephen on behalf of the whole congregation and for the ensuing APCM.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting: Members present 20

2 Apologies for Absence
Apologies for absence had been received from David Houghton, Julia and Brian Cobb, Pete Rollins, Val Tyas, Reg Swain, Hilary Crosby, Barry and Coral Currell and Heather and Edward Shackleton.

3 Minutes of APCM held on 21 March 2016
Proposed by Jenny Thorne, seconded by Bill King, the minutes were agreed as a correct record and signed by Vikki Bisiker.

4 Matters Arising
There were no matters arising. However, Ruth Tresidder pointed out that in the Accounts for year ended 31.12.2016 (p13) the figure against 'John Milner organ fund' should read £601.22.

5 Reports
The reports were taken as read.

Rev Vikki Bisiker commented that at the end of her first year as Priest at St James Church, we were working towards St James Church becoming the hub of the Deanery; preparation work had been made to create a more cohesive and accepting atmosphere. Communications had improved, with monthly meetings between Vikki and the churchwardens – Barry (admin & communications) and Stephen (fabric).

A new 8 Essential Qualities team had been appointed in accordance with Vikki's remit to present a new programme of the 8EQ findings to the PCC.

After Vikki's initial period of observation, new collaborative services were being held at St James church, being led by a team. The enthusiasm and hard work of the Open the Book team was noted, which provided a new dynamic especially at baptism services and in outreach to Lillington and the Bridges group of churches.

A six-weekly Messy Church was proposed at St James Church after Easter – the first would be on Sunday afternoon 21 May and it was hoped that baptism families would join in. Some had already offered to help.

In May 2016 a teaching programme was introduced focussing on 'Values' and 'Giving', but there is still a need for more financial support and more practical help especially with coffee rota, PA system and service leaders.

The 10 am service for Sunday 23 April had been cancelled due to shortage of leaders. However, the mid-weekly communion service, followed by coffee at Tithe Lodge had opened up new contacts.

There was committed prayer in the church prayer room before and after the 10am Sunday service and on Friday mornings at 9.30am.

Vikki felt we were in a much healthier place than previously and she expressed gratitude for God's provision over the past year and prayed thanks for this.

6 Elections and Appointments

Proposed by Jill Parker, seconded by Heather Shackleton, the meeting agreed that Stephen Adams, as Reader at St James, should automatically be appointed to serve on the PCC.

6.1 Election of two members for the Deanery Synod

Proposed by Pat Adams, seconded by Juliet Houghton, the meeting agreed that Barry Parker and Stephen Adams be re-elected as representatives on the Deanery Synod (Margo Grant was a member of the PCC by virtue of her appointment by the deanery synod as one of its Diocesan Representatives.)

6.2 Election of three members for the PCC

Ruth Tresidder, Jenny Thorne and Pat Adams had agreed to stand for re-election. There being no other nominees, they were due elected: Juliet Houghton proposed, Margo Grant seconded, unanimous.

6.3 Appointment of Sidespersons

The list was ongoing, and anyone wishing to join the list was welcome to do so. At a request for a list of duties for sidespeople, Vikki said a new one would be revitalised and put on display. She commented that the duties were not hugely onerous but were of great value and support to the leaders. Margo Grant proposed, Rose Evans seconded that the list be accepted. Agreed unanimously.

6.4 Appointment of Independent Examiner of the Accounts

Thanks were expressed to Mrs Elizabeth McBride for her work for St James Church in auditing the accounts; as she was willing to re-stand, Ruth Tresidder proposed, Barry Parker seconded that her offer be accepted. Agreed unanimously.

7 Any Other Business

7.1 Vikki expressed heartfelt thanks to John Tresidder, who was stepping down after many years service as Verger.

7.2 On behalf of the congregation Stephen Adams thanked Vikki for all she does and for her support and encouragement.

7.3 Vikki thanked Jan Ford for her work as Safeguarding Officer over the past 15 years and advised that the PCC had appointed Heather Shackleton as our new Safeguarding Officer.

8 Date of Next Meeting was agreed as Sunday 18 March 2018 immediately after the morning service at 11.20am.

The meeting closed in prayer at midday.

Chair…… Date……

REPORTS

Church Management

Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017

Priest-In-Charge

Rev. Vikki Bisiker

Parish Administrator

Mrs M Mumford
The Parish Office
74D Coventry Street
Southam
CV47 0EA

Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc
6 High Street
Southam
CV47 0HA

Independent Examiner

Mrs Elizabeth McBride ICMA
1 Park Lane
Harbury
CV33 9HX

Annual Report for 2017

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*	Incumbent
Stephen Adams*	Warden, Reader and Deanery Synod Representative
Barry Parker*	Warden, Deanery Synod Representative, Vice Chair PCC 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
Bill King	Elected
Jill Parker	Elected
Heather Shackleton	Elected, Safeguarding Officer
Jenny Thorne	Elected
Ruth Tresidder*	Elected, 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 (2017:87 with eleven not resident within the parish).

The average Sunday attendance was 70 (2016:68), marginally up on last year, and, as in previous years, average numbers increased at the various festivals and for baptism and thanksgiving services. 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 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 2017 of £37,096 reflecting our commitment to increase Parish Share contributions in increments of £5,000 each year over a four year period ending April 2020.

The full PCC met on seven occasions during 2017, including one extraordinary meeting, with an overall 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 to those volunteers who help cover the church office each Tuesday and Friday morning and when Margaret is on leave. 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.

On 27 February 2018 the members of the Parochial Church Council approved the reports for submission to the APCM and signed by Vikki Bisiker on their behalf.

Review of the Year

I can't quite believe where the year has gone as I write this review of 2017. It was only May that I was officially licensed to you as Priest in Charge, yet I can't really remember life anywhere else! It has certainly been a busy year and I am hugely appreciative of everything that all at St James have done, both on a 'church' level and also the personal support and encouragement that you have given through a difficult year for me.

I have continued to work towards the 'remit' that was agreed with the Diocese and it has been helpful to have such a clear proposal. Here's a quick reminder:

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.

This remit has been helpful to go back to as a PCC and to stay on track as to what we are working towards. The PCC has also continued through the year to review the service pattern and has been all too aware of the strain on the service leaders who are involved in lots of other areas of church life, as well as them having other commitments 'outside of church'! We are not necessarily in a healthy place, but I do believe that we are in a healthier place than last year and that things are beginning to change and grow at St James.

I have continued to meet monthly with both churchwardens and Barry has continued in the role of overseeing administration, whilst Stephen has continued in the role of overseeing the fabric of the church. This structure has continued to work well and has been a great help in supporting one another.

The 8EQs team, made up from a mix of PCC members and congregation has met in order to begin the process of engaging with the 8 Essential Qualities of a Healthy Church programme. There is a teaching series planned for the first few months of the 2018 worship services that will enable people to engage and better understand these essential qualities and then complete the Diocesan survey in due course. This survey should give us a good indication where our strengths are and where we may need to focus our energies. The teaching programme of 2017 has been geared to lead up to this as we have looked through the book of Acts and how the early church was and grew and then we looked at the 'I am' sayings of Jesus in the lead up to Advent.

The service leaders and preachers have faithfully continued to lead our worship and the rota pattern has remained as last year. It has been tricky at times to cover all of the services and I know that the team have felt overstretched at times. One of the 10ams had to be cancelled as no leaders were available. At other times we have been creative in having a Mother's Union service and also a Breakfast Church. We also had a visiting speaker from Myton Hospice.

The Open the Book school assembly team have continued to be involved in a number of the 10am family services and this has been well received by the 10am congregation. The Palm Sunday service was particularly spectacular with all of the congregation taking part! It has highlighted the work that the OTB team do within both St James and Southam primary school. They have continued to resource the Bridges Group of parishes within the Deanery continuing to fulfil one of our remits of being a resourcing church.

Just before Christmas we held 'The Christmas Experience' for the upper years of both St James' Primary and also Southam Primary. A number of volunteers from St James' together with some volunteers from the Community Church worked alongside a charity, Crossteach, to tell the Christmas story in a very different way. Both schools loved it and were fully engaged. Simon from Crossteach, was full of praise for the volunteers and commented on the great relationships that they had with the staff and youngsters alike. It is hoped that we will be able to offer the Easter Experience with Crossteach in the Spring term.

In last year's report, I mentioned that the relationships with the schools through OTB were a natural ground to build upon and so in May we launched Messy Church in St James'. We have had a Messy type event roughly every six weeks and this has attracted about 20 children and 20 adults plus team each time. Messy has been an easy and accessible event for families to come to and a couple of parents have begun to be part of the team and take on more responsibility for the events.

I am all too aware as I write this that we face a number of challenges in 2018, but let's continue to give God thanks for all that He has provided already and trust that He will continue the work that He has begun in us despite the obstacles ahead!

Rev. Vikki Bisiker

Churchwarden's Report

At the APCM in April, Stephen Adams and Barry Parker were re-elected as church wardens and whilst we are both involved in all aspects of church life Stephen has continued to take the lead on all things 'fabric' with Barry on 'administration'. Your support in our role is really appreciated.

Following Vikki Bisiker's extended placement as curate and a formal interview process, Vikki was Licensed as Priest in Charge (Interim Minister) & Acceler8 Development Worker at St James Church, Southam on Saturday 13 May 2017.

As Vikki is entering her 3rd year with us it is worth reminding ourselves that we as a PCC and congregation have committed to:

- support Vikki as she leads the 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 St James as a resourcing (rather than resourced) church,
- increase parish share contributions by £5,000 per year over four years, as a sign of commitment to long-term sustainability, and
- become 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

At the end of the four-year commitment, i.e. April 2020, if the financial target has been reached the Diocese has agreed to write off 'arrears' of parish share amounting to £98,809.

It is appreciated that this is a massive challenge, however, it's great to be able to report that as a church family we have met the required level of increase both for 2016 and 2017. However, meeting our future commitments will become increasingly difficult without a continued increase in giving. This will be compounded when you factor in that limited maintenance on the fabric of the building has been undertaken over the past few years. A detailed report from the Fabric Committee is on page 17.

We continue to work very closely with Vikki and have regular meetings, particularly with regard to PCC agendas and reports and as we look to the future and in particular as we look at the 8EQs we look forward to working 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.

We would like to thank all who work both in prominent roles and behind the scenes to make sure the church continues to run smoothly.

We have a number of challenges ahead, some of which are included in the various reports to this APCM, but we are confident that together, with each other's support and encouragement and underpinned by prayer we will make significant progress in the coming year.

Stephen Adams and Barry Parker – Church Wardens

Treasurer's Report

The year has been positive and income for 2017 was higher than 2016; planned giving per month amounted to £2,863.32 compared with £2,621.81 in the previous year and income from loose plate collections increased by £22.30 per month.

The balance of £45,011.01 in the General Account includes the very generous £40,000 legacy received from the estate of Don Greenway deceased. Ignoring the legacy, the balance is significantly lower than the £9,000 I would have liked to see in the account considering our parish share increases by £20,000 in 2018 to £57,096; £15,000 of this is due to be received from the Acceler8 Fund to offset time spent by the Rev Vikki Bisiker on working locally with the 20 to 30's age group. Without a reasonable increase in the number of people contributing to St James we shall need to use some of the legacy to pay the increased parish share otherwise there will be a shortfall of £4,000 by the end of the year.

Significant items that need highlighting include:

- We received a very generous donation of £6,000 towards Mission expenditure, with gift aid this increased to £7,500.
- The bequest from Don Greenway's estate will be increased by an additional £10,000 when the estate has been finalised. The PCC are extremely grateful for such a large bequest.
- In 2017 The Friends of Southam Church contributed £1,950 to pay for the replacement lighting work undertaken at the end of 2016, this contribution was gratefully received.
- There was significant tree trimming carried out in the churchyard early in the year to comply with health and safety requirements and the cost amounted to £2,580.
- The expenses for the Safari Supper held in April were covered by a donation.
- The churchyard skip, owned by the church, was stolen in the late Spring and the replacement skip was financed by the insurers less the £100 excess.
- Annual maintenance/statutory checks on the gas boilers, lightning conductor, clock and fire extinguishers amounted to £1,140.63.

- It is heartening that St James Messy Church has relaunched and is attracting younger families into the church.

- Parochial church fees are down as we have had fewer weddings and funerals over the last year.

We are grateful to Liz McBride for examining our church accounts at no charge.
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 would like to thank everyone who contributes to our church finances especially those who give to the church on a regular basis, whether it be weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually. 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.

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

Ruth Tresidder – Treasurer Tel. 813524

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 2017.

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: 10th February 2018

ST JAMES CHURCH SOUTHAM
ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

	Note	Actual 2017 Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	TOTAL	Actual 2016 Unrestricted	Restricted	TOTAL
INCOMING RESOURCES								
From Donors								
Under Gift Aid Schemes	1a	35,542.54	6,000.00	45.00	41,587.54	31,594.20	970.00	32,564.20
Gift Aid recovered	1b	9,629.42	1,500.00	132.50	11,261.92	8,645.49	117.50	8,762.99
Non Gift Aid income	1c	6,784.28			6,784.28	6,527.30		6,527.30
Fund raising & special appeals	1d	3,824.97	339.01	2,900.16	7,064.14	4,002.92	1,233.07	5,235.99
Legacies	1e	40,000.00			40,000.00	1,000.00		1,000.00
Insurance Claims	1f	1,358.00			1,358.00			
Total donated income		**97,139.21**	**7,839.01**	**3,077.66**	**108,055.88**	**51,769.91**	**2,320.57**	**54,090.48**
Fees								
PCC	2a	4,819.00		299.00	5,118.00	6,132.00	-125.00	6,007.00
Total regulated fees		**4,819.00**		**299.00**	**5,118.00**	**6,132.00**	**-125.00**	**6,007.00**
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		**101,958.21**	**7,839.01**	**3,376.66**	**113,173.88**	**57,901.91**	**2,195.57**	**60,097.48**
EXPENSES								
Diocesan costs								
Parish share	3a	37,096.00			37,096.00	32,096.00		32,096.00
		37,096.00			**37,096.00**	**32,096.00**		**32,096.00**
Clergy & Service costs								
Clergy expenses	4a	685.05			685.05	1,134.89		1,134.89
Altar supplies	4b	133.18			133.18	154.48		154.48
Music	4c	504.24		3.25	507.49	699.99	690.00	1,389.99
Other	4d	694.00			694.00	536.00		536.00
		2,016.47		**3.25**	**2,019.72**	**2,525.36**	**690.00**	**3,215.36**

ST JAMES CHURCH SOUTHAM
ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

		Actual 2017				Actual 2016		
	Note	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	TOTAL	Unrestricted	Restricted	TOTAL
EXPENSES (Continued)								
Administration								
Administrator	5a	4,633.20			4,633.20	4,414.80		4,414.80
Office supplies	5b	1,811.05			1,811.05	2,186.12		2,186.12
Other	5c	1,077.46			1,077.46	1,087.31		1,087.31
Office telephone		278.30			278.30	471.26		471.26
Church Office	5d	4,426.55			4,426.55	4,238.90		4,238.90
		12,226.56			**12,226.56**	**12,398.39**		**12,398.39**
Maintenance								
Utilities	6a	3,263.52			3,263.52	3,579.63		3,579.63
Insurance	6b	6,269.06			6,269.06	6,069.70		6,069.70
General repairs	6c	1,279.36		1,950.00	3,229.36	2,413.95	3,788.03	6,201.98
Churchyard	6d	3,473.00		745.00	4,218.00			
		14,284.94		**2,695.00**	**16,979.94**	**12,063.28**	**3,788.03**	**15,851.31**
Ministry support								
Appeals and charitable giving	7a	150.00		619.70	769.70	136.88	615.59	752.47
Children and home mission	7b	455.91		728.28	1,184.19	299.91	442.33	742.24
		605.91		**1,347.98**	**1,953.89**	**436.79**	**1,057.92**	**1,494.71**
TOTAL EXPENSES		**66,229.88**		**4,046.23**	**70,276.11**	**59,519.82**	**5,535.95**	**65,055.77**
SURPLUS/DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR		**35,728.33**	**7,839.01**	**-669.57**	**42,897.77**	**-1617.91**	**-3340.38**	**-4958.29**
Add Reserves b/fwd at 1 Jan 2017		**9,282.68**				**10,900.59**		
TOTAL RESERVES 31 DEC 2017		**45,011.01**				**9,282.68**		

Accounts for Year Ended 31 December 2017

RESTRICTED FUNDS MOVEMENTS Fund Description	Balance 01 Jan 17	Receipts	Payments	Balance 31 Dec 17
	£	£	£	£
Audio/visual/technology	75.00		3.25	71.75
Booklets	25.00			25.00
Building maintenance	63.93	1,950.00	1,950.00	63.93
Children ex Infant Welfare Trust	7,422.25		320.31	7,101.94
Churchyard maintenance	620.00	185.00	745.00	60.00
Flower Fund	64.47	251.13	219.70	95.90
Granny Wagon	153.10			153.10
He*Brews	726.59		201.99	524.60
Hope 14 Onwards	69.87			69.87
International	154.95	614.62	400.00	369.57
John Milner Organ Fund	601.22			601.22
"Messy Church"	484.58	76.91	205.98	355.51
Wedding Fees in Advance	25.00	299.00		324.00
	10,485.96	**3,376.66**	**4,046.23**	**9,816.39**

DESIGNATED FUNDS MOVEMENT Fund Description			
Jolly J's		339.01	339.01
Mission		7,500.00	7,500.00
		7,839.01	7,839.01

	£	£
Liabilities - Agency collections		
Agency Wedding Fees in Advance	284.00	
Tax for Administrator	-260.00	
The Children's Society	1,148.03	
	1,172.03	

Liquid funds as at 31 December 2017	
Bank	63,838.44
TOTAL FUNDS	
Less Restricted Funds held on behalf of others as per above	9,816.39
Less Designated Funds	7,839.01
Less Liabilities - Agency collections	1,172.03
St James Funds at 31 December 2017 see Receipts & Payments Account	**45,011.01**

Accounts for Year Ended 31 December 2017

NOTES RELATING TO 2017 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. We are very grateful for the £6,000 donation designated for Mission.

1b Tax reclaimed from above and from the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (unrestricted) and from Special Appeals (restricted) from 1st October 2016 to 30th September 2017.

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. Designated covers donations from Jolly J's. Restricted includes International, a donation from the Friends of Southam Church for replacement lighting and donations for the churchyard and church flowers.

1e We are very grateful for the part payment of £40,000 of the legacy from the estate of Donald Greenway deceased.

1f Insurance claim for replacement skip for the churchyard.

2a Restricted Wedding Fees in Advance may be carried over from one year to another.

Expenditure

3a Our contribution to Coventry Diocese.

4a Clergy expenses and telephone.

4b Candles, Communion Wine, etc.

4c Unrestricted includes Music Licences for 2017 and audio/visual expenses.

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, fire extinguishers, clock and lightning conductor. Restricted includes the cost of replacement lighting.

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. Tree trimming following the 5-year inspection of trees in the churchyard was covered by all Restricted expenditure and some Unrestricted. The remainder of Unrestricted relates to the purchase of a replacement skip following theft of the previous one.

7a Unrestricted includes donation to Southam Christmas Lights Association. Restricted includes expenditure on Christmas and Easter flowers and International.

7b Unrestricted includes purchase of Easter postcards. Restricted includes the purchase of books for children who were baptised, expenditure by the Open the Book team, Messy Church and the Cross Teach Trust Christmas Experience for Primary School pupils.

Giving Report

It is encouraging that our income is 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 2017 a total of 31 people paid by standing order into the church bank account. Giving by this method amounted to £23,819.92 – an increase of £2,388 over the previous year.

13 people donated through the blue envelope scheme and a total of £7,227.94 was given by this method, an increase of £520.74 over the previous year.

A total of 80 people contributed to the church by yellow envelope, of these 7 gave on a regular basis. Total giving by this method (including one-off gift aid donations) amounted to £10,539.68, an increase of £6,114.60 over 2016.

We received gift aid of £11,261.92 from HM Revenue & Customs, this is an increase of £2,498.93 over the previous year. Tax is recovered in arrear and covers the period 1st October 2016 to 30th September 2017.

During the year the number of people who are non-taxpayers who gave on a regular basis decreased by one to 6 and income decreased by £10.60 to £3,312.

Cash collections amounted to £3,472.28 an increase of £267.58 over the previous year.

Listed below is the equivalent weekly giving during 2017 whether paid by standing order, cheques or the envelope schemes:

£1.00 up to £5.00	13 people
Over £5.00 up to £10.00	16 people
Over £10.00 up to £15.00	11 people
Over £15.00 up to £20.00	1 person
Over £20.00 up to £30.00	2 people
Over £30.00 up to £40.00	3 people
Over £40.00 up to £50.00	3 people
Over £50.00 up to £100.00	1 person
Over £100.00 up to £200.00	1 person

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

The fabric committee currently comprises: Stephen Adams, John Gwillam, David Hewer (Hewer Builders), Bill King, Barry Parker and Jenny Thorne. We generally meet three or four times each year. This year there may have been fewer meetings but much communication by email! If you think you might be interested in the fabric side of church

life we would very much welcome all additional expertise. Please speak to one of the existing members for more information.

Early in the year Peter Johnson from St Peter's Church, Grandborough, gave a very enthusiastic and detailed presentation to the Committee of major fabric works and the obtaining of funding for St Peter's.

During the year members of the fabric Committee have added draught-proofing to the inside of the deteriorating South Porch doors to enhance the use of the South Porch as the Prayer Room.

The north aisle roof LED security flood light was replaced after the original one stopped working, some redecoration has been carried out in the minister's vestry and the toilet, the "wedding lights" were removed from the screen, an emergency key for the belfry door has been arranged, and other ongoing minor maintenance works have been carried out as needed.

An item involving considerable time and energy was the replacement of the churchyard waste skip after the original skip was stolen, and our thanks go to John Tresidder for his sterling work on this issue.

Consideration was also given to the radio microphones and a recommendation was made to PCC. Following this, two new microphone systems were purchased by the church.

There has been some attention both in-house and by the maintenance contractors to the heating system at various times during the year. The system has reached the end of its expected life and parts are now longer easily available, so replacement of the heating system is also on the fabric agenda. A visit has been made to view and discuss the new heating installed at St Michaels, Bishops Itchington.

In March 2018, Barry is attending a Coventry Diocese Training Day for Churchwardens and others about applying for Faculties for Church fabric work. Barry is hoping to also use this opportunity to network with other churchwardens about current fabric issues at St James. During the year a substantial list of potential/proposed/necessary fabric works was presented to PCC for consideration and determination of priority works. The fall of plaster from the South Aisle ceiling at the end of January has brought with it a renewed focus on the overall condition of the whole building and this work is ongoing in conjunction with the PCC. The coming year is expected to be a very busy and interesting time for the Fabric team!

Stephen Adams

Electoral Roll Officer's Report

Two members left

No members died

Two members added to the roll

The Electoral Roll now stands at 87 members

Margo Grant – Electoral Roll Officer

Safeguarding Officer's Report

In April 2017, I took over the responsibility of Parish Safeguarding Officer from Jan Ford. My sincere thanks go to Jan for all her past work and her invaluable assistance in the 'hand over' process.

2017 has seen the completion of the development and implementation of a new and more rigorous National and Diocesan Safeguarding Policy. Each Parish is required to evidence an Audit Trail confirming they are complying with the Diocesan Policy. This has involved ensuring all Staff and Volunteers, who are required, being DBS checked and trained in their safeguarding responsibilities. This process in ongoing and I am grateful for everyone's co-operation towards the goal of achieving 100% compliance and thereby ensuring our Church is as safe a space as possible for our children and vulnerable adults.

Heather Shackleton - Parish Safeguarding Officer

Deanery Synod Report

Southam deanery comprises 15 parishes within a six-mile radius of Southam with representatives from each parish. Stephen Adams and Barry Parker sit on the Deanery Synod. Barry Parker is also the Synod's Lay Chair and a member of the Deanery Standing and Pastoral Committees. Margo Grant attends synod as one of its Diocesan Synod representatives. All three are members of our PCC.

Synod meets four times each year, is supported by the Standing and Pastoral Committee, and receives reports from the Diocesan and General Synods providing PCCs with an important link between the parish, deanery and wider structures of the church. In particular synod works with parishes to agree the amount each will pay to the Diocese 'Parish Share' to cover clergy, housing and training costs, etc.

During 2017 clergy numbers increased with two House for Duty appointments in the Bridges Group and two part-time stipendiary appointments, one each for the Offchurch Group and Long Itchington with Marton strengthening the deanery clergy team.

The deanery also has a strong focus on mission and collaborative ministry and the deanery mission team (DMT) organise evangelistic events under the national Hope banner. The aim is to provide high quality training and outreach events we can be confident in inviting non-Christian friends to. During the year events included an evening of music and testimony

with Steve Parsons, a comedy and carols evening with Paul Kerensa, and Table Talk continued fortnightly in a local pub

Recognising that the clergy team would not be able to function without strong lay teams around them the DMT are continually looking for ways to develop and strengthen these teams both within individual parishes and deanery-wide and are planning for 2018 a number of 'training' events covering Worshiping God, Making New Disciples and Transforming our Community. The team includes a number of representatives from St James.

In the Spirit, a deanery service of informal worship, is held on the first Sunday of each month tea/coffee/cake from 6.00pm Worship from 6.30pm, alternating between St Esprit, Marton and St Lawrence, Napton.

Kingdom Come is the Deanery prayer meeting and takes place in St James at the heart of the Deanery roughly six-weekly at 4pm on a Sunday afternoon. 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 providing information of upcoming events, testimony and prayer points is published quarterly. Posters and flyers for upcoming events can be found on the Hope notice board at the back of church.

Massive Messy Church at the Grange continues to attract more families ranging in age from grandparents to babies and compliments our own Messy Church.

As I hope you would agree, this is a great deanery to be part of!

Stephen Adams and Barry Parker

Leading, Service Support & Worship

Sound and Vision

In last year's report we stated concerns regarding the condition and reliability of some of the radio microphone equipment. It was also said we were looking at alternatives to some of the elderly equipment in use at that time.

After seeking advice from a number of sources, and following a recommendation from John Gwillam, the Church purchased two new radio microphones with receivers. One a new clip-on mic and the other a replacement for the rather battered hand-held microphone, generally used on a stand for service leading at 10am or for the Bible Reading lectern at other services.

These microphones have proved their worth during the year and no problems have been reported.

During the year we have seen increased use of projected videos and video songs with words on the screen for Sunday 10am services. Recently we have done some testing of a device for controlling PowerPoint presentations using a handheld "clicker" from the platform and we expect to see further employment of this useful accessory in the future.

Additional "lighting" has been provided using copper LED string lights augmented by an LED "star" much to the appreciation of Christmas congregations and recent wedding parties. The pillar string lights continue to be used regularly to brighten the appearance of the interior for other services too.

We are always keen for others to know how to operate the PA system and computer/projector, which are used not only at the Sunday services but for other occasions in the church. If anyone would like to get involved, we would be pleased to give you more information and training.

Stephen Adams and Barry Parker

Music Group

This past year the music group has once again continued to provide and lead the worship songs at the 10am service each month, though since last summer, only on the 1st and 3rd Sundays, unless requested otherwise.

We had a 'choir' of 12 at the Christmas Carol service in December which was brilliant. Thank you to everyone who took part.

The music is chosen as far as possible, in keeping with the theme of the Sunday and/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 as appropriate. Comments from the congregation are always listened to and taken on board as much as possible. We still use video songs when Ann isn't available.

A big thank you to Ann for her keyboard skills, Stephen and Boogie – drums, to John Home for singing alongside me and to Margo who also joins us when she is able to.

If anyone is interested in joining the group for Sunday morning services, or for special occasions only, that would be great. More singers are needed, an extra keyboard player would be useful, and anyone who can play an instrument of any description would be most welcome!! Please just let me know if you feel any of these positions is for you.

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 Year's Eve due to a shortage of ringers.

We rang for a Number of Weddings and hosted five bands of visiting ringers. Two peals were rung by visiting bands, one for the Patronal Festival and the usual Mop peal.

We did not have an annual outing again this year due to difficulty in fixing suitable dates to suit everyone's holiday arrangements.

We have struggled with some of our practice nights during the year due to lack of ringers. This being due to some of our ringers having to work abroad, and illness. We do occasionally have visitors from other towers and people that are working in the area. This does help a great deal and we are always very pleased to welcome them into the tower.

The Christmas meal was as usual organised by Iain and Loraine 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.

We are still looking to recruit new members into our team. We did open the Belfry on the day the History Group held a function in the Church, but this created very little interest.

Almost all of our band are now pensioners our youngest ringer is now forty-three 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

Unfortunately, the number of children attending regularly on a Sunday morning remains low. However, the numbers attending Messy Church are encouraging and numbers have increased at services specifically aimed at children at Easter and Christmas.

Through John Hedge we have continued to provide teaching for the children who do attend on a Sunday whilst the adults have their own teaching. Our thanks go to John Hedge and also to Pat Adams and Mary Home who have helped John.

Barry Parker - Vice Chair PCC

Messy Church

Our first official Messy Church at St James was in May 2017 and has run roughly every half term (with the exception of October when we had a Massive Messy at The Grange). The format is quite simple, on arrival there are crafts for the youngsters (with a varying degree of help from the team and parents!), then we gather for a Bible story, songs and a prayer before then sharing a buffet tea together.

At the Southam Christmas Lights switch-on the Messy Church and Open the Book teams from St James came together to provide a stall, next to the combined churched free refreshments stall, with crafts for children which provided an opportunity to engage with adults and invite them to attend our Christmas services.

Messy is a really accessible way for families to come to church and a number of the contacts through Baptisms and Jolly Js have come, had a great time and stronger relationships are being built. There's usually about 20 children and 20 adults (including helpers). A number of volunteers are needed to run a Messy and I am aware that a number are overloaded, so if anyone would like to get involved then please do let me know. A variety of skills are needed, so we can always find you a job to do!

Rev. Vikki Bisiker

Open the Book

As in previous reports I would like to reflect on the closing words of my last year's report. We took our storytelling to Lillington Primary School and this proved to be a very different experience from our usual schools. I suspect that our approach to assembly was also somewhat different from what the staff and pupils there were used to! In spite, or maybe because, of this it was wonderful to see how attentive and involved many of the audience were.

To date there is no news of an OTB team establishing there but we continue to pray for them….

As for God providing our own team with the enthusiasm and resources to continue His work in Southam and the Deanery, He certainly has! The regular fortnightly visits to St James' C of E and Southam Primary, as well as the half-termly visits to the Bridges Group schools,

keep us pretty busy. Due to the many other commitments that team members have occasionally we find ourselves short of participants. Pupils are used to being involved as this is often planned but we've discovered that certain members of staff at Southam Primary are also very keen.

At this point I would like to thank Julia for her involvement with OTB over the last few years. She has now taken a step back in order to devote her time to a new project. However, she's still available to help in emergencies, making props and helping out at Southam Messy Church.

Team members also supported the schools' Easter, Harvest and Christmas services which have been held in church by acting as welcomers.

Four team members along with Vikki were also involved for the first time in an exciting initiative run by Crossteach – a charitable Christian organisation working with school age children – and delivered to Year 5 and Year 6 pupils from Southam Primary and St James'. A hectic day in the week before Christmas but the pupils were fully engaged and many expressed pleasure at seeing OTB members there.

As well as Massive Messy Church for the Deanery there is now Messy Church at St James' Church (see report elsewhere). Whist it is certainly not only OTB members that take part in these sessions, many of us do.

Within the regular pattern of church services, Vikki often asked us to story-tell at Baptisms where the simple, clear presentation of God's message is appropriate. We also helped put together child-friendly worship and activities for Good Friday and Christmas Eve.

Looking forward to 2018 we would ask God to continue to bless our work, gently guiding us in the right direction in case we have strayed from His path and purpose for us, and grow St James' church through the involvement of these young people and their families.

Jenny Thorne – Team Leader

Granny Wagon – Aka Hot Chocolate in the Park on a Friday Night WP/GW

Our stalwart team of volunteers continue to turn out each Friday evening to ply anyone who would like some with hot chocolate and biscuits. This winter so far there's always been someone glad of a hot drink when we get there, though naturally sometimes discretion is the better part of valour and we decide the weather is not in our favour so curl up at home in front of the tv, or possibly with a good book.

It's disappointing to be the only ones to turn up, so we go if possible. A few times we have been unable to fill the slot for whatever reason, and it would be great if one or two more friendly souls would join the team – currently there are seven of us, which averages once a month, depending on other commitments. Should you be inclined to join us, we'd be pleased to hear from you. We each have a DBS certificate, which is fairly straight forward to acquire – any other skills you can learn on the job, e.g. mixing hot chocolate, though an empathy with the younger generation is helpful! And being prepared to answer questions such as "Why are there raisins in a hot cross bun?" Quick as a flash: "Because Jesus was raised from the dead?" Possibly not strictly accurate, but I was impressed!

It is quite an illuminating experience to get into conversation with some of the youngsters, some of whom are intrigued as to where we come from, why we are there and who pays? A few will comment that they used to come down years ago, others are staggered that we may well have begun our weekly event *even before they were born* (in quite a few cases!) (5th April 2005 in case in comes up as a quiz question.) Any volunteers please contact Chris Cooke or Jan Ford – we'll be delighted to hear from you.

Chris Cooke and Jan Ford

Chill

CHiLL is a home-based youth group (yr7 to yr13) and has continued to meet throughout 2017 at Radford Semele Vicarage. The group is small but covers a wide age range, currently 13 to 18, but the group has really gelled and is very encouraging and supportive of one another. Because of the safe and natural feel of the group, we've continued to chat about issues that the young people face and the challenges of having a living faith in the quite secular context of school and social groups. But there's always lots of laughter and the inevitable cuppa and cookie together too!

Rev. Vikki Bisiker

Jolly J's

Jolly J's is a baby and toddler group for under school age, it runs on Monday mornings between 10am and 11.30am in school term time and also in some school holidays if pre-arranged.

The NCT pulled out of running this group last January and now it is classed as a church group and run by three very able Mother's with Mother's Union members providing drinks and story. There is also snack time and crafts and a chance for mums, dads, grandparents and carers to have a chat over coffee, etc.

For more information ask Chris or Rose.

Chris Cooke

Homegroups

The Monday Evening Homegroup

We are a home group that meets weekly in term time using the CWR Lifebuilder range of Bible studies throughout the year to study different books of the Bible. At present we are studying Hebrews and working our way through it.

We have reflective evenings, meals out and attend Deanery talks or outreach events and as a study group we support the life of the church with the Granny Waggon, Men's Breakfasts, Mothers Union, Summer Fete and Christmas fayre.

Please feel free to ask about coming to visit if you like to see how we work or ask to find out more information.

Juliet Houghton

The Tuesday Evening Homegroup

It is our joy and privilege to lead this homegroup. We meet on alternate Tuesday evenings at our home - 6, Sycamore Grove, at 7.30pm. The group is very friendly and new people are always made really welcome. Some lovely friendships have developed over the years as we love and support each other through the 'ups and downs' of everyday life! The members of our group are at various levels of faith and understanding and we enjoy exploring and discussing the Bible together (no question is ever too simple!). We hope that the things we learn together are helping us to reflect Jesus in our communities.

At the beginning of the year we continued with a series of studies on 'Women of the Bible', including Abigail, Rahab, Ruth and Esther. Through these studies we were encouraged and challenged – whatever our background, God wants to use each one of us! In the autumn we enjoyed the morning Bible Studies from New Wine 2017 led by R.T. Kendall. The topic was 'The Church God wants'. This teaching was both inspiring and very down-to-earth. Before Christmas we did an interesting Advent study and we all learnt something new. More recently we have started to investigate the 8 Essential Qualities of a healthy Church, giving us more time to consider and discuss the teaching we receive on Sunday. We pray that as we continue with these studies we will indeed all be inspired to fulfil our God-given potential in the life of St. James' Church. 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 throughout the weeks and especially when we might be finding life difficult.

Last spring and summer several members of the group went along to 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. This year a few have joined the Deanery Alpha group and are enjoying the opportunity to spend time and learn more about the Christian faith together.

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. Pease do come along and 'give us a try'. You will be made most welcome! The official starting time is

7.00pm and the official end time is 9.30pm. 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

Our home group is informal, relaxed and fun! A perfect place to build friendships, deepen relationships, discover more about God together and encourage each other to practice doing the things Jesus did.

We listen to God as He speaks in His word the Bible, apply His word to the realities of life, care for each other and pray for one another. It is a safe place to share openly the challenges of life, to discuss your own thoughts and views and find loving support.

Quotes below from some of our members.

- *"Home Group gives the opportunity to share and understand concerns personally and for our church community as well as looking at Biblical applications for our lives "*
- *"The fortnightly home group gives me an opportunity for spiritual guidance and functional knowledge of the church in an environment which is supportive. There is no other place that I can regularly get this."*
- *"The value of a Homegroup for me has been, and remains, a place for sharing, and building trusted relationships."*

Small groups are great places that help us to grow in our relationship with God and with one another. Don't miss out, why not join one! If you would like to know more about our group or homegroups in general, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Jill Parker

The Thursday Afternoon Homegroup

The Thursday afternoon group suffered a couple of setbacks during the year. First, our leader, Jen Burgess, moved to a new house to be nearer her family in Brockenhurst. Jen had competently led us for some time and guided us in our Bible study. Pam Batstone also moved away from Southam to be nearer her family. Pam was an able contributor to our discussions and often suggested subjects for the group to study. We wish them both well and trust they find peace and joy in their new homes.

Betty Phillips reached a milestone 90th birthday which was celebrated in church with a superb afternoon tea followed by enjoyable entertainment.

The group studied various scriptures including Judges, Moses, Noah, Adam and Eve, Abraham and, currently, David. We meet on the first and third Thursday of each month in each other's houses and take it in turn to lead the discussions.

You will find a warm welcome should you wish to join us at our meetings or social occasions. We usually have a lunch in December and an afternoon tea during the summer. Please contact me if you would like further details.

Averil Brown

Church Liaison

Combined Churches

Regular meetings between representatives of the four Churches have taken place for many years, probably going back to the time when there were only three churches!

Joint events during Advent, Lent and at Easter have always been a feature, and over the past few years, the Christmas Light Switch-On has become more of a joint effort, with the Combined Churches having a representative on the Christmas Lights committee. This has proved beneficial to all concerned regarding each other's view point and providing more hands to the plough!

Jan Ford

St James C of E Primary School, Southam

The collaboration between St James', Southam and Long Itchington schools continued to flourish during 2017. Joint ventures involving pupils and staff strengthened the friendships and support systems that such an organisation can provide. Much of this is down to the committed educational and Christian leadership given by Mrs Phyllis King (Executive Head teacher) and Mrs Kathy Palmizi (Head of school).

Unfortunately (for the two schools) Mrs King has decided to retire in July 2018 in order to re-focus her interests and energy. I would like to thank her on behalf of the Foundation Governors for her quiet but determined example of Christian teaching and leadership. The governors will certainly have this as a priority when looking to appoint her successor, to work alongside Mrs Palmizi.

Education seems to suffer more than its share of changes at any one time – new curriculums, moving goalposts and uncertainty about Multi Academy Trust (MAT) deadlines for imposed membership to name but a few! The sustainability of small one-form entry schools is increasingly problematic – most of all financially – so the proposal to link with other church schools from rural and urban areas is definitely worth considering.

There would be financial benefits from "group buying power", a wider support network for all staff including head teachers and, above all, a greater sense of stability for coming years. Also, in this instance, the Christian ethos of the schools would be upheld through the support of the Diocese. Three of St James' Church Foundation governors have been pro-active at the information gathering stage, visiting other member schools to speak with head teachers and governors, and attending briefings held by the executive team of the Diocesan MAT.

In last year's report I mentioned the ill-timed OFSTED inspection which resulted in them placing the school in the "Requires improvement" category. The staff and pupils certainly responded to this challenge and subsequent visits by Her Majesty's Inspectors and Local Authority Improvement Officers have found a vastly improved situation. Both parties are judging St James' to be a "Good" school again.

As a church school we also have to undergo a SIAMS inspection every five years, and 2017 was the year! The team of inspectors visit ensured that St James' is functioning efficiently

both educationally and within the guidelines for Christian ethos. At this point I shall hand over to Jill Parker – our newest Foundation Governor – who met the inspection team.

"There is a strong and effective Christian partnership at work in the school creating a sense of loving peace that is tangible to visitors and was clearly felt by the SIAMS inspector. The Governors present at the inspection, even myself having been in post for only a few months at the time, had no difficulty in answering the inspector's questions and providing evidence that through its distinctive Christian character, the school is good at meeting the needs of all learners. This is clearly articulated in the school motto 'Let your light shine' which is a banner for the vision and values of the school, such as love, forgiveness and reconciliation, emphasising them as a central focus for everyday life, building a sense of team.
The inspector's report highlighted the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school as outstanding; ensuring all pupils flourish and grow in confidence to learn successfully. The overall grade given was 'Good'."

So, exciting times ahead and very much to look forward to in the life of St James' School. Reflecting on 2017, as a church we should give thanks for the dedication of everyone at the school and their determination to provide the best Christian education for every child attending. I would also like to thank the other Foundation Governors from our church – Dave Howell, David Baxter and Jill Parker – for their efforts last year. All of them are active and committed governors, working to support the staff in maintaining the high quality of education and personal Christian development that St James' School aims to provide.

Jenny Thorne – Foundation Governor and Vice-chair of Governors

Mission and Outreach

Fundraising – including Summer Fete and Christmas Fayre

Thank you to everyone who supported our events in 2017.

During the year the Flower Fund benefitted by £223.63 from Jacky Graham's coffee morning and an additional £27.50 was received towards the cost of Easter and Christmas flowers. Refreshments served at the Southam History Society Open Day and Open Gardens raised £241.90.

Our Summer Fete raised £577.11 and the Christmas Fayre £1,068.42; due to a variety of reasons both of these events raised less funds than 2016.

Unless more people are available to help it is unlikely that there will be a Summer Fete in June 2018.

The Christmas Fayre will be held on **Saturday 1st December 2018** please do make a note of this date in your diary.

Ruth Tresidder

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.

Southam Community Church and the Congregational Church have been taking services at some of the residential homes for a great many years, while members of both St James Church and Our Lady & St Wulfstan RC Church took Holy Communion to individuals.

Since about 2004 the Combined Churches have organized a rota and on the first Sunday of each month, one of the four Southam churches takes it in turn to hold a short afternoon service at Galanos House and Newstead Lodge. The Congregational Church also holds a monthly service at Wattons Lodge, and members of St James Church arrange a monthly Service of Holy Communion at Galanos and Wattons.

Jan Ford

International

Coffee mornings on Fridays between 10.30am and 12noon and continue to be well supported. £614. 42 was raised in donations for the year all for international causes.

A donation of £200 was sent to The Barnabus Fund for water wells in the Sudan and in December a £200 donation was made to a project in Malawi, The Blantyre Minibus Project, where Steven and Pat Adams daughter and family are currently living and raising funds to provide transport for the youth group.

Cross of nails prayers are said at 12 noon.

Chris Cooke

Men's Breakfast

Another packed year for Men's Breakfast!

We met every month to enjoy Roger Lane's 'Full English for a Fiver', spending time together discussing key issues of the day and listening to a guest speaker. In December, however, we let Roger off his cooking duties by 'repairing' to the White Hart, Ufton to partake in their festive fun.

Numbers attending have continued to grow and we are nudging 30, which is great, but we have had to find a way for Roger to cook seven eggs in one frying pan whilst keeping them all in perfect shape!

We continue to be supported by our set-up team comprising Tony Brown (condiments) and John Home (toastmaster) with Ian Crowther (team leader) and Barry Parker and everyone helps to clear and wash up at the end.

Each month we donate the 'profit' from the breakfast to the charity of the speaker's choice.

Ian continued to source a range of quality speakers and last year was no exception. Our guests spoke on a range of topics and issues including the RNLI, Siloam Ministries, Tearfund, Harbury E-Wheels and the terror threat facing the UK.

In addition, it is always special when 'one of our own' speaks to us and this happened on a couple of occasions last year when we learned about Life in an Army Boarding School and motor racing - but not F1. We also had a great morning listening to Martin Green, our very own Area Dean, talking about his passion for guitars and playing and singing a guitar he had built himself.

New members are always welcome, just give me a call on 01926 811254 or email champagnebuff@gmail.com. We always advertise the breakfasts in the Church Bulletin.

Barry Parker

Mothers' Union

The Mothers Union year began, as has now become the custom, with a New Year Lunch this time at the Fox and Hen. Subscriptions of £22.50 were collected by our Treasurer, Annie Lane.

In February, Heather kindly hosted the meeting. Mary Home was unable to give her talk on "Soups" so the meeting took the form of Prayers, Meditations and Music. In March Spike and Jenny Thorne gave a most informative and interesting talk, supported by slides, of their trip to Madagascar. A quiet afternoon was enjoyed in April with Music, Thoughts, Reflections and Prayers. Following this devotional afternoon, members shared their memories of Evelyn Basson who had sadly died in February after a stay in hospital.

In May, a speaker from Tear Fund visited us to tell us of the work of Tear Fund. The outing in June was to Radford Semele Church. Members were able to view the restoration work and hear the resident Vicar speak about the rebuilding of the Church after the devastating fire. Afternoon tea was then taken at Hill Top Farm. Rose and Derrick Evans hosted a

strawberry tea in their lovely garden in July. It was a pleasure to welcome some of the Jolly J's group at this event. In August, members met in Church to celebrate Mary Sumner Day. This was a Deanery event with afternoon tea being served to all those attending.

The AGM took place in September, preceded by Holy Communion. Officers and Committee were duly elected, and reports received. It was reported that Phil King had received her long service award from Mothers Union World Wide President.

Mary Home was the speaker at the October meeting. She gave a demonstration of making soup in her soup maker. Many members brought and showed us various gadgets which they found useful. At the November meeting, CNN (Community of the Cross of Nails) explained their aims, mostly healing the wounds of history, learning to live with differences and build a culture of peace.

November 7th members attended the funeral service of our member, Amy Harris and later a celebration of her life.

The year ended with a carol service in Church during the December meeting.

During 2017, member Betty Phillips reached her 90th birthday and invited us, and many others, to a splendid tea followed by entertainment. Members attended the Women's World Day of Prayer on the first Friday in March. They also attended other Diocesan events throughout the year.

The aim for 2018 is to increase membership and, at the time of writing, this looks like being fulfilled.

We welcome newcomers to join us for worship and fellowship, at any of our meetings. Contact Rose for details.

Averil Brown - Mothers' Union Secretary

St James Strollers

The group has continued to "stroll" each month throughout 2017 and has enjoyed meetings both local and further afield.

There are a number who have turned out regularly whilst others have joined us from time to time as circumstances dictate to take part in the informal fellowship of our gatherings. Our numbers have varied from as few as four to the mid-teens and we have encountered all sorts of weather during the year.

In brief - some recollections: – we got very wet – Stoneythorpe, - weary – Ladbroke and Welsh Road (distance underestimated), - a pleasant visit to Sulgrave (George Washington), - a glorious day in the Edge Hill area on which we felt obliged to relax at the Rose & Crown, Ratley, - a circuit of small villages in the Rugby area, including a canal tunnel! – perfect weather in the Cotswold villages of Cornwell and Churchill, – an interesting circumnavigation of the Stowe Estate, - the pretty villages of Chipping Warden and Edgcote, - finishing the year with, closer to home, Priors Hardwick, Lower and Upper Shuckburgh and Stockton.

We hope to continue our varied programme during the coming year and, if you'd like to join us, please put a note in your diary for the first Sunday of each month meeting at 2 pm 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

Much of our time is still taken up with Bees Abroad (BA) as we do enjoy the camaraderie when exhibiting and networking for the charity at shows such as Builth Wells, 3 Counties and the Great Yorkshire Show.

Over the years in Kenya we were working towards handing responsibility for the work of Bees Abroad to our dear friend and beekeeping trainer David Njuguna who we had been working with for over ten years. He deserves much of the credit for the success of the charities work during this time. The now completed DFID project in Laikipia has been externally assessed and was awarded an A+ as it was highly relevant and incorporated value for money related to the economy.

At the end of August, we received the devastating news that he had been killed in a road crash. This meant that our planned visit to Kenya in Oct/Nov needed a different approach to the on-going work. As it turned out many of the Kenyan field officers working under David for at least three years were capable and willing to take on some of the existing BA projects

We visited and spent time with David's wife Lydia who has the support of the family and Church community and discussed the way forward by setting up an annual David Njuguna memorial award to honour him.

We spent time with the team and heard about the work they were still doing supporting the groups even though the project had finished. We shared with them the way the Bees Abroad process applications for help from Kenya. It was obvious that they had received excellent training from David Njuguna and had the skills necessary to take on project management with support and encouragement from Bees Abroad and assisting with finding funds.

Our month-long work in Kenya visiting existing and potential projects which included The African Inland Mission work Cheptebo Rural Development. They will shortly commence a one-year general agricultural qualification which will include a two-week beekeeping module for 50 students. The apiary and resources have been developed by Bees Abroad generously helped by a grant from the Worshipful Company of Wax Chandlers. One of our trainers John Kibue visited with us and will support this work. We received the following message from the farm manager after the November visit:

"On behalf of Cheptebo fraternity we wish to thank most sincerely John & Mary for their tireless commitment and dedication in helping us and communities in ASAL (Arid and semi-arid land) regions to know bee-keeping as an income generating activity. We promise to work faithfully with John Kibue and the team from Laikipia."

We linked with a Brecon Charity who asked if beekeeping would be suitable for the disabled people they were working through the Red Cross in Molo. One of the UK group had beekeeping experience and may well take responsibility, so John was able to talk about what beekeeping entailed in Africa and introduce him to the nearby Baraka Agricultural College They were able to see the bees there assisted by Cornelius an experience beekeeper. Mary did a session on value addition to hive products to representatives from three disabled and one able bodied group to generate small businesses. The group realised that this was something they could do and immediately set up a committee to take it forward.

We received an unusual invitation which found us living in a Maasai hut in the compound village experiencing a minimal way of life. They were very kind, and meals were always good. They were very open to receiving beekeeping training and also included added hive value products which they could use or to sell at their market. The memory will last long with us as at an evening ceremony we have both been given Maasai names and were treated to a brilliant game drive on the Maasai Mara.

All these visits entailed much travelling sometimes on poor roads and unreliable vehicles together with living out of suitcases and left us tired and needing recovery time back here in the UK before we celebrated Christmas.

Thank you to all at St James. We very much appreciated the support and prayers for our health and safety when we were working in Kenya.

Mary and John Home