

The Church of St James the Greater

Annual Report 2015



THE MISSION OF ST JAMES THE GREATER
is to welcome all people,
to share with them the knowledge of God,
to encourage them to follow the Christian way
to celebrate the joys of life and to support each other through its sorrows,
to serve those amongst whom we live,
and to address the needs of others in the world.

WE ENDEAVOUR TO FULFIL OUR MISSION BY:

1. **welcoming** people regardless of age, race or social status.
2. **worshipping** in ways both old and new, combining words and music, movement and stillness with skill and imagination to glorify God and to inspire people in their life and work.
3. **belonging** to the Church of England and taking an active part in the life of the Diocese of Leicester.
4. **listening** to different points of view to discern God's will for the church and the world.
5. **preaching** and teaching a thoughtful response to the gospel of Jesus Christ in the light of the Spirit for today.
6. **studying** the Bible and Christian life in groups and linking with Diocesan courses.
7. **praying** for the well-being of one another, for those who ask for our prayers, and for the church and the world.
8. **caring** pastorally for the needs of the congregation and of the parish and contributing to charitable causes.
9. **conducting** services at special moments for people - including baptisms, weddings and funerals - and for organisations.
10. **providing** opportunities for people of all ages to meet socially and as members of organisations.
11. **promoting** cultural excellence by making available space and facilities for concert performances.
12. **raising** the money needed to maintain and improve our buildings, and to meet the costs of our church's ministry and mission.

Annual Report of the Church of St James the Greater in 2015

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	
Ex Officio Church Wardens	Julia Walker Keith Vaughan	(first elected 13: Vice Chairman) (first elected 15)
Diocesan Synod	Margaret Terry	
Deanery Synod 2014 – 2017	Glynn Richerby Michael Rule John Sharp Margaret Terry	(ex officio)
Elected Members retire 2016	Tony Bentley Michael Molloy Barbara Penrose April Rule (vacancy)	(Deputy Churchwarden) (Electoral Roll Officer & Deputy Churchwarden)
Elected Members retire 2017	Hannah Cowley Simon Edwards Angela Hefford Phil Jones Jo Stapleton	(elected 2015) (Deputy Churchwarden) (Deputy Churchwarden) (Secretary)
Elected Members retire 2018	Alan Fletcher Emmanuel Okoli Mike Rule Andy Judge Sarah Kirby	(Treasurer) (Co-opted 2015)

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.

Finance Committee (established in June 2015)

Provides stewardship of all the financial resources of the PCC. Safeguards against the misuse, loss or unnecessary depletion of PCC funds. Has oversight of all the procedures and documentation which relate to all and any aspect of the finances of 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 170 members on the Electoral Roll (144 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 224 (230 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 12 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 second Annual General Meeting followed by attendance at the Patronal Festival.

A Lent course of midweek study and Sunday sermons focussed on English Spirituality.

The Bishop held his last Confirmation before retirement at St James’ on 7 June 2015.

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.

Two house groups regularly met.

A midweek youth club met on Wednesdays. A Slavonic Youth Club ceased to meet.

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

Saturday Stop-by – a joint initiative of the British Islamic Society and St James the Greater – celebrated a fourth anniversary on 7 January 2015 providing 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.

Review of the year

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) had six scheduled meetings. Main concerns were: progress of a Funding Programme; the establishing of a Finance Committee and a Concert Committee; employment of sessional youth workers on behalf of the Mission Partnership; choir recruitment; concern for vulnerable adults.

The PCC received 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.

A Funding Programme launched at the Annual Parochial Meeting achieved a significant increase in regular giving to meet the costs of the ministry and mission of our Church.

Our contribution to Diocesan funds through the new Gift Scheme was £ 54,666 (£67,500 in the previous year).

The Charity Committee has been very active in encouraging support of charitable objectives. Events together with special collections for emergency appeals raised a total of £3,221 (£5,812 last year).

The 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 week at Beverley Minster in July.

St James Singers directed by Michael Rule took a regular turn in singing for services.

Another season of Church sponsored concerts with a box office provided through the Church Office has reinforced St James's as a major concert venue.

Francis Ciza continued in the work of part-time security /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 newly constituted Concert Committee is to promote church sponsored concerts and monitor hire of our premises for concerts in pursuit of the aim of St James the Greater to be a spiritual home for the arts.

Mission through Music is an initiative being promoted at St James along with other churches in the Southern Edge Mission Partnership.

Deferred repairs to church central heating pipes as well as to walls and drains around the church will need to be carried out when the cost can be met.

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) & Miss Julia Walker (Vice Chairman)
8 April 2016

FINANCE

The Role of the Treasurer

The role involves ensuring that there are essential controls and procedures in place for the proper management of charitable funds. This includes keeping detailed and accurate accounting records and reports of stewardship income, offerings, special appeals and any trading and restricted income; as well as detailed, receipted and categorised support records of expenditures.

The Treasurer must act as the first and primary tier of financial checks and balances; and is responsible for ensuring the proper disbursement of church funds – both restricted and unrestricted – within policies established by the Charities Commission, the Church of England and the PCC.

It follows that the Treasurer should not be involved in any of the operational procedures which it is his responsibility to oversee. So I am not a signatory to the accounts with Santander, NatWest and the CBF nor do I have any involvement in day to day financial operations to avoid the problem of supervising myself.

The Diocese of Leicester

We have received tremendous support from the diocese this year – in particular from John Orridge (Diocesan Finance Director), Jonathan Kerry (Diocesan Chief Executive Officer) and the Archdeacon of Leicester. We are very grateful for this support.

The Independent Examiner

Charity Commission guidance describes the main responsibilities of the Independent Examiner as follows:

- To review the accounting records maintained in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act 2011 in order to provide a reasonable basis for the identification of any material failure to maintain such records
- To compare the accounts of the charity with the charity's accounting records in sufficient detail to provide a reasonable basis on which to decide whether the accounts are in accordance with such accounting records
- To carry out analytical procedures to identify unusual items or disclosures in the accounts. Where concerns arise from these procedures, the examiner must seek an explanation from the charity trustees. If, after following such procedures, the examiner has reason to believe that in any respect the accounts may be materially misstated then additional procedures, including verification of the asset, liability, incoming resource or application, must be carried out.

I am extremely grateful to John Orridge for agreeing to be the Independent Examiner for the 2015 accounts. In addition, in order to ensure independence, the work John does will be reviewed by Jim Pullen who is also a member of the finance team at the Leicester Diocese. Both John and Jim are Chartered Accountants and the diocese have agreed that they can do this work without charge to the PCC.

The Charity Commission

Given the turnover of the PCC, it is necessary for the PCC to register with the Charity Commission. Keith Vaughan is handling this process.

The creation of an excellent computerised financial recording system based on a series of interrelated spreadsheets

John Cox has done a tremendous amount of work to establish this bespoke system for SJG. He and Annabel Cowley have now created the position where the recording of all financial transactions is done comprehensively, quickly and efficiently. The system also provides real time financial information with monthly management accounts being produced within a few days of each month end.

The establishment of a Finance Committee

A Finance Committee has been established, which I chair. The other members are the Vicar, two Churchwardens, the PCC Secretary and the PCC Administrator. The committee met on 25/08/2015, 19/09/2015 (jointly with the Standing Committee), 14/10/2015 (jointly with the Standing Committee), 27/10/2015, 30/11/2015, 12/01/2016 and 23/02/2016. Both John Cox and John Orridge have been in attendance at some of these meetings.

The responsibilities of the Finance Committee are described in the attached Terms of Reference.

Operational financial procedures

The Finance Committee has reviewed all operational financial procedures by reference, in particular, to the relevant parts of Charity Commission Guidance CC8 on “*Internal Financial Controls for Charities.*”

Some of the required procedures were already in place and in total we now have procedures to ensure:

- That no single individual has sole responsibility for any single transaction from authorisation to completion and review
- That there is budgetary control by the Finance Committee examining the monthly management accounts
- That accounting records are in place to explain all transactions and show the position of the PCC
- That the assets and investments of the PCC are safeguarded and resources are properly applied
- That steps are taken to prevent and detect fraud, financial abuse and other irregularities
- That money transactions and the actions of budget holders are in accordance with the agreed policy
- That cheque and cash receipts are promptly recorded in the cash books
- That cheques and cash are banked regularly and promptly
- That cheques and cash not banked on the day of receipt are placed in a safe or locked cash box
- That there is adequate insurance in place for all the insurable activities of the PCC, including cash in hand and in transit
- That all accounting records of income are maintained accurately
- That all expenditure is properly controlled and documented – with a dual system in place for all cheques and online banking
- That all expense claims are authorised by a person other than the claimant

The 2015 Annual Report and Financial Statements

It is not possible to present the 2015 Annual Report and Financial Statements to the APCM at the meeting on 24 April 2016. The Independent Examiner – who will be attending the APCM – has reviewed all the financial records for 2015 and is satisfied that the income and expenditure position is as described in the attached management accounts.

However, because of the ongoing Police investigation relating to our former Treasurer, John Sharp, it is not possible to make the prior year adjustments which it is anticipated will be required as part of the 2015 accounts until those issues are resolved, and this may take some time.

As agreed with the diocese, parish contributions have been suspended since February 2016. As the budget indicates, this will strengthen our financial position and once we have established the appropriate level of reserves we will reinstate monthly contributions and may be in a position to make lump sum payments on account of the amounts not paid during 2016.

Alan Fletcher
Treasurer

CHARITABLE GIVING COMMITTEE

During 2015-2016 the members of the committee were Caroline Beardsmore, Mike Bull, Hilary Simpson, Barbara Penrose, Emma Jones, Liz Turner and Karen Scrimgeour. During the course of the year, Barbara resigned from the committee, and Caroline also stepped down as convenor. We also welcome Karen and Liz as new committee members.

During 2015 we organised

- (i) A quiz evening for Macmillan Cancer Care raising £367
- (ii) A collection for the Nepal DEC Appeal raising £420

In addition money was raised for the Stop by Project, Christian Aid, the Osiligi Maasai Warriors and other good causes through Church events, card sales and donations.

Emma Jones
Charity Committee 2016

THE CHURCH OF ST JAMES THE GREATER FABRIC REPORT 2015



The costs incurred during 2015 in connection with the care, repair and daily maintenance of our magnificent church was in excess of £7,000.

The refurbishment of our forecourt sign board and the internal and external redecoration of the large hall and the disabled access stairwell were just a few of the projects undertaken during the year.

Phase 2 of the west end repair project, which covers the brick walls, pillars and drains on the north and west sides, has (after consultation with our architect and structural engineer and with the approval of the PCC) been put on hold. We will continue to keep the situation under review.

The necessary routine inspections, including the electrical servicing, boiler, organ, lift maintenance and minor repairs, have all been completed as required throughout the year.

We are most grateful to Chris Morfey for carrying out the annual inspection of our emergency lighting and indeed to everyone that assists with the upkeep of the fabric of St James in any way. The changing of a light bulb, replacing a door handle all is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Looking ahead to 2016 the church office, servers vestry and the church main doors at the west end front of are all scheduled for redecoration.

Our church heating system requires extensive work and the replacing of a damaged leaking pipe in the undercroft will involve the complete draining of the system. This work is scheduled to be carried out during the summer months.

Julia Walker and Keith Vaughan
Churchwardens

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 Co-ordinators Conference in September 2015, which was held at St. Martin's House.

I continue to oversee the Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly Criminal Records Bureau) checks for those in contact with children, a process which, from December 2015, is done online. I make occasional visits to the various groups and help with the Sunday Club on a rota basis.

Vicky Roe
March 2016

PASTORAL ASSISTANT'S REPORT 2015

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 2015

This will be my last report on behalf of the Stewardship team and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the team leaders and distributors for their help and support since I took over from Tricia Dean in 2008.

I am delighted to report that Vicky Roe has taken over the reins, and I am sure you will join me in wishing Vicky well in her new role. Team Leader, John Gonsalves, stood down this year for health reasons. I would like to thank John for his contribution to the team, firstly as a distributor and latterly as a team leader, over many years. Maggie Weller, who has helped in the past as a distributor during my absence, has become a Team Leader.

Four times a year, in February, May, August and November, the Team Leaders collect bundles of the Quarterly magazines to pass on to the Distributors, who in turn deliver them to members of the congregation. They also 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 continues to update information on how members of the congregation receive their Quarterlies. One aim has been to reduce as much as possible those receiving their copy through the post, due to escalating postal charges. 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 Vicky know.

Pam Spokes

REPORT ON THE DIOCESAN SYNOD

The Diocesan Synod has met three times over the past 12 months. At our meeting in May we received the Annual Report and Accounts of the Diocesan Board of Education, received and approved the outline budget for 2016 and considered Bishop Tim's recently produced Commission on Poverty : How do you get by? Also present at that meeting were two speakers from the Archbishops Council who introduced a discussion on an important document "Reform and Renewal" about which we will hear much in the coming months as it is to be considered at General Synod all the way down to the Parishes. We were invited to give particular consideration to financial changes and challenges and discipleship. One matter for our attention was that we need a 50% uplift in Ordinands nationally just to meet diocesan ambitions and replace retirees. Much food for thought! The May meeting was the last Synod presided over by Bishop Tim and it concluded with warm tributes being paid to him by both the clergy and the laity.

A new Synod was elected during the summer to serve for the next three years, so the meeting in September was the first not only for the newly-elected Synod but also for our Acting Bishop, John Holbrook, Bishop of Brixworth in Northamptonshire. It began with an Opening Service of Holy Communion at which Bishop John presided and this was followed by his Presidential Address, which was warmly received. Bishop Tim's shoes were not easy to step in to, but Bishop John has certainly been an asset to the Diocese during the Vacancy in See. The September meeting is always heavily weighted with financial matters as we double up as the Diocesan Board of Finance for its AGM and are also presented with the Annual Reports and Accounts of St Martins Cathedral Properties Ltd. as well as being briefed on Launde Abbey expenditure. We also gave further consideration to the Budget for 2016. The final item was a presentation by members of the Bishops Youth Council who spoke with enthusiasm about their projects, in particular their forthcoming visit to our link diocese of Trichy.

At our meeting in November, we gave final approval to the budget, which had been revised in light of disappointing Parish Gifts, and authorised the expenditure in the year ending 31st December 2016 a sum not exceeding £8,646,260. We also heard of some of the projects in the Diocese funded by the Growth Fund. We received an updated Diocesan Bullying and Harassment policy, the work of the working group set up to look at this issue and who produced the document "Working Well together in Ministry: Addressing Issues of Bullying and Harassment." The two substantive issues at that Synod were presentations and discussions on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults, and areas of new housing development. The former issue is particularly pertinent in view of the then recently announced Goddard Inquiry which will look in depth at cases of historic child abuse, and Archbishop Justin has requested that the Church should be among the first to be scrutinised. The question of new housing development and our ways of reaching out to them will be ongoing, as over the next ten years, 15,500 new houses are planned to be built in our Diocese with more developments to be announced.

In December we learned that our new bishop is to be Bishop Martyn Snow, then Bishop of Tewksbury. His service of welcome is taking place on the 14th May. We look forward to welcoming him to our next Diocesan Synod the following week!

Margaret Terry
Diocesan Synod Member

DEANERY REPORT FOR 2015

The Deanery Synod met three times in 2015.



12th March 2015, Parish of the Resurrection

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.

Chris Burch gave a presentation on the Bishop's Report on Poverty. The Bishop's Commission on Poverty was set up by the Leicester Diocesan Synod in 2013 and the report was issued on 9th February 2015. On the Commission were academics, local government and clergy. Evidence was gathered including focus groups at St Peter's Braunstone. The following came from those groups and other interviews:

- Those with power need to know about the fear of being without money.
- Don't put a person in a box.
- How ill do you have to be to get help now?
- What do you do if you are forbidden to work because of immigration legislation?
- Could the church offer a place for groups to set up and meet?
- Important for people to know they aren't on their own.

Chrispal Anand gave a report on the Parish of the Resurrection followed by Matt Pitt and Mads Morgan talking about what pioneering ministry is. The meeting was closed with prayers.

8th July 2015, All Saints, Scraftoft

The Meeting started with a presentation on the Diocese's Growth Fund. Liz Rawlings talked about how the Growth Fund has helped at Hope Hamilton with a children's and families' worker. Fiona Wingate talked about St Guthlac's World War I commemoration. Anthony Lees-Smith talked about 'Welly Walks'.

Martin Court presented a profile of the parish of Scraftoft and Netherhall which straddles the county and city. In particular their youth work, and refurbishment of their facilities. Following refreshment, parish treasurers, who were invited to this meeting, had the opportunity to speak about their parish gift for 2016, of which about 25% did so, with many others having provided their information in writing.

19th November 2015, St Mary's, Knighton

Mike Kelly and Matt Pitt talked about vocations in mission and ministry. The question was posed, "What does vocation mean?" Suggestions included: calling, service, passion, sharing, takes time, burning inside. Anthony Lees Smith is taking part in a national young persons' conference for ministry opportunities for 16-20 year olds, please let him know if you have any young people who could be interested.

The Pioneer Ministry working group met in July with Matt Pitt. Part of 2020 plan was read out to explain the starting point. Synod agreed there was no need to change the direction of travel of the 2020 plan, noting:

1. There is a lot of interesting pioneering work going on;
2. The Deanery can't be too prescriptive about how that pioneering develops;
3. The deanery 2020 plan needs to be implemented in the context of individual mission partnerships.

Following the Parish Report there was an update from the Cathedral about the impact of Richard III and future plans for Cathedral mission. The meeting concluded with an update on vacancies and new appointments.

Richard Worsfold
Area Dean

SOUTHERN EDGE MISSION PARTNERSHIP (SEMP)

Together with 6 other local churches, the aim is Mission, to be reaching out to new people in new ways and open up opportunities for God to touch new lives.

The main activity continues to be our "Edge" project, employing Ali Simpson-Smith as a full time qualified Youthworker to work for us on "detached" work among young people in the deprived part of South Leicester around Saffron Lane. What Ali has been achieving there has led to the original 5 years of the project being extended for a further 3 years up to the end of 2017. 2015 did turn out to be rather a difficult year for her because the City's funding cuts meant that there were no longer Council Youthworkers for Ali to work alongside. We did try to recruit a Sessional Worker to help, but it didn't work out. Also, the Samworth Academy, which is where Ali is based, was in special measures and had its own problems.

But there were still some good stories. The football went well and within the team atmosphere there were clear signs of lives being changed for the better. Lunchtime meetings and the Tea and Toast sessions at the Academy were well supported, and Ali started a new Youth Alpha course for those that wanted to follow up their ideas more deeply. The Youth Cafe, on Wednesday evenings has grown to a level that she now needs more adult volunteers to be the eyes and ears for her supervision. There is to be a "Come and See" evening about that this month with people from St James and hopefully the other churches as well.

Looking ahead, Ali is hoping to start a Girls Group to do for the girls something of what we think the football is doing for the boys.

For 2016, there is a new idea for outreach which we are calling Mission through Music, We know that music means so much and has had such a spiritual influence here that we would like to find the way to extend it more widely, Glynn is leading it and we are seeking ideas and guidance. There was a Christmas evening which Matt arranged last December at the Academy and 3/400 people came, many I am sure with little or no Church connections. It may not all be encouraging, but I think there is a lot for us to feel enthusiastic about.

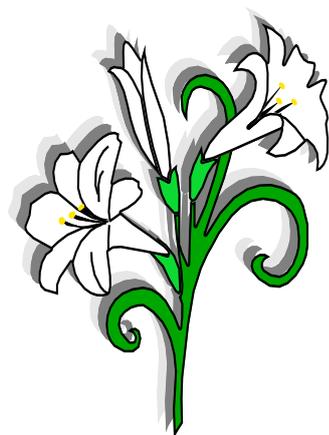
John Raven

Caroline Beardsmore
representing **St James the Greater in SEMP**

Jan Geere

Lindy Forbes

ST JAMES THE GREATER FLOWER GUILD ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16



Our **Membership** stands at 11

Mothering Sunday - 100 bunches of Daffodils were prepared for this special day Richard Turner owner of The Flower Company very kindly donated them.

Holy Week – Traditionally at St James we place flowers on the Maundy Thursday's Altar of Repose, and for the first time three Wooden Cross in the Garden 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 so your support is greatly appreciated.

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.

The Guild arranged additional flowers in church for the **Confirmation** by our Bishop.

Donations - the Guild is most grateful to all how give so generously to our funds, without your support our work would not be possible.

Advent Wreath & Crib - once again Guild members ensured both were assembled in preparation for Christmas.

This year our **Coffee Morning** was held by kind invitation of Jane & Andrew Sharp. The heavens were keen for us all to have a good soaking but it did not dampen our spirits and once again we are most grateful to the faithful few for supporting the Guild.

Our new fundraiser this year was a lunchtime Drinks & Canapé event held at the home of Anne & Fredrick Sylvester, a very successful venue.

Our **AGM** followed Lunch at the home of Hilary Simpson.

In closing this report, may I personally thank the Guild Members for their support and for the additional work undertaken while I was recovering from surgery. Without their time, 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 and Cherry Fulloway 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

Tour to North Yorkshire

A very successful tour to North Yorkshire was taken in July 2015 including services at the Minster, Trips to the beach, steam trains, camp sites and the odd tipple in the club house. All participants really enjoyed a well balanced tour of music and a holiday together. Choristers were particularly pleased to win some minions at Flamingo World whilst nursing some self inflicted fatigue after dancing the night away the previous evening. Visitors from Leicester to support the choir in action were very appreciated.

Cantata Choir Concert

The St James Cantata Choir presented a highly emotional concert in October 2015 for the feast of All Souls. Stephen Cleobury CBE was the star soloist at the organ, performing with great energy and musicianship. The choir showcased singers from all over the country and many of our home grown talent had the wonderful opportunity of working with Maestro Cleobury as a conductor in the Durufle Motets. The orchestra (Musical & Amicable Society) were highly complimentary of all that is achieved through music at St James.

Choral Scholars

A decision was made (due to the fragility of the back row of the choir) to employ 3 university and college choral scholars. The choir welcomed Bethany Stone (an A level student), Sophie Paterson and Fern Ashby (Leicester University students) in October 2015. All have contributed well to the

musical life of the church with excellent ensemble singing, solos and good humour! I am grateful to them for their efforts – which have included a willingness to travel long distances for special occasions out of university term time.

Bethanne Raja as Organ Scholar

Bethanne Raja was appointed organ scholar from the beginning of 2016. She has shown a fondness for the instrument and has developed well under the expert guidance of Michael Rule. I wish her well in her studies.

St John's Outreach Project

Outreach work was undertaken in the local primary school for 2 terms. 18 children took part in the choral skills programme and were involved in some services at church. Unfortunately the project did not yield any recruits to the choir due to other commitments. The project was terminated as of Easter 2016.

Samworth Outreach Project

An excellent service was held in school at the Samworth Academy. A huge effort by the church musicians was made to make a positive impact on the community – again in the hope of recruiting youngsters to the choir. Several attempts were made to encourage a large number of the congregation to come and integrate with the parents of potential recruits. Some 300 parents and relatives attended the service. About 7 members of the congregation came – a little over 2% of the total number attending. Currently work is being done to secure the recruitment of 4 girls (3 in year 9 and 1 in year 8)

Recruitment

Recruitment is at an all time low. Very little success has been had for either front or back row recruitment. A list of 10 potential boys was supplied by the vicar in 2015 – of which 2 boys have joined as probationers. Transport problems, extracurricular, family and work commitments, lack of families internal to the church, etc.... continue to hinder the opportunity for replenishing the stalls. The offer of scholarships, free piano lessons, etc... has done little to persuade potential musicians to the church choir.

Choir numbers

Numbers have declined due to various university departures.

Current membership:

12 Girl Sopranos (4 to leave in July 2017)

5 Boy Trebles (1 voice broken) + 3 boy probationers

4 Altos (3 on scholarship – due to expire July 2016)

4 Tenors (all future students – 1 to leave July 2016, 1 in July 2017 and 2 in July 2018)

7 Basses (1 part time, 1 to leave in 2017)

The Music Department

COFFEE DROP-IN

Many thanks to all who support the Coffee Drop-In on Thursday mornings (10.45 – 11.30). Recently I took over from Doris Makepeace and we would all like to thank her for organising the drop in for so many years. 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!

Liz Turner

THURSDAY LUNCHESES

This year saw a programme of monthly lunches launched which has proved very popular with up to 25 people enjoying a two course lunch following the Coffee Drop-In once a month. Everyone is welcome and special diets are catered for with notice. At Christmas we enjoyed lunch at the Old Horse with over 30 people attending. For further information please contact the Church Office.

Barbara Penrose and Annabel Cowley

SERVERS REPORT

During the past year we have said farewell to Rachel Chukuli, I thank her for her dedicated service. We currently have 19 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

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

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

SIDESMEN REPORT

There are now 22 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

TRINITY HOUSE GROUP

Anno Domini has continued to reduce numbers, but the Group still has a very good socio- religious meeting once a month and a Christmas dinner together at the Cradock. We are keen to continue.

Barbara and John Raven

REPORT OF THE YOUTH COMMITTEE 2015-2016

The Youth Committee relies heavily on the work of John Raven and this year he has worked as hard as ever in continuing the development of young people at St James. Financially we depend heavily on the PCC's youth fund subsidy and hopefully they will continue to support us in the coming year. Even though the organisations struggle at times to 'recruit' young people the financial support helps very much in maintaining the status quo.

SJ2, in particular, has struggled to recruit young people to its ranks. The Sunday Club still proves to be a huge benefit to parents and worshippers in the congregation and although numbers and ages vary it would seem to be wise to use more resources and further encourage young parents to attend St James. We thank Jo and Tracey for the magnificent work they do.

The Uniformed Organisations continue to have the same recruitment problems with the Beavers being the most difficult to increase membership. However, the Scouts, Cubs and Beavers meet as one group. If numbers of younger members increase then there would be a separate Beaver group recreated. Our thanks goes to the Hursts once more. The Choirs continue to flourish and Matthew is very 'instrumental' in that. (forgive the pun!) One of the key factors involved in the success of the choirs is the contribution that the parents play, particularly in the transporting of choristers to and from practice and services. It's the problems of everyday life and ability to transport young people that limits the recruitment to the other youth organisations like Beavers, Cubs and SJ2.

Again we thank Vicky Roe for her continued support as Child Protection Officer for the congregation and hope that she will continue to maintain the safety of young people of St James.

Bob Turnell

YOUTH CLUB

Despite big efforts, including efforts by the young people themselves, we have not been successful in recruiting, and I think that is not only about how the young want to spend their time but also about parents turning out to deliver and collect. However the members that remained, although being older than what was our upper age limit of 15, wanted to carry on, so we have continued to meet on Wednesday evenings and we have had some good and lively times. The plan is to encourage them to think about changing the format and adding variety, but meanwhile it is good that it is there to give expression to St James' ongoing interest in young people.

John Raven

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