



**ANNUAL PAROCHIAL  
CHURCH MEETING  
22 October 2020**

# **AGENDA AND REPORTS 2019**

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## **AGENDAS 22 October 2020**

### **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 four members for the PCC
  - 6.2 Election of three members for the Deanery Synod
  - 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 7 April 2019**

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

**1. Welcome and Prayer**

The Rev Vikki Bisiker welcomed everyone and opened the meeting in prayer.

**2. Minutes of Vestry Meeting held on 18 March 2018**

Proposed Heather Shackleton, seconded Chris Cooke, the minutes were unanimously approved.

**3. Election of Churchwardens:**

Both Stephen Adams and Barry Parker were prepared to stand again and there being no other candidates it was unanimously agreed that they should continue as Churchwardens (proposed Margo Grant seconded Jan Ford).

Thanks were noted from Vikki and Margo for the amount of work put in by the churchwardens – and their wives

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

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting: Members present 23**

**1. Welcome and Opening Prayer**

**2. Apologies for absence:**

John & Mary Home, John & Ruth Tresidder, John (Spike) Thorne

**3. Minutes of Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 18 March 2018**

Were approved and signed (proposed Andrea Hugo, seconded Jenny Thorne).

**4. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**5. Reports**

The reports were taken as read (proposed Margo Grant, seconded Barry Parker, agreed unanimously).

**6. Elections and Appointments**

**6a Election of three members for the PCC**

Hilary Crosby, Jill Parker and Chris Cooke had completed their terms of office. Chris was stepping down, though Hilary and Jill were prepared to stand for re-election. There were four nominations: Hilary, Jill, Tom Harriden and Andrea Hugo. By a narrow margin, Hilary, Jill and Tom were elected.

At this point there was a prayer of thanks for all the PCC.

**6b Appointment of Sidespersons**

The list of sidespeople was accepted unanimously (proposed Ann Crutchlow, seconded Shirley Hurley).

**6c Appointment of Independent Examiner**

Thanks were expressed to Elizabeth McBride, for her work in examining the accounts and to Treasurer Ruth Tresidder for her meticulous work as Treasurer. Having offered to continue, Elizabeth McBride was re-appointed unanimously (proposed Pat Adams, seconded Barry Parker).

**7 Any Other Business**

**7a** Stephen proposed a vote of thanks to Vikki, for her continued support of the team leaders and churchwardens.

**7b** Jenny Thorne proposed a vote of thanks to Mrs Ron Holmes, who continued to visit church every four days to ensure the Book of Remembrance was showing the correct date.

**7c** The Thursday homegroup had inadvertently been dropped from the list of Homegroups in the Bulletin: Betty Phillips emphasised that it was still meeting regularly at 2pm.

**7d** Comment was made that the 8EQs survey results had particularly mentioned the strength of small groups.

**8 Date of next meeting:** Sunday 22 March 2020 in church following the 10am service.

The meeting closed in prayer at 12.15pm

Chair..... Date.....

**REPORTS**

**Church Management**

**Annual Report and Financial Statements for  
the year ended 31 December 2019**

**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 2019**

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:

Rev. 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
Hilary Crosby	Elected
Jan Ford	Elected, Minute Secretary to September 2019
Tom Harriden*	Elected
Bill King	Elected
Jill Parker	Elected
Heather Shackleton	Elected, Safeguarding Officer
Jenny Thorne	Elected
Ruth Tresidder*	Elected, Treasurer
Andrea Hugo	Ex-Officio, from July PCC Secretary from September 2019
*Standing Committee members	

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

Following revision there are currently 85 members on the Church Electoral Roll of whom nine are not resident within the parish (2019:87 with 12 not resident within the parish).

The average Sunday attendance was 69 (2018:69) 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 continue to reach out into the community with our Open the Book team taking bible stories into Southam St James CoE Academy and Southam Primary school, our baby and toddler group 'Jolly J's' 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 - 18. 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 2019

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 2019 with an overall attendance rate of 88%.

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.

The members of the Parochial Church Council have approved the reports for submission to the APCM which were signed by Vikki Bisiker on their behalf.

### **Review of the Year**

The four-year plan for St James was formulated to enable the church to grow, become the hub of the deanery and work towards being a church that could be financially sustainable. Over 2019 we have continued to be committed to working towards this. There continues to be new faces coming in through the doors and a sense of community, welcome and acceptance. Several congregation members have expressed a genuine sense of care, church family and inclusion.

I feel that committed prayer has been a key factor in the changes at St James' and with the Prayer 20/20 HOPE Together national initiative for 2020, I hope that the passion and commitment to prayer grows. Our prayer tree leaves are regularly changed to ones of blossom showing God's answers to prayer.

One of my frustrations over the last year is that I have been unable to invest as much time and resources with emerging and existing leaders as has been needed. We do have and appreciate the beautiful church building in Southam, but with significant repairs and funds needed just for its upkeep, a number of the leadership team are feeling drained with the responsibility of this and feel that it has distracted their time from serving through their gifts. Significant thinking, strategy and resources are needed in this area;



however, buds of hope are emerging and offers from new folk using their gifts and talents help are beginning to happen.

St James has fulfilled its commitment to increasing its Parish share by £5k per year for four years. The increase has not been plain sailing, but as a PCC, we are grateful to God for His financial provision of unexpected gifts...again answers to prayer! Regular giving does need to increase if St James is to be permanently sustainable.

The strong relationships between St James' and both the local C of E primary school and Southam Primary have continued. The Open the Book team continue to do an amazing job in many schools across the Deanery. The children have clearly listened and can relate details of Bible stories back to me when I take half termly assemblies at St James academy. As well as regular assemblies and seasonal celebrations, both primary schools' yr 5/6s take part in The Easter Experience and The Christmas Experience hosted at St James using the Crossteach resources. These experiences have been very well received by pupils and staff and it is the non-C of E Primary that requests them first every year! Through both schools, we have also had Reception Class 'weddings' re-enacted and several classes brought to St James to explore the building or to find out about Baptism. With parents involved in these events too a number of relationships with 20s & 30s have naturally built.

The Breakfast Church Sundays have been very popular with baptism families and visitors. These events have drawn large numbers ... at one time we had a queue coming out of the church doors! Relationships have been strengthened as people have got to know each other more and new lay people have volunteered to help serve etc. With the challenge of a lack of kitchen facilities etc. within the church building, we have had to be creative in the layout setup and also the food served, but I feel that we provide the best quality and hospitality that we can, and this has been well received. We have become very resourceful and adaptable as a church even though this has been frustrating at times!

The Christmas and Easter services have been creative and had a mixture of the traditional readings with the more contemporary use of video material. Carols by Candlelight, When Christmas Hurts, and Remembrance services have had particularly positive feedback and a number of new relationships with individuals, families and the community have been built through these services and all of the work each one of you do serving the community in a whole variety of ways!

It has been a privilege to see God's people grow and deepen in their relationship with God and each other, discovering their gifts, encouraging and caring for one another and each playing a part in the Body of Christ as they gather and as they live their day to day lives in the community of Southam.

I feel that with the exciting opportunities for mission and growth mentioned above, that there are now stronger foundations to enable St James to develop more fully into a sustainable local church as well as a resourcing one to the wider Deanery. So, a BIG THANK YOU for all of your faithful commitment, prayers and serving the folk of St James, the town and the community.

**Rev. Vikki Bisiker**

## **Churchwarden's Report**

At the APCM in April 2019, 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 prayers and support in our role have been and are really appreciated.

Vikki's appointment to provide interim stipendiary ministry to St James for a period of four years is due to come to an end on 30 April 2020. Under the terms of that appointment we agreed to support Vikki as she led the church into the change necessary to deliver the Diocesan Mission Purpose via the 8EQs and to develop the role of St James as a resourcing church. We also agreed to support her work developing ministry and mission to the 20s – 30s age range in the parish, which was expected to take up at least 50% of her time.

As a church family we also agreed to increase our Parish Share by £5,000 each year, over four years. This has been achieved with support, particularly from the Accerer8 funding and the use of legacy monies, and our 'arrears' of parish share amounting to £98,809 should be written off.

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 Fabric report can be found on page 18.

Looking toward the future, on the basis that, broadly, the terms of Vikki's appointment had been met, the PCC at its PCC meeting held on 14 November 2019 voted unanimously that they were in favour of a permanent appointment at St James and we are in conversation with Archdeacon Missioner, Barry Dugmore, as to how we move this forward to formally appoint Vikki. (Addendum: Following discussions with the diocese Vikki has accepted the offer of an 18-month renewal of her licence as Priest-in-Charge of St. James, to 31 October 2021.)

On an ongoing basis we continue to work very closely with Vikki and have regular meetings. 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 on the work of St James to fulfil our purpose of Worshipping God, Making New Disciples and Transforming our Community.

As part of this vision, last year we reported on our progress, or lack of, on the proposal to use the Rectory for outreach. Unfortunately, despite Vikki, Martin Green, the Area Dean, and ourselves spending a significant amount of time and having numerous meetings and conversations with the diocese and others trying to agree a solution, we were unable to move forward due to the diocese imposing significant financial constraints in their final proposal. As a result, and as was reported late last year the PCC agreed, albeit reluctantly, not to pursue the proposal at this time.

It is a national church requirement that the archdeacon inspects each parish in the archdeaconry once every three years. The inspection is a check that the administration of the church is being run properly. It includes inspection of church registers and records, insurance policies, the church inventory etc., etc. and is different from the Quinquennial Inspection, at which an architect gives a detailed report on the state of the church building. The inspection can be and was delegated to the Area Dean who then reports

back to the Archdeacon. The inspection took place in May 2019 without any problems being identified.

Much of the work and service for the Church is and always has been done quietly and without fanfare (including church cleaning, our flower arrangers, taking home communion and visiting sick or elderly members of the Church, or setting up for services and a lot more besides) all of which makes our church such a wonderful, loving and caring community to be part of. We pay tribute to all those who serve in such a selfless way - thank you.

At the time of writing, however, we do have a number of vacancies including oversight of health and safety, the maintenance and development of the church website and the church's digital online presence through Facebook and Twitter, etc. We are also looking to set up a team to care for the churchyard. An update will be provided at the APCM.

Clearly, we have significant challenges ahead, some of which are included in the various reports to this APCM, but we are both 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**

Planned giving for 2019 was slightly higher than 2018 and amounted to £3,012.37 per month compared with £2,952.11 in the previous year. The total One-Off Gift Aid donations decreased to £496.80 per month compared with £702.50 in 2018. Income from loose plate collections increased by £8.00 per month. Overall during the year General income **decreased** by £826.54 and our payments exceeded income by £10,908.66 – a very unsatisfactory situation.

The balance of £56357.63 in the General Account is purely made up of legacy money received in 2017 and 2018.

On a positive note we paid our parish share of £60,806 in full - £15,000 of this was covered by money received from the Diocesan Acceler8 Fund to offset time spent by the Rev Vikki Bisiker on working locally with the 20 to 30's age group.

Following agreement with the Diocese the historic outstanding arrears of £98,809 should now be written off.

In 2020 our parish share amounts to £56,024; Vikki's work with Acceler8 ceases at the end of April so we will only receive a grant of £5,000 from the Acceler8 Fund to assist in paying our share in full.

Significant items that need highlighting include:

We are very grateful for a donation of £4,625 received towards furthering Mission in the parish, and with gift aid Mission donations amounted to £6,131.25.

Annual maintenance/statutory checks on the gas boilers, lightning conductor, clock, fire extinguishers and Quinquennial inspection amounted to £2,161.47.

Overall Parochial church fees decreased significantly over the last year due to fewer weddings and less funerals being held in church.

The PCC thank Southam Town Council for including the churchyard grass cutting in their mowing contract and their paying for emptying the church skip throughout the year. Unfortunately, the Town Council will be unable to continue their support from 2020 onwards as they have been informed by the National Association of Local Councils that such payments contravene the Local Government Act.

We are extremely grateful to Liz McBride for examining our church accounts at no charge.

Without a substantial increase in general income we shall need to use around £25,000 of legacy monies to cover the shortfall of income over expenditure, this situation cannot continue indefinitely.

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 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 2019.

#### *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: 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020

**ST JAMES CHURCH SOUTHAM**
**ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019**

	Note	<b>Actual 2019</b>			TOTAL	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	<b>Actual 2018</b>			TOTAL
		Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted					Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>												
<b>From Donors</b>												
Under Gift Aid Schemes	1a	34,333.59	4,625.00	1,336.55	40,295.14	35,042.14	6,400.00	1,000.00	35,042.14	6,400.00	1,000.00	42,442.14
Gift Aid recovered	1b	10,043.66	1,506.25		11,549.91	9,586.48	1,250.00	253.75	9,586.48	1,250.00	253.75	11,090.23
Non Gift Aid income	1c	9,512.07			9,512.07	8,096.32			8,096.32			8,096.32
Fund raising & Appeals	1d	3,994.18		1,025.33	5,019.51	3,101.30	-339.01	2,581.03	3,101.30	-339.01	2,581.03	5,343.32
Legacies	1e	0.20			0.20	37,415.58		1,000.00	37,415.58		1,000.00	38,415.58
Insurance Claims												
Grants	1f		622.40	15,000.00	15,622.40			15,000.00			15,000.00	15,000.00
<b>Total donated income</b>		<b>57,883.70</b>	<b>6,753.65</b>	<b>17,361.88</b>	<b>81,999.23</b>	<b>93,241.82</b>	<b>7,310.99</b>	<b>19,834.78</b>	<b>93,241.82</b>	<b>7,310.99</b>	<b>19,834.78</b>	<b>120,387.59</b>
<b>Fees</b>												
PCC		3,799.00			3,799.00	6,683.00		-324.00	6,683.00		-324.00	6,359.00
<b>Total regulated fees</b>		<b>3,799.00</b>			<b>3,799.00</b>	<b>6,683.00</b>		<b>-324.00</b>	<b>6,683.00</b>		<b>-324.00</b>	<b>6,359.00</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES</b>		<b>61,682.70</b>	<b>6,753.65</b>	<b>17,361.88</b>	<b>85,798.23</b>	<b>99,924.82</b>	<b>7,310.99</b>	<b>19,510.78</b>	<b>99,924.82</b>	<b>7,310.99</b>	<b>19,510.78</b>	<b>126,746.59</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>												
<b>Diocesan costs</b>												
Parish share	2a	45,806.00		15,000.00	60,806.00	42,096.00		15,000.00	42,096.00		15,000.00	57,096.00
<b>Total Diocesan costs</b>		<b>45,806.00</b>		<b>15,000.00</b>	<b>60,806.00</b>	<b>42,096.00</b>		<b>15,000.00</b>	<b>42,096.00</b>		<b>15,000.00</b>	<b>57,096.00</b>
<b>Clergy &amp; Service costs</b>												
Clergy expenses	3a	326.87			326.87	381.72			381.72			381.72
Altar supplies	3b	191.05			191.05	124.25			124.25			124.25
Music	3c	533.71			533.71	527.80		32.94	527.80		32.94	560.74
<b>Other</b>	3d	190.00			190.00	1,130.00			1,130.00			1,130.00
<b>Total costs</b>		<b>1,241.63</b>			<b>1,241.63</b>	<b>2,163.77</b>		<b>32.94</b>	<b>2,163.77</b>		<b>32.94</b>	<b>2,196.71</b>



**ST JAMES CHURCH SOUTHAM**
**ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019**

	Note	Actual 2019 Unrestricted	Actual 2019 Designated	Actual 2019 Restricted	TOTAL	Actual 2018 Unrestricted	Actual 2018 Designated	Actual 2018 Restricted	TOTAL
<b>EXPENSES (Continued)</b>									
<b>Administration</b>									
Administrator	4a	5,065.28			5,065.28	4,865.76			4,865.76
Office supplies	4b	1,788.93			1,788.93	1,879.49			1,879.49
Other	4c	380.27			380.27	607.10			607.10
Office telephone		459.57			459.57	499.59			499.59
Church Office	4d	4,933.86			4,933.86	4,679.75			4,679.75
<b>Total Administration costs</b>		<b><u>12,627.91</u></b>			<b><u>12,627.91</u></b>	<b><u>12,531.69</u></b>			<b><u>12,531.69</u></b>
<b>Maintenance</b>									
Utilities	5a	3,430.14			3,430.14	2,702.89			2,702.89
Insurance	5b	6,319.23			6,319.23	6,227.18			6,227.18
General repairs	5c	2,706.37			2,706.37	11,137.31		3,013.93	14,151.24
Churchyard	5d			504.00	504.00			80.00	80.00
<b>Total Maintenance costs</b>		<b><u>12,455.74</u></b>		<b><u>504.00</u></b>	<b><u>12,959.74</u></b>	<b><u>20,067.38</u></b>		<b><u>3,093.93</u></b>	<b><u>23,161.31</u></b>
<b>Ministry support</b>									
Appeals & charitable giving	6a	62.50		676.50	739.00	156.25		754.49	910.74
Children & home mission	6b	397.58	622.40	507.63	1527.61	654.45	231.00	630.97	1,516.42
<b>Total Ministry support</b>		<b><u>460.08</u></b>	<b><u>622.40</u></b>	<b><u>1,184.13</u></b>	<b><u>2,266.61</u></b>	<b><u>810.70</u></b>	<b><u>231.00</u></b>	<b><u>1,385.46</u></b>	<b><u>2,427.16</u></b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b><u>72,591.36</u></b>	<b><u>622.40</u></b>	<b><u>16,688.13</u></b>	<b><u>89,901.89</u></b>	<b><u>77,669.54</u></b>	<b><u>231.00</u></b>	<b><u>19,512.33</u></b>	<b><u>97,412.87</u></b>
<b>SURPLUS/DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR</b>									
Add Reserves b/fwd at 01 Jan 2019		-10,908.66	6,131.25	673.75	-4,103.66	22,255.28	7,079.99	-1.55	29,333.72
<b>TOTAL RESERVES 31 DEC 2019</b>		<b><u>67,266.29</u></b>				<b><u>45,011.01</u></b>			
		<b><u>56,357.63</u></b>				<b><u>67,266.29</u></b>			

**RESTRICTED FUNDS MOVEMENT**

<b>Fund Description</b>	<b>Balance 01 Jan 19 £</b>	<b>Receipts £</b>	<b>Payments £</b>	<b>Balance 31 Dec 19 £</b>
Audio/visual/technology	38.81			38.81
Booklets	25.00		8.63	16.37
Building maintenance	0.00	1,336.55		1,336.55
Children ex Infant Welfare Trust	6,805.05		106.54	6,698.51
Churchyard maintenance	1,040.00	137.52	504.00	673.52
Flower Fund	115.46	116.38	76.50	155.34
Granny Wagon	153.10		44.98	108.12
He*Brews	291.24		237.77	53.47
Hope 14 onwards	40.37		40.37	0.00
International	364.36	752.68	600.00	517.04
John Milner Organ Fund	601.22			601.22
"Messy Church"	340.23	18.75	69.34	289.64
Parish Share	0.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	0.00
	<b>9,814.84</b>	<b>17,361.88</b>	<b>16,688.13</b>	<b>10,488.59</b>

**DESIGNATED FUNDS MOVEMENT**

<b>Fund Description</b>	<b>Balance 01 Jan 19 £</b>	<b>Receipts £</b>	<b>Payments £</b>	<b>Balance 31 Dec 19 £</b>
Jolly J's	0.00	684.53	684.53	0.00
Mission	14,919.00	6,753.65	622.40	21,050.25
	<b>14,919.00</b>	<b>7,438.18</b>	<b>1,306.93</b>	<b>21,050.25</b>

**LIABILITIES – Agency Collections**
**0.00**
**LIQUID FUNDS AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2019**
**£**

Bank

87,896.47

**TOTAL FUNDS**

Less Restricted Funds held on behalf of others as per above

10,488.59

Less Designated Funds

21,050.25

Less Liabilities – Agency Collections

**St James Funds at 31 December 2019 see Receipts & Payments A/c**
**56,357.63**



**Accounts for Year Ended 31 December 2019**

**NOTES RELATING TO 2019 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 £4,625 donation designated for Mission and £1,366.55 restricted for the Building Fund.
- 1b Tax reclaimed from above and from the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (unrestricted) from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019.
- 1c Planned giving that may not qualify for tax relief and loose plate collections.
- 1d Unrestricted includes proceeds from the Christmas Fayre, one off donations and insertions in the Book of Remembrance. Restricted includes International, Messy Church, churchyard and church flowers.
- 1e Additional interest received from the estate of Mrs DL Roberts deceased.
- 1f Grants received from the Bishop's Mission Fund towards applying for planning permission for change of use of The Rectory (designated) and from Acceler8 towards the parish share (restricted)

**Expenditure**

- 2a Our contribution to Coventry Diocese including the grant received from Acceler8.
- 3a Clergy expenses and telephone.
- 3b Candles, Communion Wine etc.
- 3c Music Licences for 2019.
- 3d Visiting laity/clergy undertaking funerals.
- 4a Salary and tax for Administrator. The Office is manned on Tuesdays and Fridays by volunteers.
- 4b Rental and maintenance for photocopier, stationery, and Book of Remembrance.
- 4c Fund raising and refreshment expenses and administration of weddings and funerals.
- 4d Rental of Church Office and associated utilities.
- 5a Gas and Electricity supplies and Water rates for St James Church.

- 5b Insurance of buildings, contents and public liability.
- 5c Includes routine maintenance of fire extinguishers, clock and lightning conductor and statutory testing of gas boilers, quinquennial inspection and repairs to roof leaks
- 5d We are extremely grateful to Southam Town Council for including mowing and strimming the churchyard in their grass cutting contract and paying for emptying the skip. Restricted expenditure covered routine maintenance and provision of plants around the Bell Tower.
- 6a Unrestricted includes donations to Southam Christmas Lights Association and Southam Foodbank. Restricted includes expenditure on Christmas and Easter flowers and International donations to MAF, the Barnabas Fund and Bees Abroad Uganda Good Shepherd Project.
- 6b Unrestricted includes purchase of Christmas and Easter cards and Breakfast Church expenses. Designated includes fees for the abortive change of use for The Rectory. Restricted includes books for children who were baptised, expenditure by the Open the Book team, Messy Church, Granny Wagon and the Cross Teach Trust Easter and Christmas Experiences for Primary School pupils.

## **Giving Report**

A significant proportion of our giving is eligible for tax relief and allows us to claim back from HM Revenue & Customs 25p for every £1 donated in this way.

During 2019 a total of 31 people paid by standing order into the church bank account. Giving by this method amounted to £23,172.92 – an increase of £159.00 over the previous year.

9 people donated through the blue envelope scheme and a total of £6,611.97 was given by this method, a decrease of £755.53 over the previous year.

A total of 60 people contributed to the church by yellow envelope, of these 14 gave on a regular basis. Total giving by this method (including one-off gift aid donations) amounted to £10,510.25, a decrease of £1,550.47 over 2018.

We received gift aid of £11,549.91 from HM Revenue & Customs, this is an increase of £459.68 over the previous year. Tax is recovered in arrear and covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

During the year the number of people who are non-taxpayers who gave on a regular basis was 9 and income increased by £1,319.68 to £6,363.58. I am conscious that as more members of our congregation retire it does mean fewer people fall into the tax bracket.

Cash collections amounted to £3,148.49 an increase of £96.07 over the previous year.

Listed below is the equivalent weekly giving during 2019 whether paid by standing order, cheques or the envelope schemes:

£1.00 up to £5.00	27 people
Over £5.00 up to £10.00	16 people
Over £10.00 up to £15.00	8 people
Over £15.00 up to £20.00	0 people
Over £20.00 up to £30.00	5 people
Over £30.00 up to £40.00	2 people
Over £40.00 up to £50.00	1 person
Over £50.00 up to £100.00	3 people
Over £100 up to £200.00	1 person

I would like to thank everyone who contributes to our church finances especially those who give on a regular basis, whether it be weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually.

If you would like more information on ways to contribute to St James on a regular basis, please do contact me.

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

### **Fabric Report**

An important point of note is that Mark King was appointed as Architect for St James, and Mark carried out the Quinquennial Inspection in March of this year. No major new issues were highlighted as a result of his inspection. The main issues of concern are those previously noted by the PCC: the stonework and pointing of the tower and spire, and the south aisle roof. The estimates obtained for these works (including replacing heating system components) totalled approximately £126,000. A list of the repair estimates is included with this report (see below). As time passes the expected costs will rise and further deterioration of the building will occur. The barrier fencing around the tower area which was erected following some minor falls of stone has continued to be maintained in place as a precaution.

As the very long-standing historic Parish Share "debt" is expected to be officially cancelled by the Diocese by the end of April 2020 it will then be possible for St James to make applications for grants towards building works.

After many, many hours of meetings, discussions, planning applications and report writing, it was finally concluded that there was no realistic possibility of using the Rectory as a resource for St James and the wider Deanery, mainly due to the significant financial conditions that would have been placed on the congregation by the Diocese and serious

uncertainties concerning how any arrangements would work in the event of the building being required by the diocese to also house a member of the clergy at the same time.

Regular minor maintenance, testing and certification continues to be provided in relation to the fabric. Bill King regularly checks roof gutters and various drains and removes blockages. At the start of 2019 Bill replaced the extractor fan in the "tea-room" which had stopped working.

In relation to the interior fittings of the church, the water leaking through the South Aisle roof has discoloured small areas of carpet of the side platform, and the seat fabric on a number of the church chairs is badly worn. During 2020 some members of the church are planning (alongside Rev. Vikki) to make some non-structural changes within the building to reduce clutter, rationalise storage/recycling boxes etc and to make the building more welcoming and visitor/user friendly.

The heating system has continued to work without major expenditure on repairs, although perhaps not as effectively as we would all like! An estimate to replace the boilers and radiators was obtained during the year, but no progress on this issue has been possible due to lack of funds.

The Southam Town Council has announced it will no longer provide grass cutting services for the churchyard, so St James will need to directly employ and pay a contractor to do the work in 2020. Excellent work has been done by volunteers in tidying and improving various areas of the churchyard and it is hoped this will be continued through 2020 in the areas not maintained by the grass-cutting contractors.

At present we do not have an active Fabric Committee and are seeking both inside and outside the church membership for those with skills, interest and the capacity to assist the PCC in this area.

Please do contact the churchwardens or PCC if you know of anyone with skills and interest in buildings, grant applications or fund raising who may be able to assist St James make progress with the necessary repairs and changes to ensure the building remains useable and becomes fit for purpose for the 2020s and beyond.

**Fabric Estimates (as at 9<sup>th</sup> May 2019):**

Item	Cost £	Inc VAT	Comments
<b>SOUTH AISLE ROOF</b> (Updated estimate February 2020)	33,415 (34,400)	40,098 (41,280)	Stainless steel roofing Includes credit for lead removed
<b>TOWER &amp; SPIRE:</b> Scaffolding	13,130	15,756	
Barrier Fencing	550	660	
<b>Tower:</b> Pointing, removal of vegetation, replacement of stone as required + Cost of stone	6,516 500	7,819 600	
<b>Spire:</b> Repointing, Re-gilding of weathervane and clock Steeplejack ladders, ropes, other equipment	20,221	24,265	Steeplejack Subcontractors May be additional cost for other work on clock Assumes Hewer's Scaffolding in place on tower
Fee for Management of subcontractors	2,022	2,426	Payable to Hewer Builders
<b>Total - Spire and Tower</b>	<b>42,939</b>	<b>51,526</b>	
<b>Total – South Aisle Roof, Spire &amp; Tower</b>	<b>76,354</b>	<b>91,624</b>	
<b>Heating</b>	28,468	34,161	New boilers, new radiators (soak away extra?)
<b>Total including heating</b>	<b>104,822</b>	<b>125,785</b>	(May 2019)

**Stephen Adams**

**Electoral Roll Officer's Report**

Four members died

Two members added to the roll

The Electoral Roll now stands at 85 members

**Margo Grant – Electoral Roll Officer**

## **Safeguarding Officer's Report**

Once again Safeguarding compliance has been given high priority by Coventry Diocese and therefore St. James Church, Southam. Ten volunteers successfully renewed their clearance to continue in their roles through the Data Barring Service (DBS) this procedure is required every 5 years.

The Diocese introduced a Parish Dashboard system to assist parishes in keeping track of their position in respect of compliance with Safeguarding requirements. Southam parish signed up to this system which also enables the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor to access statistics for their records.

A requisite of the Parish Action Plan is that a Risk Assessment be carried out for each group or activity within the Church premises or outside as authorised by the PCC. To enable this process to progress it has been necessary for the designated leader of such group to attend the C2 training course. Almost every leader has now attended a C2 course and compilation of the risk assessments is well underway. It is hoped to complete this task within the next few months. Many thanks to all concerned for their willingness in undertaking this additional job.

Safeguarding, making sure our Church is as safe as it can possibly be, is everyone's responsibility and I thank you all again for your continued co-operation.

***Heather Shackleton - Parish Safeguarding Officer***

## **Deanery Synod Report**

Deanery Synod meets four times each year, is supported by the Mission 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.

Your current representatives are Stephen Adams and Barry Parker, their current term of office running out on 31 May 2020

Each parish elect representatives to sit on Deanery Synod for a term of three years, the number elected being determined by the numbers on their electoral roll. Acknowledging that numbers on electoral rolls across the Deanery were falling, which would result in a reduction of representatives, the Diocesan Synod resolved, that based on 2019 electoral roll numbers, to increase the numbers of representatives. For St James we can now appoint up to three representatives instead of two.

As an elected Diocesan Synod representative Margo Grant attends Deanery Synod. All three are ex-officio members of our PCC.

During the year, together with two other deaneries, Southam Deanery was chosen by the Diocese to pilot a scheme to draw up extensive plans for the medium to long term future for the Deanery 'The Deanery Plan'. Meetings were held with the Diocese following which Deanery agreed that this should be pursued through Deanery Chapter and the Deanery Mission Team.

Another approach was made by the Diocese to see if Southam Deanery would like to take part in a pilot scheme to 'rebrand' the Parish Share. Currently the Share was seen as representing the cost of the clergy in use in the parish, but the change would be to consider it a contribution to the Diocese in payment for clergy services provided.

Following consideration of the draft proposal by the Deanery Treasurer's Group the decision was taken not to take part in the pilot scheme but to first prepare our 'Deanery Plan' and then consider how to finance it.

Under the 'HOPE 19' banner we continued to run a variety of Deanery wide missional events for all in various venues across the Deanery. These included:

- 'In The Spirit', a service of contemporary guitar led worship and an inspirational and challenging message held at St Esprit Church, Marton on the first Sunday of each month, 6pm for 6.30pm.
- An evening with John Daly, local dementia champion, helping churches be dementia aware and dementia friendly,
- An evening with Andy Castle (*Thrive*) on "Spiritual Parenting" of our young people in our churches,
- Film nights showing 'I Can Only Imagine' and 'The Gospel in Chairs'.
- The Deanery cream tea with bouncy castle and a talk from Claire Maxim, the new CEO of the Arthur Rank Centre),
- Two Massive Messy Churches, one featuring John Hardwick a singer, juggler, puppeteer and storyteller, and
- Bryn Haworth in Concert, an inspirational evening of Gospel, Rock and Blues.

Unfortunately, an event planned for December featuring John Archer, comedy magician, had to be cancelled as, following an appearance on Britain's Got Talent, he was booked on a tour of the USA!

Looking forward, a completely new programme is planned under the 'HOPE 2020' banner. 'In The Spirit' continues on the first Sunday of each month and there will be more training, including the Bible Course, our 2020 Deanery Lent Course, the 2020 Prayer Initiative, Massive Messy Church events, concerts and a cream tea.

Posters and flyers for upcoming events can be found on the Hope notice board.

***Stephen Adams and Barry Parker***

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

### **Sound and Vision**

Apart from occasional minor issues, the sound, computer and projection system has operated appropriately during 2019, and other than batteries and cables, there has been no need to repair or replace any of the items in use.

Only a little progress has been made so far on the plans proposed last year to reconfigure the desk and mixer cabinet, there have been some minor alterations to the desk and the provision of some CD storage baskets.

The additional LED lighting strings together with the window displays were particularly appreciated and commented upon by many visitors during the Christmas period. Any suggestions for further improvements to lighting particularly for special events would be greatly welcomed.

Any offers of assistance in the operation of the current Sound and Projection System during services will be warmly welcomed and full training will be given to anyone interested.

At the same time, it is recognised that there is always room for creativity and updating in line with ongoing technological advances in this area. This is an opportunity to improve the overall experience in the building for both visitors and regulars, and to enhance our worship together.

### ***Stephen Adams***

### **Music Group**

The music group continues to provide and lead the worship songs at the 10am Holy Communion service on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays each month as we are able.

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 they are taken on board as much as possible.

A big thank you once again to Ann for her keyboard skills, Stephen – drums, Tom – French horn and to John Home, Margo and Becky for singing. Thank you also to Gerry who joins us when he can, on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday.

If anyone is interested in joining the group for Sunday morning services, or maybe for special occasions only, that would be really good. Do you sing? Can you play the keyboard? An extra keyboard player would be useful. Is there anyone who can play an instrument of any description? Anyone who can offer any of these talents will be most welcome!! Please just let me know if you feel any of these things are 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 also had very good attendance over the Christmas and Easter periods and had 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 only two Weddings and hosted seven bands of visiting ringers. The Mop Peal was rung by a visiting band from Warwick again this year.

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 again during the year due to lack of ringers. This being due to some of our ringers having to work abroad, and illness. We do have four learners at the moment, and we are hoping that they will become regular members of the band in due course. Occasionally we 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 fifteen people including several of our ringing friends from other Towers in the area.

We are still looking to recruit new members into our team. Almost all of our band are now pensioners our youngest ringer is now forty-six 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**

As reported last year, the number of children regularly attending church on a Sunday morning remains low but more recently we have begun to see numbers increase. The numbers of 'Southam' children attending the deanery-wide Massive Church, held twice a year at the Grange Hall, our own Messy Church, Breakfast Church and those attending services specifically aimed at families with young children are encouraging. With an increasing number of baptisms, we also see more children and they are encouraged to take part in the children's work during the service, without missing out on the baptism!

Through the good services of John Hedge we continue to provide something for the children whilst the adults have their own teaching, and in those weeks John is not available Pat Adams leads the group. Our thanks and appreciation go to both and also to those others who help out with the group. If neither are available, we make sure we have age-appropriate worksheets available.

We continue to receive positive feedback regarding the location of the children's corner which remains popular with parents who are looking after children as they feel more part of the service.

Looking forward we are planning to improve the look and feel of the children's area.

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

#### **Open the Book**

As has become my custom in these reports, I like to take the closing sentence from last year as my starting point. In this I noted that whilst God is good and provides, He also challenges. This year the challenge has been very much for the ability of the team to keep going, with several members having health issues themselves or within their immediate family. But yes, God has provided – not just improved health and healing but also demonstrated to us the strength within our team to support each other at difficult times. I would like to thank the whole team, but especially Heather and Rose, for continuing with all the planned sessions during my two periods of absence.

The pattern of visiting the various schools has remained the same as last year. We go into St James C of E Academy fortnightly to share God's word from the Storyteller Bible. Stories are carefully chosen, after discussion with Mrs Palmizi – head of school – to support the R.E. curriculum and to enrich the provision of Collective Worship.

Each half term we visit Priors Marston, Napton and Stockton schools (The Bridges Group schools) to lead an assembly there. As team leader I try to attend the planning sessions for the coming term and am made to feel welcome and that the work of OTB team is greatly valued. Once again, the stories told are carefully chosen so that they fit in well with the school's planning for R.E.

Team members continue to support school visits to church where possible. A particular favourite is working with Cross Teach at Easter and Christmas when they share "Experiences" with Year 6 pupils from both St James School and Southam Primary School. At these key points of the Christian year we also enjoy taking part in the Good Friday family service and the Crib service on Christmas Eve. Coming into an unfamiliar environment is made easier for many children when they recognise team members!

We are fortunate in having a good number of very committed people in our team but are ALWAYS pleased to welcome new members. The main qualification is having a great desire to share God's word with children through storytelling and drama (no previous experience required!) Please speak to me if you'd like to know more.

***Jenny Thorne – Team Leader***

**Granny Wagon – Friday Night Hot Chocolate in the Park**

This year marks 15 years of 'hot chocolate in the park'!

"What shall we do about all the youngsters hanging around the lychgate?" asked Chris, in March 2005.

"We'll do a Granny Waggon", replied Jan, used to serving refreshments outdoors at the end of cycle races, transporting hot water pump flasks and plastic cups in an ancient vehicle to the venues.

We decided we'd better check with the authorities: God, John Armstrong, PCC, and then do a prayer walk around the town, finishing at the bench just below the telephone exchange, overlooking the park. It was bitterly cold, and hordes of rowdy youngsters could be heard, but not seen, in the recreation ground.

The following week, Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2005, we loaded the car with flasks (donated by John & Mary Home), a very large container of drinking chocolate powder (donated by Andy), custard creams and pink wafer biscuits (donated by various supporters), milk, teaspoons, plastic cups, tea, coffee, squash and some cold water (in case).

We pulled up outside the Wattons Lodge entrance to the park, Chris went in to invite the youngsters to have some hot chocolate while Jan prepared a few drinks ready to hand out..... We served about 50 drinks that first evening, including one tea to the Police Support Officer, who'd come along to see what was happening.

We regularly served drinks to 30 or 40 youngsters on a Friday evening for a number of years – now we feel pleased if a dozen or so turn up on a good night - society has changed a lot over the past 15 years, mostly I presume due to the number of electronic devices which engage the young people to such an extent.

Huge thanks again to our stalwart team of seven, who have turned up in wind and rain (and occasionally sunshine) most Friday evenings 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. Our customers are generally between 11 and 16 though we welcome everyone. Often in the summer, dads and small children are regulars, as well as dog-walkers and curious passers-by. One summer recently, we had a few weeks of organised rounders games, led by Gary White, which went down well.

It's a great pleasure to offer drinks to all and sundry, and interesting conversations sometimes 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**

This youth group lives up to what it says on the tin! Meeting at The Vicarage in Radford Semele on the 2nd & 4th Sunday evenings, we explore faith in a relational way, chew over the challenges that the young people face today, watch films, and share food. It's only a small group of secondary age young people, but they value the time invested in them and we have lots of laughter along the way too. We are very aware of the pressures of schoolwork and times of exams and so have been flexible in our meeting times this past year as some took GCSEs and A levels. If you know of anyone who would like to pop in and CHiLL then please have a word with Vikki...sadly you do have to be of secondary school age!

***Rev. Vikki Bisiker***

**Jolly J's**

Our baby and toddler group is going from strength to strength on a Monday morning, Lucy and Clare are now in charge of the play and Rose, Chris, Sylvia, Emma and Pam are the tea and coffee and snacks brigade. It all works very well, and we have many lively children and lots of babies, running from 10 until 11.30 with snack time, crafts and songs to finish. It is a lovely atmosphere and an opportunity for parents, carers and grandparents to chat and share their stories and concerns.

We are always needing extra help if you would like to join us.

***Chris Cooke***

## **Homegroups**

### **The Monday Evening Homegroup**

We are a small Homegroup who study God's word in a variety of ways to enable us as a group to gain more knowledge of a God led lifestyle. Throughout this year we have used different formats from our CWR study of Hebrews, with some video clips on different parts to give us an easier understanding. We have enjoyed the Lent study. We also joined with another Homegroup to do some different studies.

We have recently started "The Bible Project: - An Overview of the Bible New Testament", which is an on-line study. These are added to by the Streams in the Desert on 5 Mondays in the year at St Paul's, Leamington for the female members of the group. The men have the Men's Breakfast with speakers on various subjects.

The studies have also been added to with meals out for birthday celebrations, BBQ, and gardening to help as a group where needed. We are joining the 2020 prayer events when we can. Some of us also will join in with the Diocese Study for eight weeks. During the year we have had new members join us, some to move on with work commitments and some to stay. Do ask any of the St James Homegroup Leader if you would like to know more. We are all listed in the pew sheet.

### ***Juliet Houghton***

### **The Tuesday Evening Homegroup**

In Psalm 133v1 we read, "How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity." Those words are as true today as they were all those thousands of years ago.

It is our joy and privilege to lead this homegroup, so we recently asked the group what homegroup means to them. Here are some comments:

- It helps me to learn more and want to study more. It has become my 'Family' within the larger family of the Church.
- Homegroup has brought new knowledge and fellowship to me.
- Regular meetings for Bible study and discussion have been important in developing faith.
- Homegroup has helped me to build friendships, be myself and grow in faith.

During the past year we have studied various aspects of Christian living to help us to become 'more like Jesus'. We have looked at the Bible to discover who God says we are (not what we think or feel or what others say about us), but that we are chosen, loved, precious..... We are currently studying 'Men of the Bible' and we're working our way through from Abraham. Not only are we discovering that the men God used were often weak, insecure and felt inadequate for the task (like we do) but we are working through the Bible chronologically seeing 'God's story' unfold and discovering the links between the Old and New Testament.

There is a good support network between group members as we care for each other through the 'ups and downs' of everyday life! We spend time praying together for topical issues and for each other. This care for each other is often maintained between homegroup meetings. It 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. As a homegroup we enjoy meeting socially at different points during the year. Unsurprisingly these gatherings revolve around food! We also try to support additional

Church and Deanery events as they are advertised throughout the year and always find these fun and an opportunity to further develop our friendships.

If, as yet, you don't belong to a homegroup and are interested in finding out more then please talk to Stephen and Pat or telephone them on 813753. We meet on alternate Tuesday evenings at our home - 6, Sycamore Grove, at 7.30pm for coffee/tea and 'catch-up', at 8pm we start the 'study' and the official end 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 homegroup is informal, relaxed and fun! We meet fortnightly, mainly on a Wednesday evening but are flexible so that we can stay connected.

It is a safe, welcoming place where we can share openly the challenges of life, the ups and the downs. To challenge and support each other, to confide and confess, to forgive and be forgiven, to laugh and weep together, to be accountable to each other, to watch over each other and to learn and grow together in faith as we study the bible and pray together.

During 2019 we used a variety of resources to draw us closer to Jesus.

For example, we studied Revelation. Reading the bible, listening to short talks and discussion helped us all to better understand the book of Revelation and see the whole plan of God from the beginning to end that is painted in glorious vivid images.

We also hosted a 'taster' course of 'Reading Between the Lines' to which we invited anyone from St James to join us. Many phrases in the English language have originated from the Bible, such as 'Given up the ghost', 'Pride comes before a fall', 'Putting words in your mouth'. From Genesis through to Revelation, Evangelist Glen Scrivener, takes one phrase at a time, and unpacks spiritual truths in a short video. For all who came it was an encouraging time to see the many links between the Old Testament and New Testament and find how they all point to the grace of Jesus.

To date there are 369 available as a daily email or on an app to your phone, on You Tube or the Speak Life website. We chose just 6 as an encouragement to dig deeper into God's word. If you would like to know more visit <https://speaklife.org.uk/rbtl/>.

Each time we meet we start with refreshments; Margo is always ready and waiting to serve a cup of tea or a great cup of coffee. Occasionally wine is also offered to celebrate a birthday or special occasion. We also had extra times in 2019 when we met together socially to share a meal.

Our time together ends linking hands to share the grace to which we have added a line to remember all those whom we love, finishing with Amen followed by a rousing 'olé'!

We encourage anyone who is not in a home group to try one, as you will see from the reports of all the home groups at St James, they are all different but share a common theme of being committed to helping each other live out our Christian lives in the context of loving relationships.

***Jill Parker***

**The Thursday Afternoon Homegroup**

Following a break, the Thursday Afternoon Homegroup will be starting up again soon. Please keep your eye on the Bulletin for more information.

## **Church Liaison**

### **Combined Churches**

Representatives of the four churches meet three times yearly to exchange information, discuss the possibility of joint events, and compare notes regarding covering the monthly rotas for the services at the various residential homes.

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, and a substantial amount taken in donations!

The 'Open the Book' team were alongside providing a 'Messy Church' opportunity for the younger children. Although the Nativity scene was on display again outside the Tithe Lodge, sadly despite our best attempts it failed to light up this year. We are hoping that this will be rectified before the next 'switch on'!

The Good Friday Walk of Witness, instigated well over 30 years ago by Southam Community Church, has been held every year. 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 Tithe Lodge for a brief service. Large numbers of hot cross buns are given to shoppers and passers-by as we go. There is generally a satisfactorily large group gathered at the final stop, many of whom were curious bystanders who joined in!

***Jan Ford***

### **Southam St James C of E Academy Foundation Governors**

You will notice from the title of this report that the process of joining the Coventry Diocesan Multi Academy Trust is now complete. This has had a significant impact on the school in several ways and, whilst most of them have been beneficial, there have been some considerable teething problems. These were largely to do with financial issues and the governing body were extremely fortunate to have a couple of governors who are very experienced in finance and who were able to obtain satisfactory outcomes for the school.

One of these governors is Dave Howell who retired at Christmas, having been a Foundation Governor on behalf of St James Church for twenty years! Dave has done a tremendous amount of work throughout his time as a governor but in recent years worked tirelessly as a member of the small committee who negotiated the school through collaboration with Long Itchington C.E. Primary and then again as we moved into academisation. I personally am extremely grateful for all he has done in making sure that the school is well run but more importantly, that all of the children get the very best Christian and academic education.

As part of an Academy the Local Governing Body (as it is now called) has a different role than when the school was Church Aided, some responsibilities being held by the management of the Academy Trust. This does not mean that the role of the governor is any less important or valued. In fact, the monitoring of the quality of education which the pupils receive is firmly with the LGB, as is accountability for how money coming to the school from central government is spent. Under the new constitution there are fewer governors, so it means that each one has to be committed to their role and be prepared to be an active member.



In spite of these changes at managerial level, the ethos of the school remains unchanged. It is a happy school where all children are welcomed, nurtured and encouraged to “Let their light shine” (school motto). It is extremely well led by Mrs Ali Hine – executive head teacher – and Mrs Kathy Palmizi – head of school for St James. Their Christian leadership inspires the staff to follow their example and as a church we should be very grateful for what they achieve.

Standards at the school continue to improve and are currently rated comfortably in the “Good” category by the Local Authority on their regular visits. As with all small one class entry schools, fluctuations in the birth rate and numbers entering the school each September have a massive impact on Budgets. The school is fortunate to have an active PTFA whose fundraising helps to provide enrichment opportunities for the children as well as more basic equipment needed.

At the LGB meeting in December we welcomed Roderick Clark, known to many of you from his long association with St James Church in various roles. Rev Vikki feels unable to take up her position as Ex-Officio member at the moment so Coventry Diocese suggested that Roderick be considered. With his Christian background and also his experience in education I’m sure that he will do a wonderful job.

The January meeting will be the last for David Baxter, a Foundation governor for the last eight years. As well as his Christian outlook and the business experience he can bring to meetings, David’s children have attended the school during this time so in addition he brought the parental point of view. Our thanks must go to David for his commitment to St James governors, even when working far away from home meant attendance was difficult.

Another year when there have been lots of changes at St James – mostly good!

***Jenny Thorne – Foundation Governor and Vice-Chair of LGB***

## **Mission and Outreach**

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

During the year the Flower Fund received donations of £116.38 towards the cost of Easter and Christmas flowers.

We did not hold a Summer Fete in 2018 but in 2019 we raised the worthwhile sum of £731.35 and our Christmas Fayre raised £1,307.17, a significant increase over the previous year.

**Forward dates for your diary for 2020-** our Summer Fete will be held on **Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June** and our Christmas Fayre on **Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December**. Please do try and support us on these occasions.

***Ruth Tresidder Tel: 813254***

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

A small group of licensed lay people take communion to any housebound parishioners who request it, on a regular basis, including Greenways at Long Itchington, where a longstanding member of our congregation was living for some time and a small group of residents attend regularly.

The communion service at Galanos House is now four weekly, mainly because there are so many other activities going on there with which we compete! We also hold a monthly weekday communion service at Wattons Lodge where a monthly Sunday Evening service is also held by the Congregational Church.

Three of the churches are on a rota for the last Sunday in the month to take an evening service at Tithe Lodge, instigated by one of the residents, in addition to the regular first Sunday afternoon services at Galanos House and Newstead Lodge, in which all four churches partake.

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 continue to be well supported, giving an opportunity for people to meet, chat and pray. Many visitors see the church open on Friday morning and drop in to look around. The money raised has meant that we can give to some international fund-raising events. This year we have given £200 to Bees abroad for a project in a Ugandan school, to Ministry Aviation Fellowship for their work in many remote places in the world and to The Barnabus fund which supports persecuted Christians in many parts of the world. Thank you to our helpers and our customers that make a difference.

The church is open from 10am – 12 noon with coffee at 10.30am onwards and midday prayers for reconciliation at 12 noon, please come and join us.

Thank you for all your support enabling us to support these projects,

***Chris Cooke and Jan Ford***

### **Men's Breakfast**

In pulling this report together I have teamed up with Ian Crowther (from Ufton Church) who with myself and Roger Lane organise our Men's Breakfasts.

As a new decade dawns, it seems amazing that our first meeting took place back in February 2000. Originally it was held at the Stoneythorpe Hotel in Southam, but its closure and conversion to a wedding venue in 2009 meant we were homeless!

Undaunted we found a new location: Ufton Village Hall and "*one of our own*", Roger Lane volunteered to man the kitchen. What a boon that has proved to be! The other two members of the Breakfast triumvirate are Barry Parker and Ian Crowther and attendance has grown from single figures to their maximum of thirty - all sitting down to ***Chef Roger's Full English for a fiver*** - with even a Waiting List on occasion.

Originally, talks were on a religious theme, but now we can listen to a range of topics: Work in charities, both Christian and secular, Authors, some nationally recognised, Clergy from the local area, Olympic Games volunteers, Experts on HS2 and even some in lighter vein. Martin Pleasance's Talk on Body Language had us enthralled and though Gwen Zanzottera's Talk "Topless in Stratford" did cause some members' wives to look askance, her anecdotal and hilarious description of life as a guide on top of a tour bus revealed all - in the nicest possible way.

Gwen was just one of the many lady Speakers we have welcomed over the years and Inspector Allison Wiggin from Warwickshire Police will be our first Speaker in 2020. We also delight in hearing Talks from "*one of our own*" and their topics have ranged far and wide through, for example: Life in a Boarding School to a Charity Cycle Ride to Rome.

We are always on the lookout for new speakers so if you can think of someone we might invite, or if you would like to speak yourself you would be very welcome. Please email Barry Parker at [champagnebuff@gmail.com](mailto:champagnebuff@gmail.com).

Key to our success is the mantra Fun, Friendship and Laughter which every occasion delivers, and members come from far and wide: not just Southam and Ufton, but Leamington, Radford, Warwick, Daventry and their surrounding villages.

We also have a Men's Breakfast 'Christmas Meal', historically in the pub!

Our sole costs are rent and provisions, which means we give every Speaker a cheque for the charity of their choice. In 2019 that generated £970 for worthy causes, so not only did we thoroughly enjoy ourselves, we also helped others less fortunate.....

We still have room for new members and invitations to our Breakfasts will appear in the Church Bulletin each month.

### ***Barry Parker (and Ian Crowther)***

### **Mothers' Union**

Southam Branch meet on the second Thursday of the month usually in St James church unless otherwise stated on the programme which can be found on the Mothers' union Coventry website under 'Our branches/Southam' or on the noticeboard in church.

At the start of the year members and friends enjoyed a New Year lunch at the Bowling Green and the annual Subs were collected.

We had a varied programme during the year which included talks from organisations supported by Mothers' Union, members own presentations of adventures and interests, outings out and fundraising events. All our meetings include notices, prayers, socialising and refreshments.

Fundraising included Raffles. Coffee, bric-a-brac and cake sale morning, a summer strawberry afternoon tea, an annual card sale where Mothers' Union merchandise is sold and also Donations given during meetings. All monies raised are sent to Head office and distributed to the various Mothers' Union causes.

Other activities take place regularly including prison visiting, knitting items for hospitals and baptisms, calling in on indoor members, supporting church events and prayers.

In September members joined in with the Thursday morning Holy Communion service then the annual AGM was held. Rose Evans and Averil Brown announced that they would step down from their positions as Leader and Secretary, both due to changes in personal circumstances. Reports were distributed, notices given, and prayers said.

In December our final meeting for the year was the annual Carol Service in church.

Mothers' Union Southam always welcome visitors to any of the monthly gatherings and are active in seeking new members to join us. We have around 30 members of different ages and backgrounds.

For further information please visit the website, come along to the church and have a chat to a member or you can contact me on 01926 813075

***Annie Lane - Mothers' Union Treasurer, Secretary and Branch Administrator***

## **St James Strollers**

St James Strollers continued regular meetings on the first Sunday of each month throughout 2019 with the number taking part ranging from seven to eighteen. Quite a few try to come to each of our "strolls", but, with inevitable alternative commitments the composition of the group has varied during the period. This adds another aspect to the fellowship as all are encouraged and made welcome. Once again, during the year I have been particularly grateful to Edward and Derrick for their suggestions and assistance, when, in particular, on a couple of occasions, I was unable to take part.

Our programme during this year has again been quite varied and some brief recollections are :Stoneythorpe and Bascote – familiar territory: Marton and Eathorpe – among meadows by the River Leam: Sawbridge and the Grand Union canal – which we shortened because of the wet weather: Kenilworth Castle and Beausale – encountering sheep and alpacas: Badby Woods – on Bluebell Sunday so that we could finish with tea and cake: Brinklow and Newbold Revel – a delightful stretch along the canal and on little used paths: Little Compton – a walk in three counties during which we saw the Red Arrows, visited Adlestrop, the inspiration for Edward Thomas' poem and Chastleton House, a beautiful NT property: Hellidon and Catesby – pleasant countryside, but we ended in a

thunderstorm: Harbury and Chesterton – seeing the M40 from a different angle: Edge Hill – a circuit of Upton House during which we saw red kite and panoramic views: Braunston and Wolfhampcote – quiet roads, canal towpath and we finished in the dark: Southam old and new footpaths – chosen because the countryside was waterlogged.

As you will have gathered this is quite an informal group who enjoy the fellowship of time spent in each other's company and if you would like to join us then please put a note in your diary for the first Sunday of each month meeting at 2 pm at Wood Street car park. There is no commitment – just turn up and we'll go.

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

Hope to see you soon.

***"Spike" Thorne – Southam 814468.***

### **Bees Abroad in Kenya**

Celebrating 21 Years of Bees Abroad

Bees Abroad has been training and supporting communities in the developing world to keep bees in order to help alleviate poverty for 21 years. During those 21 years 100 Bees Abroad projects have helped to lift 50,000 families out of poverty in 15 countries in Africa, Asia and Oceania.

Beekeeping empowers individuals, households and communities breaking gender stereotypes, developing youth and including the disabled. It can increase incomes by 20% and crop pollination by up to 40%. Bees Abroad uses only 100% locally sourced materials to produce essential beekeeping equipment such as hives and protective clothing. The resulting honey is a 100% natural health giving product which is valued everywhere. Income from honey, beeswax cosmetics, candles enables women in particular are able to learn skills to generate income for their families.

We have been involved as volunteers in Kenya since 2005 and until 2 years ago went out for a month on an annual basis to do hands on training and demonstrate the benefits of beekeeping in a sustainable way. We have been able to reach Kenyans to develop knowledge and skills enabling them to carry out training for their own people.

Now we have a reliable team that we communicate through emails as well as a monthly face to face meeting using modern technology. We are able to discuss all aspects including their workload, progress and funding requirements. The charity receives many requests from developing countries, and we are responsible for Kenya and deciding if they are feasible and the cost involved. Then with the team we discuss the proposal and seek the funding from within or outside the charity.

As part of the 21<sup>st</sup> celebrations we have been in touch with several projects from way back and have been encouraged to know that they are independently still benefiting their communities. Occasionally we receive messages from leaders of current projects and I'm sure you will understand that within many groups there are those from various faiths and sometimes none.

We would like to close this report and share with you Nashen message which really does inspire us to continue supporting this work.

*Hi John and Mary, Happy new year!*

*On behalf of the membership of Nakhuba young farmers group, a group you have tirelessly supported, wish to extend our sincere appreciation and best wishes to you, your entire family and the bees abroad fraternity.*

*We have walked a long journey with you and bees abroad since 2016, capacity building our group through CERA RIGHTS. Our able trainers, Mr. Gitonga, John Kibui madam Merioth did a wonderful job and we do appreciate their efforts too. We had last training for the year 2019 on 19th and 20th December and it was indeed fruitful to members.*

*Apart from training group members, community members were also incorporated in our trainings and they benefited immensely whereby number of beekeepers has increased within our community.*

*The training has equipped the group members with the necessary skills and with your continued support in some areas i.e. equipment and legal requirements, we are now ready to compete in beekeeping business.*

*Thank you once again and may God bless you and grant you good health throughout 2020 and beyond.*

*Nashon Wafula For: NAYOFA GROUP.*

Bees Abroad Annual Report of the entire work will shortly be available

**Mary and John Home**