

The Church of St James the Greater

Annual Report 2014

Background

St James' Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent – the Reverend Canon Glynn Richerby – in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC also represents those who, although living outside the small parish, choose to be associated with the worship and witness of this church.

Membership of the Parochial Church Council (PCC)

Ex Officio Ministry team	Glynn Richerby Jane Sharp Angela Jagger John Raven David Brunning	(as from October 2014)
Ex Officio Church Wardens	Julia Walker Michael Bull	(first elected 13) (first elected November 13)
Diocesan Synod	Margaret Terry	
Deanery Synod 2011 – 2014	Margaret Damant Glynn Richerby John Sharp Margaret Terry	(Treasurer) (ex officio)
Elected Members retire 2015	Caroline Beardsmore David Brunning Sarah Kirby Keith Vaughan	(Deputy Churchwarden) (vacancy)
Elected Members retire 2016	Tony Bentley Michael Molloy Andrew Packham April Rule (née Burton) Barbara Penrose	(Deputy Churchwarden) (resigned November 2014) (Electoral Roll Secretary) (Deputy Churchwarden)
Elected Members retire 2017	Simon Edwards Angela Hefford Phil Jones Jo Stapleton Joe Tobin	(Deputy Churchwarden) (Secretary)

Committees

The PCC operates through a select number of committees which meet between full meetings of the PCC.

Standing Committee

This is the only committee required by law. It has power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings, subject to any directions given by the PCC.

Worship & Mission Committee

Reviews the pattern and content of services with the Vicar and advises on education and mission.

Stewardship & Communication Committee

Encourages members of the church to express their commitment in terms of time, talents and money. A team of visitors maintain contact with everyone associated with the church through distributing the *Quarterly* magazine.

Youth & Children Committee

Implements the policy “To build up contacts with as many young people as possible, so that they may grow up with an understanding of the Christian option for their lives”.

Fabric Committee

Oversees repairs to and maintenance of the buildings, but excluding the Vicarage which is in the care of the Diocese.

Charitable Giving

Implements a policy to raise awareness of and support for charitable causes.

Church Attendance

There are members 144 on the Electoral Roll (156 last year).

The majority of worshippers are resident outside the parish, but a significant number of worshippers are within walking distance of the church.

Attendance at services on Sundays – as recorded by Churchwardens – averaged 230 (244 the previous year) including children, and those attending more than once.

Sunday evening services are almost as well attended as Sunday mid-morning services.

A team of leaders has provided a children’s Sunday Club on Sunday mornings in term time attended by up to 10 children – numbers significantly reduced since girls have been recruited as choristers. However, there are regularly some 30 children in the choir.

There is continued demand for the church as a venue for funeral and memorial services but a disappointing level of demand for baptisms and weddings.

Festival services attract many visitors – a feature of the public ministry of this church.

Friends of St James the Greater held their first Annual General Meeting followed by attendance at the Patronal Festival.

A Centennial celebration of the completion of the church was combined with the 50th anniversary of the Historic Churches Trust at a special Evensong on 28 September 2014.

Tuesday morning Eucharists have been held an hour later during winter time.

Thursday mid morning Eucharists followed by a coffee drop-in are well supported.

Housebound members of our fellowship were remembered in prayers at Sunday services and a number regularly received communion at home.

The *Quarterly* magazine has been distributed by the Stewardship Committee to the congregation and sent by post to *Friends of St James the Greater* and others who wish to keep in touch.

Three house groups regularly met.

Midweek youth clubs meet on Mondays and Wednesdays.

The Church sponsors the 41st Scout Group which meets in the Undercroft free of charge.

Good Companions (senior citizens) became unviable and ceased to meet in December 2014.

Saturday Stop-by – a joint initiative of the British Islamic Society and St James the Greater – provides a socialising and a hot meal for local people with housing and employment issues.

The Hall and Undercroft are used for a Muslim after-school madrassa.

St James continues to financially support a detached youth worker in the Southern Edge Mission Partnership of which St James the Greater is a constituent member.

Vicky Roe monitored adherence to the church’s Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Maggie Weller acted as the Church’s Vulnerable Adult Officer.

Review of the year

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) had six scheduled meetings. Main concerns were: completion of West End structural repairs; choir recruitment; financial contribution to the diocese under the new Gift Scheme; damage to the buildings by hirers; an insurance cover review along with fire risk assessment and photographic record of the building; celebration of the centenary of the completion of the church; a Funding Programme for 2015.

The PCC received quarterly management accounts from the Treasurer; reviewed updated Health and Safety and Child Protection Policies, Procedures and Guidelines; responded to Deanery, Diocesan and Southern Edge Mission Partnership developments.

Sub Committees and working groups brought advice and proposals to the PCC.

Our contribution to Diocesan funds through the new Gift Scheme was £67,500 (the Parish Share was £70,245 in the previous year).

The Charity Committee has been very active in encouraging support of charitable objectives. Events together with special collections raised a total of £5,812 including Gift Aid (£5,938 last year) for emergency appeals. An auction raised £4,839 for the West End Appeal.

Extensive structural repairs to the twin towers of the west end of the church supervised by Andrew Packham were completed before Easter. A Fabric Appeal met the cost of repairs.

A World War One Exhibition was held in the church after Easter.

The Men's, Boys' and Girls' Choirs have maintained a high standard throughout the year at the direction of Matthew Haynes, Mike Rule and Roxanne Summerfield.

Choir members had a very successful singing tour to Bristol and Exeter Cathedral in July. St James Singers directed by Michael Rule took a regular turn in singing for services.

Another season of Church sponsored concerts arranged by John Sharp with a box office provided through the Church Office has reinforced St James as a major concert venue.

Francis Ciza continued in the work of part-time caretaker with his wife Edith assisting in cleaning the premises. The Sanctuary Guild attended to regular cleaning and polishing tasks.

The Flower Guild provided beautiful flower arrangements to highlight the church's year.

The Churchwardens and Church Administrator in conjunction with many others have ensured the efficient organisation of the church.

The Associate Priest, Readers, Honorary Clergy, Pastoral Assistant, Sacristans and Servers worked well with the Vicar to support overall ministry exercised by everyone at St James'.

Looking ahead

A Funding Programme is to be launched at the Annual Parochial Meeting seeking to secure sufficient regular giving to meet the costs of the ministry and mission of our Church.

The Bishop is to hold his last Confirmation before retirement at St James' on 7 June 2015.

The Choir have a singing tour to Yorkshire to include singing services at Beverly Minster and a concert at Bridlington Parish Church in July.

The closure of St Peter's, Highfields may have implications for the ministry of our church.

Deferred repairs to walls and drains around the church will need to be carried out when the cost can be met. Redecoration of the Hall and Undercroft access staircase is also needed.

God bless our church and parish, and prosper all our attempts to be faithful to you and to draw others into your Kingdom.

**On behalf of the PCC
The Reverend Canon Glynn Richerby (Chairman)
and Miss Julia Walker (Vice Chairman)
10 March 2015**

CHURCH OF ST JAMES THE GREATER - 2014 ACCOUNTS

Copies of the full Accounts in the statutory format will be available at the AGM. However, a condensed version of the General Fund is set out below, together with a budget estimate for the current year. Due to a falling away in the level of regular giving it will be noticed that a successful 2015 Funding Programme is one of the most urgent priorities.

INCOME	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015 Estimate</u>
Plate Collections	8224	8500
GAD Envelopes	6838	7000
Envelope Scheme	7271	7300
Standing Orders	53449	50000
Tax Reclaims	22625	21500
Donations & Legacies	16073	16000
Wedding & Funeral Fees	954	1000
Hire of Church	2235	2500
Concerts	1550	2000
Miscellaneous Income	45	100
Interest Received	209	150
Charitable Collections	10364	7500
Church Hall Rentals & Donations	14437	15000
Rental Income	4200	4200
Total Income	148474	142750
EXPENDITURE		
General Church Exps including cleaning, caretaking, security, insurance, light, heat, water, candles, communion wine less sums recharged.		
	18287	18600
Clergy Expenses including all clergy expenses less recharged		
	2250	2380
Church Administrative Expenses incl. Administrator, printing, postage, telephone, publicity, advertising less recharges		
	13534	14370
Choir & Organ Expenses including Director of Music, Organists, choir pay, music, etc less sums recharged.		
	26314	27445
Church Organisations incl Sunday Clubs, Youth work, and SEMP		
	400	4400
Charitable Giving - as collected		
	10364	7500
Parish Share		
	67500	67500
Church Hall Expenses		
	7995	8550
Properties - Vicarage and Church Flat		
	464	500
Depreciation		
	2707	2700
Total Expenditure	149815	153945
Gen.Fund Surplus / Deficit	-1341	-11195
BALANCE SHEET AT 31.12.2014		
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS	25684	
CURRENT ASSETS	77932	
LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	9763	
TOTAL ASSETS	93853	
REPRESENTED BY:-		
Unrestricted Funds	59833	
Restricted Funds	34020	
TOTAL	93853	

CHARITABLE GIVING COMMITTEE

During 2014 the members of the committee were Caroline Beardsmore, Mike Bull, Hilary Simpson, Barbara Penrose, Janet Burton, and Jane Welsh. During the course of the year, Jane resigned from the committee, and Janet also stepped down at the end of 2014. We would like to thank them both for their hard work and the ideas they brought to our meetings.

During 2014 we organised (i) a Guitar Recital and Afternoon Tea, which raised £331 for a new, local charity called the Joe Humphries Memorial Trust;(ii) a Summer Evening with drinks, dinner and music, raising £721 for Water Aid, and an Auction that raised £4,839 for the West End Appeal. We would like to extend our thanks to everyone who helped in any way with hosting or running these events, particularly David and Dee Brunning for opening their home for the Summer Evening, and Annabel Cowley for work on all aspects of the Auction. During the year we also held a retiring collection for the Disasters Emergency Committee Appeal for the victims of the EBOLA outbreak, which raised £389. The total amount raised by these events (including gift-aid on donations) came to £6,280.

We would like to thank members of the congregation for nominating charities or worthy causes to benefit from one of our special events and encourage all members of the congregation to bring suggestions to any member of the committee. We thank all those who have supported any of the things we have organised and encourage everyone to join in future events.

In addition to the events listed above, the amount of money passing through the Church Books and given to charities and good causes includes amounts raised by other groups and individuals, the Lent Appeal, and the proceeds of collections at some funerals and other services. The total amount of Charitable Giving (including Gift Aid) in 2014 was £10,651.

I should like to thank the Committee for their tireless work and dedication over the past year.

Caroline Beardsmore

CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

In my role as Child Protection Co-ordinator, I have worked with the Youth Committee and the PCC to update the Church's Child Protection Policy in line with the revised Diocesan Handbook and changes in regulations. I attended a Diocesan Safeguarding Training session in September 2014 and also provided training to the leaders of the SJ2 Youth Group in November 2014.

I continue to oversee the Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly Criminal Records Bureau) checks for those in contact with children. I make occasional visits to the various groups and help with the Sunday Club on a rota basis.

Vicky Roe

FABRIC REPORT 2014

In September St James became 100 years old, an age at which the Fabric of our wonderful Church will need to be carefully monitored. Phase one of our West End Repairs is now completed. The PCC approved the postponement of Phase two, until such Funds are available, but be well assured we will keep our eyes on the condition of the work listed under Phase two.

Routine inspections, including the electrical, servicing, and minor repairs have been completed as required throughout the year. The Church and Halls continue to suffer at the hands of others, the increasing use of our buildings brings its own additional repair problems.

In the 80's a major programme of internal renovation was carried out in the church, including new boilers, electrics and sound systems. All those systems will in the not too distant future need replacing.

As of December 2014 the Fabric Work Listing Summary, has over 35 outstanding repairs/replacements requiring attention. All will put our limited Funds under pressure.

Looking ahead to 2015 - Redecoration is required in the lift stairwell and lobbies of the Large Hall both inside and out; if we are to expand on the hiring income we must improve the appearance.

Finally may I, on behalf of every one at St James, extend our most grateful thanks to Andrew Packham. His love and care of our magnificent Church as Fabric Chairman over a number of years has not only saved us a significant amount financially but kept our buildings in excellent condition.

Julia Walker Churchwarden & Chair of Fabric
Mike Bull Churchwarden

PASTORAL ASSISTANT'S REPORT 2014

Over the past year I have continued my Church and Parish duties and my meetings with the Vicar. I value the opportunities to visit people and take Communion to the housebound, as well as being a Eucharistic Assistant in Church. I have supported several vulnerable members of the congregation in different ways. I lead a team who help with schools visiting the Church as part of their RE curriculum, using a child-friendly Church Trail leaflet for the purpose. I am grateful for other members of the congregation who visit people regularly.

I attended the Pastoral Assistants' Study Day with AGM at Hope Hamilton Church in January 2015. Although my official term of duty as a representative on the Pastoral Assistants' Council has ended, I continue to be responsible for taking and typing the minutes of meetings.

Vicky Roe

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

The committee meet four times a year, coinciding with the publication of the Quarterly magazine in February, May, August and November. These get-togethers are primarily for the team leaders to collect magazines to pass on to their distributors, who in turn deliver them to members of the congregation. It is also an opportunity to share information about any changes in the congregation; newcomers; those who have moved or left; those who are ill or have died; and those who may welcome some assistance, for example home visits or lifts to services.

In conjunction with Annabel, the Stewardship team has updated information on how members of the congregation receive their Quarterlies. Due to escalating postal costs, copies are only mailed to those who have subscribed through the Friends of St James or in special circumstances.

We also feel that there may be some people currently receiving their copy via one of the distributors, who would be happy (and possibly prefer) to pick up a copy from the back of the church. This would allow the team to concentrate their efforts on delivering magazines to those really in need of a home visit.

If you are happy to collect your copy from church in future please let either Annabel or me know.

Pam Spokes

REPORT ON THE DIOCESAN SYNOD

The Diocesan Synod has met three times over the past 12 months. Our meeting in May was heavily weighted by financial matters as we received the Accounts of the Board of Education, participated in the AGM of the Board of Finance and gave serious thought to “Funding the Future / Generous Giving”, when we were asked to give support to the Bishop’s challenge to develop a culture of generous giving by individuals and parishes throughout the Diocese. Other items included: the sale of closed churches; the Vacancy in See Committee regulations; and we were required to vote on proposals embodied in the draft Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordinations of women) Measure and draft Amending Canon.

The main item for the September Synod is always the draft budget. We learnt that contributions from Parishes (offered in July) were increased this year but not by the amount that had been hoped for. We also received reports on the financing of St Martins House and Launde Abbey. As the 50th anniversary of the Leicestershire Historic Churches Trust and the 25th anniversary of Ride and Stride fell in 2014, Janet Arthur, as Chair, gave a presentation on the work of the Trust.

At our November meeting the main agenda items were: a review of “Shaped by God” – our Diocesan vision for mission which was introduced in 2005; a report on the Bishop’s Commission on Poverty, the report of which has been recently launched; and the Diocesan Budget. The Synod authorised the expenditure in the year ending 31st December 2015, of a sum of just over £8,375,000

For me, one of the highlights of meetings of Synod is the Bishop’s Presidential Address, which is always topical and thought provoking. The next Synod in May will be Bishop Tim’s last before his retirement when no doubt tributes will be paid to him. He will be sorely missed!

Margaret Terry
Diocesan Synod Member

DEANERY REPORT FOR 2014

The Deanery Synod met three times in 2014.

13th March 2014, Hope Hamilton

The meeting began with a summary of recent comings and goings in the Deanery and updates on additional responsibilities. A presentation on the General Synod was given by Shayne Ardron of the Martyrs who is currently a lay member. She gave a thorough overview on how meetings are organised, and what to expect as a representative before encouraging people to consider standing for the next elections in 2015. Aphro McCullough gave a presentation on the Experimental Baptism Service being currently trialled and gave an overview of the differences and similarities to the existing service before answering questions. The final part of the meeting included pioneer stories from those attending as well as an update on pioneer ministry from Alison Roche. Trevor spoke regarding Cornerstone: Cornerstone has ceased Sunday morning pub meetings and joined Christ the King’s congregation at Beaumont Leys, but it remains as a “pop up” church meeting in addition at the pub twice a month and twice a month at Stocking Farm plus running family craft sessions now at St Luke’s as a messy church on Sunday afternoons..

9th July 2014, St Peters, Highfields

Parish treasurers were invited to this meeting which was focussed on the offers made by parishes under the new Parish Gift system. There was a presentation on the new system from John Orridge (the Diocesan Director of Finance) explaining how the costs of ministry in the diocese are met, and how this system makes us responsible to each other at deanery level. Those present shared their parish’s gift and had the opportunity to explain how they had decided on that amount. Following this there was time for updates and notices during which we said goodbye to Mandy Ford, Area Dean who is now Canon Chancellor in Southwark.



20th November 2014, St Peters, Braunstone

The official first meeting of the new Synod began with a Eucharist celebrated by the Reverend Chris Burch, with a sermon by the Archdeacon, Ven. Tim Stratford. This was followed by a supper (kindly prepared by volunteers from St Peters) and elections to the Standing Committee, concluding with notices.

Elections to the Standing Committee

Les Michelmore	Lay Chair
Margaret Terry	Assistant Lay Chair
Vic Allsop	Assistant Lay Chair and Treasurer
Shayne Ardron	Lay Representative
Gary Nicholle-Anderiesz	Lay Representative
Pat Ewen	Lay Representative
Anthony Lees Smith	Clergy Representative
Keith Magee	Clergy Representative
Martin Court	Clergy Representative

A presentation was given Chris Burch and Andy Smith, a St.Peter's church member, about St Peter's, its hardships, its successes –it was humorous and heartwarming but challenging! Updates were given on recent appointments, forthcoming retirements and resignations and those with additional responsibilities.

Looking forward.

We will be electing lay members to a new General Synod in 2015 and with some new incumbent priests and pioneer ministers recently put in post in our deanery, we are looking forward to continued growth in mission of all kinds.

Richard Worsfold
Area Dean

SOUTHERN EDGE MISSION PARTNERSHIP (SEMP)

In my report last year, I explained that St James was in a Mission Partnership along with 6 other churches, St Andrew's Aylestone, Nativity in Aylestone Park, St Christopher's in the Samworth Enterprise Academy in Saffron Lane, St Mary's Knighton, St Guthlac's Holbrook Road and St John's Clarendon Park. The purpose for coming together was to work on mission, finding new ways for the Church to reach out into the Community and for God to touch new lives.

Mission partnerships are central to the Leicester Diocese vision for mission, "Shaped by God", first adopted in 2005 and given new emphasis in the 2014 Revision of last autumn. What is wanted is for the Church to grow, in numbers, in the depth of our discipleship and in loving service to the world. In the Southern Edge, we are all very different churches, but we are finding strength together in that diversity. Each church has 3 representatives on the Mission Action Group, which meets 3 times a year to receive reports and to be the link between the life of the churches and the mission initiatives of the Mission Partnership. Each initiative is then managed by an individually formed Task Group of people specially interested or gifted in it.

A year ago it was rather less about mission and more about ministry in the Southern Edge churches, because 2 of our parish priests, Rev Dave Appleby at St Andrew's and Rev Jennie Appleby from St Johns were moving to Plymouth, leaving us 2 short from our 6 stipendiary clergy. There were doubts about a possible plan for St John's to link with the strongly evangelical Holy Trinity Church in Regent Road, but in the end the positives outweighed the misgivings, Rev John McGinley, the Vicar of Holy Trinity, was licensed as Priest in Charge and, through his curate, Rev Sami Lindsey, we know has made a very encouraging start there.

I am afraid that no appointment has yet been made at St Andrew's but Ivan Bennett has been installed as Lay Assistant Leader at Nativity, the first ever such appointment to be made, and we have just been told that a new Curate, Rev Neil Bullen, is to join St Mary's in June. A great help to me

personally has been the Rev Professor Richard Bonney, non stipendiary priest at St Guthlac's being willing to take on the role of Assistant Co- Convenor of the Mission Partnership with me.

But I must move on. We still may have ministry problems ahead (quite apart from any future changes that may overtake us here, Rev Alison Roche plans to step down from St Christopher's when she and her husband are accepted as parents for adoption) but it is time for me to take this report on to the proper purpose of the Partnership, which is Mission.

Our "flagship" project continues to be "The Edge", employing Ali Simpson-Smith on detached youthwork in the Saffron Lane area. She has been a great influence for good during her 5 years there, and when she was on maternity leave last year, it was an opportunity for us to review and to try to do more to get closer to the potential for the project spelt out in the Streetspace Report of 2013. Ali is back at work now and we want to support her by employing a Sessional Worker for 15 hours per week during school term times. St James PCC has agreed to act as the employer, recharging SEMP with the costs, and I am very grateful to our PCC for the help and expertise they are giving SEMP in this way.

Both the Football and the Youth Cafe were continued while Ali was away. Both are going well and numbers are increasing. With Ali back now we hope to arrange more gatherings for new groups, "Spaces" with a spiritual dimension is one for example, but in particular we want to start a Girls Group which can work for them rather as the Football does for the lads. We hope to arrange a special presentation of the Football, perhaps at Nativity during May, which might include sponsoring the match balls they use and give us all a chance to meet some of the players. They are out of the Cup for this year, but are pressing strongly to end at the top of their Saturday League. This year a Football Cage was bought for them. It is a bit of kit which can be used at neighbourhood events and which we hope will help involvement in the local communities of our area.

In addition to "The Edge" project, we are hoping that the link with Holy Trinity through St John's may lead to new outreach, firstly with St John's School where a meeting is being arranged for after Easter, and separately within the Clarendon Park community, possibly there on an ecumenical basis to include as many of the other local denominations as we can.

One more idea to report is, bearing in mind how effective our music at St James has been over the years in bringing faith, not just to young people, but especially I guess to young people, we want to try to extend a "Mission through Music" idea through all our 7 churches, and that is to be on the agenda for the next Partnership management meeting in May.

St James 3' representatives on the Mission partnership are the three of us signing this report, but I am adding Lindy Forbes because she has been doing so much to help SEMP this year, not just by writing our monthly prayer which is shown on the stand at the back of the Church, but in so many ways. We would love to have more people that we could call on, like Lindy, who want to help to reach out to new people in Jesus' name.

John Raven

Caroline Beardsmore

Jan Geere

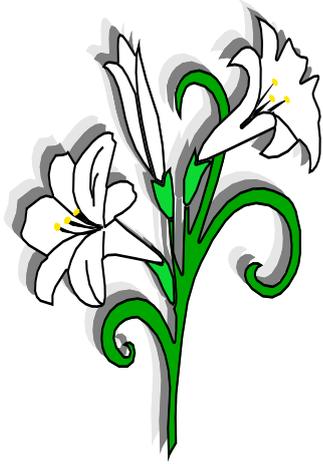
Lindy Forbes

representing St James the Greater in SEMP

GOOD COMPANIONS

Throughout 2014 the Good Companions continued to meet for a range of activities but it had become very apparent that due to age and disability the group was ceasing to be viable. We celebrated our 50th anniversary in September but the sad decision was made to close the group after one final outing at Christmas to the Old Horse for lunch. Members of Good Companions have been invited to join the Thursday morning coffee group once a month for activities followed by lunch and a trip is being organised for both groups during the summer of 2015.

Janet Burton
Coordinator



ST JAMES THE GREATER FLOWER GUILD ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15

Our **Membership** stands at 10. This year we have had several comings and goings with members returning, resigning and sadly departing this world. Norman Paviour, a past Chair of the Guild, loved St James and served it in many ways from boyhood. He will be sadly missed.

Mothering Sunday - 100 bunches of Daffodils were prepared for this special day. Two of our baskets, before your very eyes on Mothering Sunday, collapsed from wood worm. They have been replaced with green plastic Trugs.

Holy Week – Traditionally at St James we place flowers on the Maundy Thursday's Altar of Repose, and the Wooden Cross in the Porch on Good Friday morning.

Festivals - Easter, Harvest and Christmas flowers have once again given great pleasure to all attending Church on these special days. Easter is the only festival totally financed by the generous donations from our congregation via the Envelope/Gift Aid scheme, and without this income, we would not be able to decorate our beautiful church to the standard we have all been accustomed to for so many years.

Commemorative Flowers; Three Guild members consider arranging these flowers a privilege and willingly undertake this duty on behalf of members of our congregation past and present.

Donations The Guild is most grateful to all who give so generously to our funds. Without your support our work would not be possible.

The **Advent Wreath & Crib** Once again Guild members ensured both were assembled in preparation for Christmas.

This year our **Coffee Moring** was unfortunately cancelled due to the clash with the concerts on Victoria Park. Our **Summer Evening** was held at Barbara & John Raven's house. Everyone enjoyed excellent food, and good company in a loving home. Thank you both.

The Guild provided, in addition, Flowers for **St James Centenary, Historic Churches Trust, Glynn and Sues Ruby Wedding, 2 Funerals and a Wedding** during the year.

We were pleased as a Guild to be able to support our Church's **West End Appeal**. The Guild Lunch followed our **AGM**. That provided a good opportunity to chat afterwards.

In closing this report, may I personally thank the Guild Members for their support? Without their time, and talent, given freely each week, our lives at St James would be without the beauty of flowers. May God give us strength to continue our work!

Julia Walker
Chairman/Co-ordinator

SANCTUARY GUILD

My grateful thanks to Barbara Penrose, Cherry Fulloway and Margaret Damant in keeping the church dusted and polished over the last year.

If anybody could spare half an hour occasionally to help in any way, would you kindly contact me on 0116 288 5315

Doris Makepeace

MUSIC AT ST JAMES THE GREATER

Choir incomings and outgoings

Cody Watson and Sebastian Carrington joined the boys' choir and are due to be admitted as full choristers on Easter Sunday 2015. Kelsi Lamb was admitted to the girls' choir as a senior dark blue ribbon holder in autumn term, 2014. Alistair Jackson became a full member of the bass section in the autumn term, 2014. Richard Paterson has left as a full time member to attend on a more part time basis.

Back row

Female altos have been welcomed into the alto section of the choir. A lack of male altos has been the decisive factor in adapting the makeup of the back row. Concern for the tenors has reached a desperate situation with 2 of the 3 young students departing in July.

Choral Scholarships

A proposal for university and college students to become choral scholars at St James has been submitted by the music department. If granted, the scholarships will offer £1000 per annum for 2 altos and 2 tenors.

Tour

A week of singing is planned for the second week of July, 2015 in North Yorkshire. The choir are booked to sing services at Beverly Minster and will stay on the Skipsea Caravan Park (following a tour model previously done in Devon 2014). Commitment to the tour is worrying. Many choristers do not have the financial resource to commit to the tour, and members of the back row are uneasy about committing to a full week. With these problems, the tour is in danger of collapsing.

Samworth Academy Chorister Project

A project to bus pupils from the Samworth Enterprise Academy to the church was piloted in the autumn term of 2014. The project revealed mixed success with poor support for bus driving and worries over child protection being major concerns for the longevity of the project. 14 children took part in the project up to Christmas. A full place in the choir was offered to 9 of the 14 children. 1 boy chorister took up the opportunity.

St John's School

St John's is the next target for a lasting link to the church with the hope of recruiting choristers to the choir. Rachel Jackson (mother of Kathryn) occupies a seat on the board and has expressed a desire for the school to become linked to the church.

Attendance

Attendance is still a major stumbling block to the stability of the choir. Numerous attempts have been made to bring previous members back to the group (to enlarge the pool of singers available). However, membership to choir (particularly the back row) is precarious. Choristers continue to prioritise other activities over the choir which can be frustrating.

The Music Department

TRINITY HOUSE GROUP

My preoccupation with things medical meant a few cancelled meetings for the Trinity House Group in 2014, but we did manage half a dozen or so and we added a Pub Lunch in December at the Craddock which we hope we can repeat next year. By including Polly's dog, Benjy, we still have a dozen members. The topics are plenty and varied, spiritual as well as social, and what with the voice tending to live on rather better than other parts, we have some interesting discussions - and the fellowship is great.

John Raven

COFFEE DROP-IN

My grateful thanks once again to all who support the Coffee Drop-In on Thursday mornings (10.45 – 11.30). We continue to increase in numbers and enjoy a friendly chat over a cup of tea / coffee and biscuits before going on our busy way once more. Anyone who would like to “drop-in” will find a very warm welcome – we look forward to seeing you!

Doris Makepeace

SERVERS REPORT

During the past year we have said farewell to Duduzile Chizema and April Rule, we thank them for their services. We welcome Rachel Chukuli to our team.

We currently have 20 members, but are always looking for new servers who would like to join us. I would like to thank all the servers for their support and dedication over the past year and it is most encouraging to have such a reliable team. Thank you.

Emma-Jane Finn

SIDESMEN REPORT

There are now 23 Sidesmen doing a good job greeting the Congregation, handing out Service Sheets & the Weekly Newsheet, and generally helping. They take the Collection, and tidy up the leaflets afterwards. It is a monthly rota of regular commitment. If anyone is interested in being a Sidesman, contact Julia Walker or Angela Hefford.

Angela Hefford
Deputy Churchwarden

SUNDAY COFFEE TEAM

Coffee is served on Sunday mornings in the Large Hall after the Sung Eucharist. There is a warmth of atmosphere, as the congregation catches up with news and views of friends and fellow members. It is a chance for new members to be included and to be introduced to the social life of the Church. This weekly event is made possible by the small, but faithful, band of helpers, who, on a rota of once a month, give of their time to serve and wash up. There is always room for more volunteers! From the financial contributions made, the provisions are purchased and any remainder is set aside to replace crockery, glasses and other domestic requirements.

Rosemary Freer

REPORT OF THE YOUTH COMMITTEE 2014-2015

We have not had a formal meeting of the Youth Committee in recent months which is something that will be rectified in the near future now that John is recovered.

The finances, in the short term, are sound but depending on future plans of the individual organisations the funds available are by no means excessive.

SJ2 youth club continues to struggle to recruit young members, however, a small group of about half a dozen young people, in the age group 15 to 21, continue to meet weekly in the

Undercroft. They are totally enthusiastic to continue this and we are always optimistic that this may build.

Ceri Turner led this group before she moved away and leadership has continued through Chris Moon who has relished the responsibility, having been a member for 10 years now.

Thanks must be given to Liz, John's Daughter for her supervision and support while he has been convalescing.

The lack of members at this 'top end' also underlines the importance of the other Church Groups for young people, the Sunday Clubs, the Uniformed Organisations and the Boys and Girls choirs.

Thanks to Jo Stapleton the Sunday clubs continue to serve the congregation and begin the involvement of the youngest in the life of St James.

The Uniformed Organisations continue to make efforts to recruit younger members and to retain older ones. This recruitment and retention of young people is an ongoing problem for not only the Uniformed Organisations and SJ2 but the Boys and Girls choirs. As the modern world places more demands on the young and offers a larger variety of opportunities for young people there will always be a 'battle' for their interests.

However fighting this 'battle' we have the most able and enthusiastic of leaders in Tony and Alison Hurst for the Uniformed Organisations and Matthew Haynes our Director of Music. The congregation's thanks and appreciation must go to them.

Lastly, the committee would like to thank Vicky Roe for her unstinting efforts as our Child Protection Officer and also thanks to Janet Felstead who looks after our finances.

Bob Turnell

SUNDAY CLUB

The Sunday Club continues to meet during term time. The running of sessions is shared between Tracy Tobin, Rachel Bentley, Liz Turner and family and Jo Stapleton. The teaching aims to reflect the content of the church service, using child friendly and fun ways to convey the central message. The ages of children has been getting lower, but on some mornings we have a group aged between 2 and 15 years which presents quite a challenge. Ben and Lizzie have taken on a more responsible role and are as much leaders as participants and it is great to have their help. The group continues to offer a place for young people in the church. The rest of the congregation are often so supportive and the positive comments and welcoming smiles for the children are always such an encouragement.

Jo Stapleton

YOUTH CLUB

I am disappointed that we have not been able to recruit any new younger members this year. I think it is to do with the way family life is for that age group these days. What with the occasional visitor, it means there are generally about half a dozen young people, in the age range 15 to 21, meeting in the Undercroft on Wednesday evenings.

What is encouraging is the enthusiasm all of them have to keep on meeting, and it does keep us in touch with teenagery. It also underlines for me the value of our having our other Church Groups for

our young, the Sunday Clubs, the Uniformed Organisation and in particular of course the Boys and Girls Choirs.

Following Ceri Turner, Chris Moon is now our Leader. He has been a member for over 10 years now and I am well pleased with the way he has taken to the extra responsibilities. The routine for most of the meetings has been a period for chilling out and playing games, football, snooker, basketball, table tennis and the like, then coming together for a discussion and a game that we can all play together before we finish. The discussion seems to work well. It boosts their confidence to have to stand up for a minute or so and speak while the rest look on, and more recently we have been allocating time to any work they are doing and the search for post school employment. I am very grateful to my daughter, Liz, for all she does to keep SJ2 going while I have been convalescent.

John Raven

41st LEICESTER (ST JAMES THE GREATER) SCOUT GROUP

Over the last twelve months our numbers have again gone up. We now have 6 Beavers, 6 Cubs and 3 Scouts.

The Cubs and Scouts had a camp last year at Johns Lee Woods where we were joined by Cubs from the 1st Newbold Verdon Group and from the 112th Leicester Group. There were forty of us at camp including the adults and a good time was had by all while practising scouting skills by building giant catapults (which actually worked!), secret dens, abseiling and lots and lots of other fun stuff.

We have been swimming, kayaking, cooked for the parents, had a day in the woods cooking on fires and completed badge work. The Beaver Scouts went on the District Sleep over at Johns Lee Woods where the theme was Pirates. We made ships biscuits, pirates outfits, searched for gold, completed the obstacle course challenge and mapped our treasure island. The Beavers also went kayaking with the rest of the group and have completed badge work.

We are currently working with the Regional Development Officer to try to recruit more Beavers and Cubs.

Alison and Tony Hurst
Leaders 41st Leicester

A FINAL THANK YOU

To the many volunteers who, throughout the year, give their time freely to sweep leaves, keep the building in good shape, assist the administrator, and the many other tasks that keep the building and organisation running – too many to name individually. Many thanks to you all!

The Ministry, Music and Administration Teams