



The Shell



The foundation date memorial plaque
on the outside of the main apse.

The Magazine of St James the Greater, Leicester

Autumn 2024

SUNDAY WORSHIP

8.30 am Holy Communion 10.30 am Choral Eucharist
6.30 pm Choral Evensong & Sermon

MIDWEEK

MORNING PRAYER

8 am Tuesday-Friday

COMPLINE ON ZOOM

9 pm Wednesdays - see weekly sheet for links and codes

HOLY COMMUNION

10.30 am Thursdays

See Calendar for variations and details of special services

MINISTRY TEAM

Vicar

Revd. Andrew Quigley MA (Oxon) MTh

0116 254 4113

Associate Non-Stipendiary Priest

Revd. Jane Sharp

Associate Ministers

Michael Rule BA Hons, P.G.C.E. Sheila Roberts MA

Reader

Dr. Angela Jagger BA PhD

Pastoral Assistant

Sacristan

Miss Vicky Roe B.Phil..Ed. MA

Sheila Roberts MA

For further information please contact:

Church Office, St James Hall, St James Terrace, Leicester LE2 1NA

E-mail: office@stjamesthegreater.org.uk Telephone: 0116 254 2111

Website: www.stjamesthegreater.org.uk

Please send items for the next edition by Sunday 3rd November 2024
to Dr. Paul Jenkins at: editor@stjamesthegreater.org.uk

The picture on the front cover was taken by Rev. Andrew Quigley.

From the Editor's Desk



On Sunday afternoon, 2nd June, I was delighted to welcome members of the University of Leicester Orchestral Society to St. James, where they gave us a varied programme of vocal and instrumental chamber music.

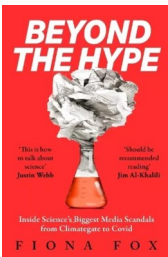
The event was well attended, and the music was accompanied by tea and cakes.

Many thanks to members of the St. James congregation who made the cakes for the occasion.

The picture shows Grace and Siyu singing the Flower Duet.

One of my jobs at the University of Leicester is public Orator for graduations.

In July, I gave a speech about three very interesting people, the first was Anne-Marie Imafidon who passed 'A' level computing at the age of 11 and went to Oxford at the age to 16. The picture shows Anne-Marie, and I am holding her book 'She is in Ctrl,' a guidebook on how women of all backgrounds can overcome prejudice through using Information Technology. Anne-Marie founded an organisation called 'Stemettes' which promotes careers in IT to women and non-binary people.



The second of my subjects was Fiona Fox, the head of The Science Media Centre in London. This organisation connects journalists to scientists to ensure that what we read in the newspapers about the major scientific questions of the day is accurate. This was a vitally important task during the Covid pandemic when Fiona and her staff worked around the clock co-ordinating expert opinion on vaccine roll out, face-masks, lockdown strategy, new variants of the Covid virus, etc.

David McAlmont is a singer and lyricist, who is also an expert on architecture. David is a generous collaborator with the University of Leicester Centre for Museums and Galleries. He has taken part in several productions which reimagine the concept of beauty in modern British society. In the picture, I am holding two of David's many CD Albums, 'The Sound of McAlmont and Butler,' and 'Happy Ending' with Hifi Sean.

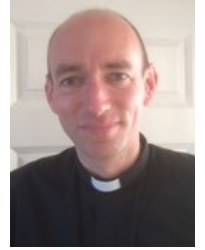


I was coming out of St James recently and I was stopped by a young man who asked me if I was the Vicar. I said I was not, and that I am just a humble deputy Church Warden. The man told me he was very proud to have been baptised and confirmed by Bishop Butler and that no one could take his Christianity away from him and that Jesus had died for him. I suggested he might like to come to our services. I will watch out for him!

Several people have raised that idea that quite a lot of students live in our parish. We have pooled our thoughts to come up with banners outside the church for the start of university and college term to see if we can attract some young people to our services.

Let's see what happens!

The Vicar writes ...



A certain national supermarket chain is celebrating its 125th anniversary this year. When you consider the demise of Debenhams, House of Fraser, Rackhams, Littlewoods, Woolworths, Wilkinsons, and many more you can see why this achievement might be significant. 125 years is a long time on the high street.

Coincidentally, this October we will celebrate 125 years since the foundation stone of St. James the Greater Church was laid. This of course makes us one of the younger churches in Leicester – the oldest, St Nicholas, was consecrated in 879, and may be a rebuild of a church on that site since two hundred years earlier. If we widen our scope to the global church, the oldest churches are over 1600 years old. Of course, *The Church* of which we are but a junior branch, can claim two millennia. The timescale of the Church is on an altogether different scale to that of high street retailers.

Personally, as the original model of our building, the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta on Torcello was founded in 639, I like to think we borrow some seniority from there. Furthermore, when we consider the upheaval of the world, and even Leicester in the last century and a quarter, our continued existence is an achievement. Many splendid churches in our city, like St. Mark's, are no longer places of Christian worship. That our church persists, not just as a building, but as a worshipping community, is something to celebrate. Given that after the challenges of Covid, our congregations are once again growing, we have further grounds for gratitude.

Undoubtedly we face challenges in the future, as do all churches, but I do not believe they are greater than the world wars, economic depressions, social upheavals and epidemics that St. James' has endured even in our "short" 125 years. This does mean that we who have inherited this wonderful building have a particular reason to do all we can to ensure that a century and a quarter is just the beginning. Watch this space for our funding programme to safeguard the future of this church we love.



A special Patronal Festival

Although the Feast of St. James the Greater is on 25th July, the Patronal Festival was kept on Sunday 28th July this year.

The Sung Eucharist was attended by The Rt Reverend Saju Muthulaly, Bishop of Loughborough who presided and conducted a baptism and confirmations for two of the choristers. Emily was baptised and both she and Regina were then confirmed. They reflected on their faith journeys.

Emily: "My journey of faith has been confusing for me, I was raised agnostic and always knew there was something more. Throughout my life I have looked for a reason, an explanation of life and the world around me, and I can finally say I have found it in God. I have been devoted to my theological journey studying religions of all kinds, and through my love of music I found God. My good friend Annabel who I've known for many years introduced me to the choir, little did she know that this would truly change my life. I'm eternally thankful for the opportunities I have been given by St James and the wider Christian community who welcomed me with open arms. To honour my journey I have chosen the patroness of musicians Saint Cecilia as my confirmation saint and I am ready to say yes to God."

Regina: "I was born into a Christian household, with a Catholic mum and a Lutheran dad and I was baptised a Catholic shortly after I was born. From a young age I had a passion for Anglican choral church music, and I fulfilled my lifelong dream to become a chorister in September 2022. This was the changing point for me in my Christian faith, as I truly felt at home at St James the Greater as soon as I joined the choir and became a member of the parish. Since then, I have felt that I am able to connect with God more through the music that I am singing weekly on Sundays. Alongside daily prayer and Bible reading, church music has been a very important component in my journey of faith, as I am able to provide a means of communication with God for the congregation, as well as myself, which is why I have chosen St Augustine as my confirmation saint, who said "who sings prays twice". I have without a doubt felt God's calling to be confirmed through music and the joy I feel when singing together with the other choristers."



The laying of St. James's Commemoration Stone on 28th October 1899.

The book 'Century to Millennium' by Alan McWhirr recounts the historic event of 125 years ago when Lady Mary Glyn, wife of the Bishop, laid the commemoration stone for the new church.

In 1881 the present Church of S. James was erected out of the materials of the Leicester Church Congress Hall. The site had generously and piously been given by the late Miss Baker, and it was always felt that the present Church would have to be replaced one day by a permanent and handsome building. Little, probably then, was it anticipated that the district would ever be so thickly and so speedily populated. Yet so it is, and the demand for the Church accommodation is imperative and immediate if the people are to be retained within the direct influence of the Church.

These two causes—the temporary nature of the present structure and the enormous increase of population—led the Vicar to initiate a movement for the erection of a new Church of S. James. To the appeal for prayer and alms and work there has been a most glad and liberal response, with the happy result that plans have been prepared by Messrs. Goddard & Co. and passed by the Building Committee. In due course the work has been begun, and Saturday, October 28th (Feast of SS. Simon and Jude) saw the official start of the undertaking, when the Lord Bishop of the Diocese, as our Father in God, blessed the Commemoration Stone, which the Lady Mary Glyn had just kindly laid.

We, in S. Peter's Parish, will always look upon the festival of SS. Simon and Jude, 1899, as a red-letter day in our parochial history. It marks another epoch, and tells to all Leicester that our Mother, the Church, has not lost Her fold upon the people, but is even "lengthening her cords and strengthening her stakes", to use a spiritual phrase.

At all times we have much to thank God for, and we begin by doing so on this occasion for the weather, so absolutely suitable for the ceremony. He is always better to us than our fears, and on Friday, as the rain came down so heavily, our spirits become somewhat depressed, but Saturday at once promised better things. The warm sunshine made the being outdoors a very real pleasure. S. Peter's functions have never been spoiled by bad weather, and this was no exception to the rule.

The service was time to begin at 2 o'clock, and 1-30 pm, the choir of S. James's, augmented by members of S. Peter's and S. Hilda's choirs, together with 53 clergy from the town and country, including Revd F. W. Robinson, late Vicar of S. Peters, began to assemble at "Mayfield", very kindly placed at their disposal by R. S. Toller, Esq., whose thoughtful arrangements for their convenience were most thoroughly appreciated. Shortly after 1-45 pm, the Bishop arrived accompanied by the Archdeacon of Leicester (the Ven. J. E. Stocks), the Rural Dean (Revd A. M. Rendell), the Worshipful the Mayor of Leicester (Ald. Geo. Clifton). The procession then formed and at once started for the Church, led by Churchwardens of S. James's (Messrs. W. L. Salusbury and C. J. Williams carrying the stave of office). The processional hymn was "All people that on earth do dwell" to the effective accompaniment of cornets. Members of the Building Committee and the Leicester Church Extension Board joined in the procession as did the Churchwardens of S. Peter's and S. Hilda's.

On arrival at the Church, which so far as accommodation served, was well filled, a short musical service was held: the Vicar intoning the prayers and the Archdeacon reading the Lesson; after a brief address by the Bishop, hymn 394 was sung while the offertory was taken. The procession then re-formed and proceeded to the site of the Stone-laying, where a large concourse of parishioners and friends had already assembled. When all were in their places, the service was continued by the recitation of prayers by the Bishop and Vicar, the choir afterwards singing Psalm 87.

The laying of St. James's Commemoration Stone on 28th October 1899 . . . continued

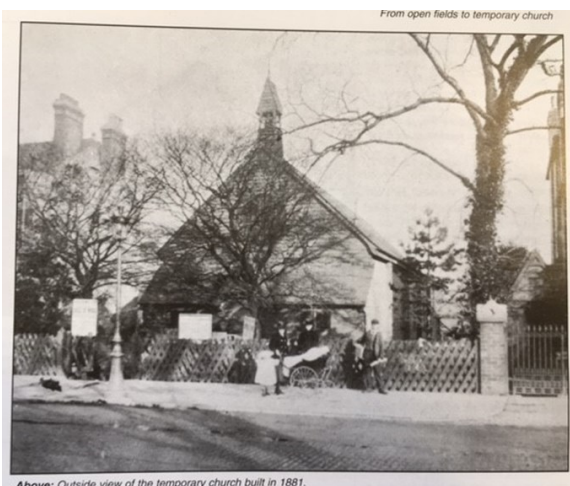
Lady Mary Glyn then advanced towards the stone and laid it with the words—"In the Faith of Jesus Christ we lay this Stone in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." The mallet and trowel being presented to her ladyship by Mr. Goddard and Mr. Herbert, the architect and building respectively. The hymn, "This stone to Thee in faith we lay", having been sung, and further prayers having been offered, the Bishop concluded the notable and impressive service with his solemn Blessing. The procession then again re-formed, and singing hymn 215 returned to "Mayfield". Thus ended the religious service.

At 3.15 pm, a Reception was held in the Medway Street Schools, the larte hall of which was made most home-like and beautiful with rugs and plants. Twnty-one ladies dispensed tea to the crowded assembly. It was most cheering to see so many of our friends from the town and county showing by their presence practical sympathy with our work. Messrs. Mansfield Bros' String Band gave a bright and good selection of music during the afternoon. At 3.45 the Bishop, the Archdeacon, and the Vicar, supported by others, mounted the platform. Mr. W. H. Tarratt, parish warden of S. Peter's, proposed, and Mr. C. J. Williams, people's warden of S. James's, seconded, a hearty vote of thanks to the Bishop and Lady Mary Glyn for their presence and help; this was supported by Archdeacon Stocks in a speech which was a masterpiece of parochial history given in five minutes, his reference to the great work of the late Vicar being warmly cheered. The vote was enthusiastically carried and responded to very happily by the Bishop.

The gathering then renewed its informal character, and spent another bright hour in conversation. So ended the day full of good omen for the future by God's good help and grace.

It were invidious to thank our special friends for their help when all did everything possible to make the day a success and worthy of the occasion, but we must just offer our grateful acknowledgement to the band of ladies who presided at the tea table, to E. Oliver, Esq., who lent us so many plants for decoration of the Reception room, to Mr. Elliot, who so generously gave his service in arranging for the catering, assisted by Mr. Porter, Mr. Goddard, and others and to Messrs. R. Morley and Sons, Messrs. Mitchell and Son, who kindly decorated the site and schools with flags.

Account recorded in the parish magazine of St. Peter's Church, Highfields, in November 1899.



Images of the original temporary St. James Church

taken from Alan McWhirr's book.



(“Mayfield” house and garden stood on land now occupied by Ripon Street and the Kia Garage.)

A Visit to Torcello

by Mike and April Rule

We at St. James are to be forever grateful to Alan McWhirr for compiling the content of the book *Century to Millennium, St. James the Greater, Leicester, 1899-1999*. It is the ideal companion for anyone wishing to learn about our church's history. Chapter 2, titled *A permanent church is built*, records the numerous changes in design the church building went through on paper before our current building was settled upon. We won't recount this chapter line by line, grab a copy of the book if you don't already have one to learn a wealth of information about our church. All we will say is that, following initial plans for a church in the perpendicular style of English Gothic, the architect Henry Langton Goddard was tasked by Bishop Mandell Creighton, Bishop of Peterborough 1891-1896, to design a church of the Basilica type, similar to the Cathedral of Torcello on the Venetian Lagoon. This was our inspiration for a 10 year wedding anniversary trip to Venice so that we could see Torcello Cathedral and compare its likeness with St. James the Greater.

On arrival at the island of Torcello, there is one single path alongside the water which takes you to the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta. There are only 12 permanent residents on the island and a couple of shops and restaurants, so there is still a well-deserved tranquillity. To the right of the Cathedral is the church of Santa Fosca, a building which took its current appearance in the twelfth century when it was rebuilt to hold the relics of the martyrs Fosca and Maura of the second or third century (which now reside in the Church of Santa Maria di Lourdes in Milan).

First impression of the outside of the cathedral – you could think you've come to the wrong place!

However once inside, there are clear similarities which inspired Goddard during this visit in the 1890s.

We'll let the pictures do the talking from this point onwards and, as mentioned, Alan McWhirr's fine work will give you far more detail than we could here.



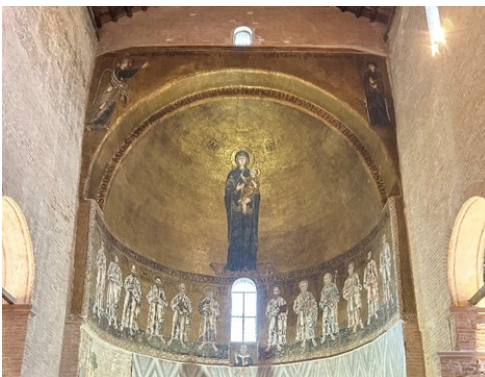
A Visit to Torcello . . . continued



Looking east, note the arches and apse.



Lady Chapel



Apsse with apostles



West end mosaic depicting the Last Judgement – we don't have one of these!

From the Director of Music

Emma Trounson



Come and Sing Joseph

Around 50 performers attended our 'Come and Sing Joseph' event in June. The mixed age and mixed ability group of singers was led by Emma Trounson and accompanied by Guy Steed and Nicholas Friedesdorff on piano and Mark Trounson on Bass Guitar. Our Junior Choir, Senior Choir, St. James Singers and members of the congregation were well represented. They were joined by a good number of visitors, some of whom were entering the church for the first time, or who hadn't been for many years. Some sang regularly in other choirs and for some it was their first experience of choral singing.



There was even a couple who came all the way from Northumberland to attend the workshop having seen it on social media. The choir rehearsed the familiar songs from Joseph and His Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat by Andrew Lloyd Webber. The choir sang occasional harmonies and with solo parts and some special parts for the children. There was a joyful atmosphere whilst participants chatted over drinks and cake before their informal performance, which went wonderfully. Overall, the participants seemed content and were asking when the next one would be. Watch this space!

Fundraising Concert – Senior Choir Tour to Portsmouth

The Senior Choir are looking forward to their upcoming weekend choir tour 23-25th August to sing the Sunday services at Portsmouth Cathedral and a recital at Quarr Abbey. The Senior Choir are holding a 'Pay as you feel' fundraising concert on Wednesday 21st August at 7 pm at St. James. The concert of choral and solo items will last about an hour with refreshments afterwards. Donations will go, in the first instance, towards the ferry crossing over to the Isle of Wight and a visit to the Spinnaker Tower in the Portsmouth Docks. A good number of our young people are attending the choir tour and we are aiming to keep their costs down. We are grateful to the Friends of St. James for their contribution and for the donations so far. For more information, or if you are unable to attend the concert but would still like to support the tour, please get in touch with Emma dom@stjamesthegreater.org.uk

Thank you, Musicians!

At the end of this academic year, I would like to say a big thank you for the work of all involved in music making at St. James the Greater. To our fantastic organists, and to all the brilliant choristers in all three of our choirs. I appreciate their continuing and unfailing enthusiasm and commitment to leading choral worship. I would also like to welcome all the new members to our music family who have joined over the summer term – Jess and Jasmine, current and former Leicester University students that have joined the soprano section of the Senior Choir, and Bess, Christian, Chidera, Chizaram and Somto who have joined the Junior Choir, bringing its current number to 13. I look forward to all that the next academic brings, working with these fantastic musicians.

On being a chaperone at Junior Choir

by Caroline Beardsmore

Fairly soon after she joined us, Emma Trounson started a Junior Choir, aimed at children of primary school age. Current legislation and common sense require that no adult works alone with children and therefore another adult needed to be present. An appeal was made for a Choir Chaperone to be available for Junior Choir practice on Friday afternoons for an hour from 4.30pm, during term time.

I had not long retired and was not usually otherwise occupied at that time. The requirement for a DBS check did not concern me as I had always had such checks when working. While I am not at all musically gifted, I greatly value the music at St. James the Greater and this was a small way in which I could offer some support. I volunteered, thinking that I would spend the hour or so sitting in a corner doing some reading.

This was not at all what it turned out to be, and Junior Choir became a joyful revelation into what goes on with the youngest members of our church community, coupled with my own learning of music and singing. The number of children turning up each week varies from two or three, to about a dozen if everyone comes. We generally start with some warming-up songs, often with actions and usually silly, but always fun. Sometimes these develop into singing in two parts, laying the basis for singing in a conventional choir. Afterwards we sing a complete mixture of music, from anthems, settings for communion services, hymns, and secular pieces for concerts. The run-up to Christmas, with church services and a concert, was particularly busy. The children take everything in their stride, mostly learning by 'call and response', as some of the younger ones cannot yet read well, if at all.

We have a short break in the middle, for a drink and biscuit, and then usually have a game based on sounding out notes of different lengths. Somehow this always involves rushing around the room to be the first to locate the display being sounded! Then it's back to work for the remainder of the hour, concluding with singing 'Bungalow', a game involving actions that the children never tire of doing.



On being a chaperone at Junior Choir

by Caroline Beardsmore . . . continued

Several members of Junior Choir participated in the 'Come and Sing Joseph' shortened concert version of Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat earlier this year, which was a wonderful occasion for everyone taking part and was my first ever experience of singing in a choir. The rehearsals ahead of the event were sheer joy, with the children entering into the clapping and shouting 'No! No! No!' with unbridled enthusiasm.

I have come to value the experience of being a Choir Chaperone, not only because it has contributed to my own musical education (I now know what 'diminuendo' is!) but because of the chance to see the children learn and develop, week by week. I also got to know Regina and Emily, members of the Senior Choir who were recently confirmed. When I can't be at Choir on a Friday I am grateful to Vicky, Sheila, and Angela who stand in, and I hope they enjoy it as much as I do.

The children all benefit from choir membership. They enjoy themselves, interacting with adults and other children in a setting that is not their school, and learning to sing. The number who join the Senior Choir once a month to sing in a service may be few, reflecting the pressures of other commitments on families, but those who do also have some time out with Chiara Steed, learning about the Gospel message that Sunday. In time, the youngsters in Junior Choir may grow up to become members of a Senior Choir, whether at St. James the Greater or elsewhere. Whatever the future holds for them, they will have benefitted from the hard work and commitment of the Director of Music, the shared experience of choral singing, and the outreach of the church into their lives.

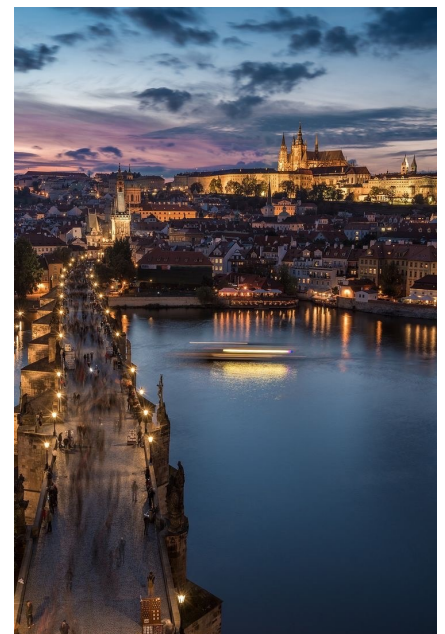
Prague - a musical City by Klara Hermanova

studying for a LLM Law degree at the University of Leicester
and a great supporter of concerts at St James the Greater.

Nestled in the heart of Europe, Prague is a city where history and music intertwine, creating a symphony that resonates through its cobblestone streets and majestic architecture.

Prague's classical music scene is a tapestry woven with the threads of time, where every note tells a story. The city has been a magnet for composers, musicians, and music lovers, drawn by its vibrant cultural life and the promise of inspiration.

The 18th century marked a golden era for Prague, blending European musical tendencies with unique Czech characteristics.



The Charles Bridge in Prague.

Prague - a musical City by Klara Hermanova

... continued

One cannot speak of Prague's musical heritage without mentioning Antonín Dvořák. Born in the small village of Nelahozeves near Prague, Dvořák's journey from a humble butcher's son to a world-renowned composer is nothing short of extraordinary. His compositions, such as the *New World Symphony* and *Slavonic Dances*, are imbued with the spirit of Bohemia and have left an indelible mark on the world of classical music. Dvořák's connection to Prague is profound. After returning from his stint as the director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York, he resumed teaching at the Prague Conservatoire, nurturing future generations of Czech composers.



His legacy lives on in the Rudolfinum, the neo-Renaissance concert hall that houses the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra and serves as a venue for the prestigious Prague Spring Festival. Dvořák spent the last decades of his life in a house on Žitná Street in Prague's New Town. This residence became a hub for artistic and intellectual gatherings. Notable visitors included Johannes Brahms, Leoš Janáček, and Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. The house was filled with the sounds of music and lively discussions, making it a true sanctuary for creativity and friendship.

Another towering figure in Prague's musical landscape is Bedřich Smetana, often hailed as the father of Czech music. Smetana's compositions, particularly the opera *The Bartered Bride* and the symphonic cycle *Má vlast* (My Homeland), celebrate Czech national identity and folklore. His music, especially the evocative *Vltava* from *Má vlast*, is a tribute to the river that flows through Prague, capturing the essence of the city's natural beauty and historical significance.

Another beloved artist worth mentioning is Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Mozart's relationship with Prague was one of mutual admiration. The city embraced Mozart with open arms, and he reciprocated by premiering some of his most significant works here. The Estates Theatre, where Mozart's *Don Giovanni* premiered in 1787, remains a testament to this enduring bond. Mozart's frequent visits to Prague, his performances, and his heartfelt declaration, "My Praguers understand me," highlight the city's deep appreciation for his genius. Beyond the grand concert halls and famous composers, Prague holds many secrets known only to locals. One such secret is the Villa Bertramka, where Mozart often stayed. This charming neoclassical villa, now a museum, offers a glimpse into the intimate moments of Mozart's life, surrounded by tranquil gardens that inspired his creativity. Another lesser-known gem is the Church of St. Nicholas in Malá Strana, where Mozart once played the organ. The church's exceptional acoustics make it a favourite venue for classical music concerts, offering a spiritual and auditory experience that is both profound and uplifting.



Prague's musical heritage is not confined to its past; it thrives in the present. The city hosts numerous music festivals, such as the Prague Spring Festival, which attracts the world's finest orchestras, soloists, and conductors. The Municipal House, with its stunning Art Nouveau architecture, and the Rudolfinum continue to be epicentres of musical excellence. In Prague, music is not just an art form; it is a way of life. From street musicians on Charles Bridge to impromptu performances in hidden courtyards, the city pulses with melodies that reflect its rich history and vibrant culture. If you get a chance to stroll through Prague's streets, let the music guide you. Listen to the echoes of Dvořák, Smetana, and Mozart, and discover the hidden harmonies that make this city a timeless symphony.

The name's Rule, Mike Rule, license to preach (and other things..)

On an annual basis our weekly leaflet advertises the Journey in Faith (JIF) course which usually carries the sentence "for more information, speak to Mike Rule who has completed the course". I did indeed complete the course back in 2021-2022 so I could explore the three aims of the course: to grow in my knowledge of the Christian Faith, to deepen my relationship with God and to explore how to live my faith in my whole life.

As it so happened, this course was a prerequisite for being considered for further training with the Diocese which could take you down several paths. As JIF came to an end, and following a few conversations, meetings and interviews with various people at St. Martin's House, I started September 2022 as a member of the new cohort of trainee Associate Ministers. It is important to say at this point that, of the six of us who started the training, we had no idea where this training was going to take us. Within a few months it was clear for some that this training wasn't part of their journey after all, and others continued still hoping to find out what God's plan was for each of us. After 21 months of training sessions in person and online, essays, presentations and placements in other churches, the 2022-2024 cohort plus others were licensed by Bishop Saju at Leicester Cathedral on Saturday 18th May 2024 as Associate Ministers of our respective parishes. But what do you have to do to be licensed? What forms the training for lay workers? What exactly is an Associate Minister?

The training we received didn't follow a traditional 'every Monday night at St Martin's House' pattern. Our knowledgebase was grown using a flipped learning style where we were given a book/article list, videos to watch, and then we met each month, usually on a Saturday, to use and expand on what we had learnt at home. This was done in a modular style so each session or two had an essay attached to it – and I can tell you it was a long time since I last wrote in an academic style with referencing and bibliographies! Our essays were marked by the training team with feedback, both positive and with areas for improvements given. Here are the main areas of study which we were required to expand upon through reading, Bible study, essay writing, presentation, preaching and action – some practical, some theological, some spiritual:

- A Christian approach to issues of wealth, poverty and deprivation.

- Causes of conflict and the importance of conflict resolution, including the implications for the church today and steps towards reconciliation

- Investigating leadership within the church including evaluating different leadership models and creating a model for leadership within a Minster Community

- The five marks of mission and creating a missional strategy

- Creating a Rule of Life to sustain my future ministry

- Questioning what the resurrection of Jesus achieved for us, the future and the universe

- What does the Lords Prayer tell us about the nature of the Kingdom and the importance of prayer?

The varying topics of each module/essay were very well planned to make us widen our thinking in many different aspects of potential future ministry – and this is where the term Associate Minister comes in. If I had embarked on this course a couple of years earlier, I would have been licensed as either a Reader, Pastoral Assistant, Pioneer or Evangelist. The Diocese of Leicester recognises that lay workers, to varying degrees, will exercise the work of each of these different positions and that training for lay ministry should equip us for all eventualities, hence the title Associate Minister.

The name's Rule, Mike Rule, license to preach . . . continued

Aside from essays, we also completed a placement in a church different to our own so, between September and December 2022. I was assigned to St. Anne's, Letchworth Road. My main learning point here was ministering to a traditional parish, particularly to children and families. I also started a placement with the food bank based at St John the Baptist, Clarendon Park, under the heading of '*Forming a theology of mission*'. This is a Friday evening initiative, working alongside the South Leicestershire Food Bank to provide food parcels to those financially deprived for a range of reasons. I enjoyed this placement so much, and appreciate its value to the point I am now a permanent member of the team there. Each placement culminated in a written account and presentation to our cohort at St. Martin's House about what we did and what we learnt. Presentations are something I'm quite used to as a teacher, but they also proved very handy in preparing for a ministry of preaching. Some may remember an online service of Evening Prayer which I planned and then evaluated to demonstrate knowledge of the Anglican tradition and liturgy. A final requirement for licensing was safeguarding training to the same level as clergy and, although time consuming, essential for anyone working in any position of authority or trust in a church setting.

At all points I felt that our training should serve a practical purpose for St. James – and by and large it did. Our first assignment required an in-depth analysis of our context – the demographic makeup of our parish and what we offer as a church to our congregation and local community. This led to the most important part – what don't we offer to our congregation and parish that we should, and how are we going to achieve this? Clearly this isn't a one-man effort, nor is my voice the only voice on this, hence I have already started our PCC off on the task of considering such questions which are being explored over a course of meetings – more detail on this to come.

I remember saying in my first sermon as a licensed minister that some questioned whether I had the time to complete this training. Yes there were times when juggling work and training that I was burning the candle at both ends, including finishing an essay at 1am once our students had settled down whilst on a school residential to Paris, but I remember the feeling of 'I did it!' at my licensing service on May 18th and as I read the Declaration of Assent to the Bishop. Looking back, the reality was 'I've got to do this as it is what I am being called to'. So, training complete – and now to get stuck in! I am extremely grateful for the support I received from friends at St. James and to those who came to my licensing service, many more than I expected! I have no idea where the first chapter of licensed ministry will take me, but I do know that I'll give my absolute best for God, for St. James and for our current and future fellowship.



Get to know Feby John . . .

Eucharistic Assistant at 08.30 Holy Communion

My name is Feby John, my husband's name is Sinju, my eldest son's name is Ivan and my younger son is called Isaac. We are from the city of Cochin in the South Indian State of Kerala. The name Kerala came from 'KERA' meaning 'Coconut Tree,' and indeed coconut trees grow all over the state. Kerala is known as 'God's Own Country' due to its natural beauty and diverse culture.

The Capital city of Kerala is Trivandrum. The state is the first in India for literacy. Pre-School starts from the age of 3 and free education is provided for children from 3 to 15 years old in state-funded schools and in aided colleges.

I obtained a BSc in Botany at St. PETER'S College Mahatma Gandhi University and a Masters in Biotechnology from Tamil Nadu Bharadhidasan University.

My first job was a quality control technician at Vysali Pharmaceuticals, where I was an analytical microbiological chemist working on quality control of antibiotic injection production. I then moved to Scotland where I did a master's degree in Biotechnology at Abertay University Dundee, after which I have done the internship at the Scottish Crop Research Institute. I then returned to India to be a lecturer in Biotechnology at Sree Sankara College in Kalady, Kerala

In 2022, I came to The University of Leicester to study for a Masters degree in International Education. I graduated in 2023.



I was baptised as a child into the Christian Jacobite Church in Kerala.

The head of this Church is the Patriarch Moran Ignatius Aphrem II who is based in Damascus, Syria and his remit covers Antioch and all of the East.

I went to St. Mary's Jacobite Church, Mekkad, Kerala.

The congregation were divided into eight wards with about 57 families in each ward.



As well as the main Church of St. Mary's, pictured above, there were four other chapels where services were held. The priests and their assistants were all men.

The morning service at St. Mary's started at 8.30 and finished at 11.30. The sermon was never less than an hour long! There was a choir and an organ. Children were taught about the faith in a separate class. There was a women's group and a Youth Association.

Get to know Feby John . . . continued

The city of Cochin has many important features. It has the first completely solar-powered airport in the world. There are also several important research institutes in the city, including The National Research Institute for Oceanography, The Central Research Institute for Fisheries, The Agricultural Research Institute and the Spices Board. Kerala is also known as 'The Land of Spices.' Some examples are black and gold pepper, nutmeg and a range of tropical fruits, including mangos and jackfruit.

About Jacobite Syrian Church

The Jacobite Syrian Church in Kerala is part of the Syriac Orthodox Church. It traces its roots back to St. Thomas the Apostle, who arrived in India in 52 AD. Over the centuries, it grew with influences from Syrian Christian traditions. In 1599, a meeting called the Synod of Diamper, introduced Latin practices, leading to a split and the formation of the Jacobite Church in 1665, which aligned with the Patriarch of Antioch.

Holy Mass (Qurbana)

The Holy Mass, known as the '**Vishudha Qurbana**' in the Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church, follows a structured format. This service includes a series of prayers, hymns, readings, and rituals. Traditionally, the Mass is conducted in Syriac, which is a form of Aramaic (Suriyani), but local languages (Malayalam) can also be used.

The Eucharist, where bread and wine are believed to become the body and blood of Jesus Christ, is the focus of the service. The ceremony is rich with symbolic elements such as incense, candles, and special vestments, which represent the divine nature of worship. While the priest leads the main parts of the Mass, the congregation actively participates through responses, hymns, and prayers.

Baptism

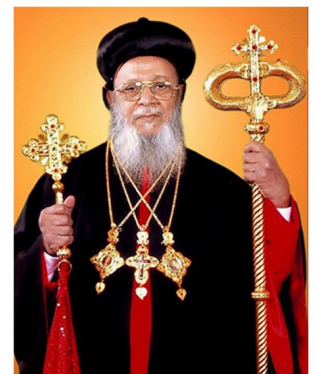
Baptism is the ceremony that marks a person's entry into the Christian faith. It typically involves immersing the individual in water or pouring water over their head three times, symbolising purification and rebirth. This sacrament cleanses from sin and formally welcomes the person into the church community. Godparents are important figures in this ceremony, promising to support the spiritual development of the baptized person. Special oils are used to anoint the individual, symbolizing the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Priesthood



Mor Greegorios Joseph
(current Catholicos
of India)

Priests in the Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church act as spiritual leaders and mediators between the congregation and God. They are ordained through a ceremony where a bishop lays hands on them, symbolizing the imparting of the Holy Spirit. Priests are responsible for leading services, administering sacraments, offering spiritual guidance, and serving the community. While priests can marry before they are ordained, celibacy is required for bishops and higher clergy. Priests wear distinctive liturgical vestments that reflect their role and duties in worship.



Mor Baselios Thomas Ist
(Past Catholicos of India)

Get to know Feby John . . . continued

Marriage

Marriage in the Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church is considered a sacrament and a covenant between the couple and God. The wedding ceremony is detailed and includes prayers, blessings, and rituals that signify the union of the couple in holy matrimony. The priest blesses the rings and crowns, symbolizing the couple's commitment and new roles. Marriage is viewed not just as a personal relationship, but as a communal event involving the support of family and community. Although divorce is allowed under certain conditions, it is generally discouraged.

Customs

The Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church has a rich heritage reflected in various unique customs. Important festivals like Christmas and Easter, as well as the feasts of saints, are celebrated with special liturgies and community gatherings. Fasting is practiced during certain periods, such as Lent, as a form of spiritual discipline and preparation. The church also honours saints and relics, with many churches named after specific saints. Icons and images of Christ, the Virgin Mary and saints are commonly found in churches and are used to aid in devotion and prayer.

These practices and customs provide a glimpse into the spiritual and cultural life of the Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church, emphasizing tradition, community, and a deep connection to the ancient Christian faith.

Forthcoming concerts at St. James

September Saturday 21st, Thursday 26th and Saturday 28th 2024 at 7 pm.

Knighthon Opera perform 'La Traviata' by Verdi.

Tickets: Saturdays £15, Thursday £12. Available on the door for cash or card.

Saturday 26th October 2024 at 7 pm. Leicester Philharmonic Choir.

Jubilate Deo – Britten

Song of Wisdom – Stanford [baritone]

Gloria – Poulenc

Requiem – Duruflé

Organist: Rosemary Field

Soloists: Ariyibi Olaoluwa Jedidiah (treble); Alison Rose (soprano); Andrew Ashwin (baritone)

Tickets: £15, U25s £5, available on the door or from the choir website: <https://thephil.org.uk/>

Saturday 16th November 2024 at 7.00 pm.

City of Leicester Singers with 4tissimo String Quartet.

Bizet 'Te Deum', Fauré 'Requiem',

Handel 'Music for the Royal Fireworks'.

Tickets: £12, under 16s free. Available from choir members, at the door, or from www.cityofleicestersingers.co.uk



Saturday 30th November 2024 at 7.30 pm. Leicester Bach Choir Concert.

Details at <https://leicesterbachchoir.org.uk/>

La Traviata at St. James

by Paul Jenkins

Pretty Woman was one of the most romantic films of the 1990s.

It tells of a rich man Edward Lewis (Richard Gere) who rescues a pretty woman, Vivian Ward (Julia Roberts) from a life of poverty and exploitation walking the streets of Los Angeles.

Edward has had relationship problems and when he meets Vivian he needs an uncomplicated girlfriend.

He buys her a new wardrobe of expensive clothes and they go to the opera together to see Verdi's La Traviata.

In tears Vivian sees the story of her life portrayed in the opera.

In the opera, a society hostess, Violetta, falls in love with a rich man Alfredo. However, his family do not approve of the match and his father, Germont convinces Violetta to leave Alfredo, 'For the good of the family name.' Alfredo is devastated and the story develops in a complicated way. Finally, Violetta's poor health worsens, and she dies after being reconciled with Alfredo and Germont.

The story comes from the book 'The Lady of the Chamellias,' by the French writer Alexandre Dumas. The opera has some of Verdi's greatest music and the drinking song is maybe the best known tune in all opera.

Two years ago, Knighton Opera performed Rigoletto at St. James the Greater, and it was a great success, raising the sum of £2,000 for Church funds. It was the first time an opera had been staged at St. James and we are really looking forward to performing La Traviata on September 21st, 26th and 28th at 7 pm. This will be the 12th opera performed by Knighton Opera and will celebrate the 20th anniversary of Knighton Chamber Orchestra.



Calendar of Services

See inside front cover for regular services pattern. Officiants given in the weekly sheet.

SEPTEMBER

1 Sunday	CREATIONTIDE 1	8.30 am BCP Holy Communion
8 Sunday	CREATIONTIDE 2	
14 Saturday	RIDE AND STRIDE OPEN DAY	10 am to 6 pm
15 Sunday	CREATIONTIDE 3	10.30 am Battle of Britain Service 6.30 pm BCP Eucharist
21 Saturday	LA TRAVIATA	7.00 pm Concert
22 Sunday	CREATIONTIDE 4	Harvest Thanksgiving
26 Thursday	LA TRAVIATA	7.00 pm Concert
28 Saturday	LA TRAVIATA	7.00 pm Concert
29 Sunday	CREATIONTIDE 5	

OCTOBER

6 Sunday	CREATIONTIDE 6 - ST. FRANCIS EVENSONG + ST. MARY'S NEWARK	8.30 am BCP Holy Communion 5 pm Joint Choirs Evensong
13 Saturday	FOSSE SINGERS	7.30 pm
13 Sunday	20 TH AFTER TRINITY	
20 Sunday	21 ST AFTER TRINITY	
26 Saturday	LEICESTER PHILHARMONIC CHOIR	7 pm Concert
27 Sunday	LAST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY	125 TH DEDICATION FESTIVAL 6.30 pm Festal Evensong

NOVEMBER

3 Sunday	ALL SAINTS	8.30 am BCP Holy Communion 10.30 am Mattins
	ALL SOULS	6.30 pm Requiem
10 Sunday	REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY	10.45 am Remembrance Service 6.30 pm Sung Eucharist
16 Saturday	CITY OF LEICESTER SINGERS	7.00 pm Concert
17 Sunday	2 ND SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT	
24 Sunday	CHRIST THE KING	
30 Saturday	LEICESTER BACH CHOIR	7.30 pm Concert



St. James the Greater Commemorative Flowers Autumn 2024

1 September

Vicky Roe

8 September

Mollie Drake and Cherry Fulloway in memory of Gillian Russell

15 September

Battle Britain

22 September

Polly Taylor in memory of her friend Myrle Allen

HARVEST

13 October

Andrew Curry in memory of Wendie Stone

20 October

Julia Walker in memory of her Mother

27 October

Chris and Kathryn Morfey in memory of their son Thomas

REMEMBRANCE

17 November

Vacant

24 November

Jo and Pete Durham in loving memory of Suzanne greatly missed Mum and wife

What's on ...

Sundays	Coffee after Eucharist Organiser: Janet Burton	11.30	Church
Thursdays	Coffee after Eucharist Organiser: Janet Burton	11.00	Church
Wednesdays	Choir Youth Group Leaders: Guy and Chiara Steed	19.00 Alternate Wednesdays	Undercroft
Thursdays	St James's Singers Director: Michael Rule	19.30 Alternate Thursdays	Ashman Music Room
Fridays	Junior Choir Boys' and Girls' Choir Practice Full Choir Practice Director: Emma Trounson	16.30 18.15 18.45	Ashman Music Room

Who's who ...

Churchwardens	Simon Edwards MBE April Rule	fabric@stjamesthegreater.org.uk
Deputy Wardens	Paul Jenkins Janet Burton David Kibert	
PCC Minutes Secretary	Jennifer Clegg	pcc.secretary@stjamesthegreater.org.uk
Church Administrator	James Gutteridge	office@stjamesthegreater.org.uk
Treasurers	Simon Edwards MBE April Rule	treasurer@stjamesthegreater.org.uk
Director of Music	Emma Trounson	dom@stjamesthegreater.org.uk
Organist and Director of St. James Singers	Michael Rule	
Organist	Guy Steed	
Flower Guild Coordinator	Julia Walker	juliabentom350@outlook.com
Head Server	William Woolley	servers@stjamesthegreater.org.uk
Friends of St. James	Tricia Dean (Chair)	triciadean@gmail.com 0787 9071 812
Building Services Co-ordinator	Tony Chizema	chizemate@yahoo.com
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Vicky Roe	pastoral.assistant@stjamesthegreater.org.uk 0116 255 2108
<i>The Shell</i> Editor	Paul Jenkins	editor@stjamesthegreater.org.uk