

2020  
REPORTS  
APPROPRIATE  
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# Vicar's Report

This is my third year as Vicar of St James and it has been a year of both great achievement and some disappointment as we had to deal with an unfortunate situation with our previous treasurer, but God has blessed our honesty and openness. It has been a blessing to work alongside you all and to envisage how things can develop in New Barnet as we embrace the future with new passion and transparency.

This year has been a year when we have managed to re-write our Mission Action Plan, please take time to read it. Of course, this is a plan that is always changing as we achieve our goals and God reveals more of his vision to us for St James.

We have had some personnel change with our new youth and children's pastor Paul who is doing a fantastic job. There has been some shifting in roles on the leadership team as well, we hope this coming year we will concentrate on leadership training alongside our mission. This will hopefully enable and release people into their giftings in a new way.

When I arrived at St James the vision was to become the hub of the community and this has been the year, we seem to have made a significant move towards this. Jim's the advice centre opened on a Monday and Wednesday and has contributed to this greatly. At Jim's we are working with the Citizen's Advice and other agencies, and alongside this I have run Woman Alive. This is a Bible Study for women particularly helping us to engage with our identity as Women of God. There have been lots of different parts to Jim's and this means we are able to engage with the community both spiritually and practically.

I hope that you are encouraged by the stories of transformation that happen every week. In 2019 we continued to do 'Prayer on the Streets' and in nearly every session we prayed for about 20 people either at the point of contact or later. There were people returning to us who had been prayed for the year before with testimony of how their prayers had been answered. I don't think we did a session without someone returning with a story of how God had changed things for them. The other good thing about this has been how the profile of St James has grown in the community. It was exciting to hear how congregation members have heard people in the community talking about how great it is that we are out on the streets praying.

The community fun day was a great opportunity to work with the other churches and also to increase our impact and engagement in the community. It was great to get to pray for many people that day and also to meet up with various community links, like the police and local MPs. For the Fun Day we were awarded a special certificate as a recognised project.

The prayer ministry team has grown, and Christine and Rich have invested a lot in this area, Rich headed up the Barnet Year of Prayer and this enabled us to both attend and host ecumenical prayer events. We are growing in our relationships with other churches and prayer is foundational to all that we do. Prayer both changes us and enables us.



I have worked with other churches through our regular ministers' lunch and also as a host to a monthly ministers' breakfast, both have been invaluable to developing relationships and widening our Kingdom work.

There has been some movement in St James ministry leaders, as Steve Craggs gave up leading the music team, he did an excellent job and has moved us forward in many ways. Steve has left a good foundation for David Mulford and Simon Perera to build on this year.

The welcome team is now run by Chris and Caroline Jones who are doing an excellent job. The men's group is now led by Martin, with Simon and Andrew after David Hall did a brilliant job of getting this going, again great ideas are developing. The family of St James is developing and growing.

In every way we are at an exciting stage in the life of St James as we have become more outward looking, we have good ethics and practice which is in keeping with biblical principles, let us keep seeking Jesus.

As I was writing this report we entered the Coronavirus 19 lockdown and the church proved that it is about the people as people joined WhatsApp life groups; helped by being telephone and shopping buddies; engaged with Zoom (getting an average of 100 people each Sunday; engaged with Facebook and other means of communication. All of you have been incredible and worked together looking after each other, truly a family with Jesus in the centre, thank you all of you, I am blessed to be your Vicar.

Our structure for the teams is as follows:

Standing Committee: Here a team take small decisions on behalf of PCC (between PCC meetings) and put together the agenda.

PCC: The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC give feedback from the congregation and are actively involved with the mission and vision of St James as well as legal matters. The PCC met nine times during 2018. Average attendance across the year was 87%.

PCC members who served in the calendar year of 2019 were:

- \*Revd Laura Hewitt, Chairman
- \*Simon Vincent: Churchwarden; re-elected April 2019
- \*Carol Connah: Churchwarden: re-elected April 2019
- \*Bob Bayman, Deanery Synod Rep, Secretary, Electoral Roll Officer (term ends 2020)
- Rosemary Leaver, Deanery Synod Rep from April 2019 (term ends 2020)
- Simon Perera (term ends 2020)
- Luke Cowles (term ends 2020)
- Alice Femi-Pearse (term ends 2021)
- Zoe Jones (term ends 2021)
- Helen Cooper (term ends 2021)
- \*Alun Matthews (term ends 2022)
- Joel Wicks (co-opted from June 2019 TO April 2020)

From April 2019

- Ros Thompson (term ends 2022)
- Koye Akinjogbin (term ends 2022)

To April 2019

- \*Doug Rolfe

\* denotes Member of the Standing Committee

From April 2017 one Deanery Synod Rep position has been vacant, and from April 2018 one elected PCC position has also been unfilled.

## Some specific discussion points during 2019

- Safeguarding measures
- Suspected fraudulent activity and its consequences (including a new treasurer & finance structure and a new Youth pastor)
- Finance procedures
- Accounts
- Staff pay policies
- MAP
- Home & Overseas mission
- Church fabric, particularly repairs to the roof and church security
- Developments to various ministries

The development of a social action centre (which became Jim's)

The other teams that have met are:

**Ministry Leaders Team:** To work with Vicar, and develop the spiritual life of St James, to include, teaching, pastoral, worship, youth and children, technical, men's group, prayer ministry. This is to ensure that the spiritual life of the church is continually developing and in line with where we sense the Holy Spirit is taking us.

**Fabric Team:** To deal with practical matters, including the buildings, the management of the church premises and other church owned premises

**Finance Team:** To work with the treasurer, supporting and assisting as required and implementing a stewardship plan.

**Home and Overseas Mission Team:** To recommend where the planned giving be allocated and support overseas mission and local missions, such as Tearfund, CAP, Local Food bank etc. to increase our awareness of the needs locally and in world.

The PCC and the other teams have been a source of encouragement and the church wardens Simon Vincent and Carol Connah have continued to do an exceptional job. We have had an Oak Hill Student Joel and his wife Lauren Wicks and children with us, and these have stayed on an extra year and been a great blessing to us. They will be missed when they leave.

Our place has continued on a Tuesday afternoon with Becky Craggs and her team, this is a great witness in the community and I want to say thank you to them for this exceptional and vital work.

Our service and worship pattern has been as follows:

- one main Sunday morning service (10:30am). For many years, it has been our established pattern to alternate this between Morning Prayer and Holy Communion. The mid-week Communion meets every week (10.15am), linked to Jim's (previously Open Church) on Wednesday mornings, and we hold a once a month Sunday evening service Encounter (which focuses on prayer and worship).

To cater for adults, we provide:

- Mid-week Life Groups, Bible-study groups in people's homes.
- A weekly Advice Centre and drop in café called Jim's (Monday and Wednesday)
- "Knit and Natter" and a craft group
- Monthly Daytime prayer meeting and other prayer events
- Meditation Group run by Rosemary, an amazing place for reflection
- Prayer ministry team and Prayer on the Streets.
- The Edge – for those new to faith and run by Rosemary. Great place to plug seekers and new people in
- Regular brunches for women ideally twice each year, these have been run well this year. Women's day (We had Anne Coles this past year and it was well attended and received), and men's events breakfasts and other events (they also meet regularly in the local pub)
- Women's Alive – Bible Study for women on a Monday
- Encounter second Sunday of the Month (focusing on prayer and worship)

### **Home and Overseas Mission Team**

We have not met as often as we should have and we have increased the membership so we can be aware of the local mission groups around. We agree how the charitable giving will be divided and it was agreed we recommend and PCC approve.

We did have some special Sundays including Tearfund Sundays and a CAP Sunday which were well received.

### **Life Groups**

There have been some change in leadership of the last year and we have also changed the title to Life Groups to incorporate all the small groups including those that do not meet in homes. There has been good feedback on the topics, we covered the spiritual gifts and recently are undertaking the prayer course.

## **Conclusion**

Over the last year we have changed some of the structure of the main service to include alpha the first of the month. This has been an opportunity to get to know each other as we engage in discussion. It has been encouraging to hear great testimonies of how people are learning new things about each other. We have also had a confirmation service here and it was a privilege to be part of the service as candidates affirmed their own faith. It has been encouraging to see the growth in St James both spiritually and numerically, and to hear great feedback when people have engaged with us.

I thank you all for being part of God's family here. There are too many of you to thank everyone so forgive me if you are not mentioned because I appreciate you. Let us continue to invest in each other and those we meet in our community. Let us be disciples, and that means being willing to take our own relationship with Jesus seriously, to look at scripture ourselves and seek the Holy Spirit for direction, let us be part of the solution not the problem. I encourage you to seek the Holy Spirit and ask how you can be part of the change at St James. Jesus calls us to be his people doing his work where we are, so share with each other, invest in relationships with each other and reach out to those around us. This year one of the priorities must be how we welcome people and how we make people feel part of the family here. Look around and see who you could connect with. Please get to know each other, maybe stay for coffee when you don't usually and maybe chat to someone you have never talked to before. Let us be a family where all belong.

I will be working with those who are leading and raising up new leaders in these next years and will also be seeking to find grants to expand our work. May I ask that you pray about your giving as well, we have expanded our work to help others and want to do more mission in the community. We would like to develop our outreach to the homeless, our care of the elderly, our connection with the youth, and our links with young families, our care of those with additional needs and our connections in the community. We would like to be a place where those who are broken are welcome and can be helped as we increase our ministry with CAP, the lonely, the lost, the ignored and all in our community.

Please continue to talk to me and share with me all that you sense God is saying at this time and together we will build His Kingdom. We want to be a people who experience the presence of God and are transformed through His word and spirit. Let us together serve the community here and lead them to the one who is the light of the world, Jesus.

Rev Laura Hewitt (incumbent, St James, New Barnet)

Approved by the Trustees (PCC) on \_\_\_\_\_ and signed on their behalf by:

### **Reference and administrative information**

St James's Church is situated in New Barnet at 71 East Barnet Road, Barnet, Herts EN4 8RN, and is part of Barnet Deanery within St Albans Diocese. The correspondence address is The Vicarage, 11 Park Road, New Barnet, Herts, EN4 9QA. St James's Church bank is Barclays Bank, Whetstone Branch, 1250 High Road, Whetstone, London, N20 0PB.

The Independent examiner is Anthony Davis

Our charity registration number is: 1150299.

## **E**lectoral Roll Report

The number recorded on the Church Electoral Roll prepared for the APCM 2020 is 107.

The number recorded in 2019 was 109: since then 4 names have been added and 6 removed (5 members moved away and one died).

Bob Bayman

19 September 2020

# Wardens' Report *Including Fabric Report*

Carol Connah and Simon Vincent have continued as Churchwardens during 2019 and the first part of 2020. We work very closely together and with Laura, but we do try to divide the responsibilities between us. In general, Carol looks after the fabric of the building and anything to do with contracts, tenancies and rental agreements. Simon looks after record keeping, reporting and communications.

## Fabric report

The Churchwardens, along with Simon Perera, Alun Matthews and Koye Akinjogbin, form the Fabric Committee. This group has responsibility for looking after the physical fabric of the church. As with all churches, there is a challenge to keep everything maintained, serviced and in order. We also have to ensure that, as a public building, we keep up to date with inspections, certifications and insurance.

We are thankful for those people that are on the Fabric Committee, or who are just there in the background or help at a work day. All are important - thank you!

The main focus this year has been the work on the roof. We noticed in late 2018 that in part of the roof, an area that appeared to have been damaged by water seemed to be spreading. We thank God that we received a grant to cover the full costs of the work, which has now been completed. We took the opportunity of having high-level access to check the state of the roof and gutters on the north side, and the contractors have repaired and replaced tiles over a large area.

We have not undertaken much other work in 2019, partly as a need to save money while we got our finances back on track, and partly to avoid distracting us from completing the roof project. However, we must make sure we continue with our regular maintenance and repair work, to avoid storing up larger problems for the future. The work plan is guided by the architect's inspection in 2018, and we have a list of things which will be done over the next few years.

The work for the coming year is likely to include:

- Repair or replacement of the back door, leading to the nursery
- Repair of the windows and brickwork at the back of church
- Renovation of the fence and earth banks in the garden
- Replacement of internal door locks in the front part of church
- And possibly some further work on the heating system

The PCC will consider the costs of all of these projects, and help the Fabric Committee prioritise between the work.

We continue to maintain the church's property at 159 Victoria Road. Apart from general maintenance and inspection, there was no major work at this house in the past year.

There were some other smaller pieces of fabric work that we carried out this year:

- Carol continued to work with KidsChoice to ensure that their area of the church is kept safe and well-maintained.
- We replaced bulbs at high level in the floodlights and the spotlights.
- We had a full inspection of the church electrical system, which we have to do about every 5 years.
- We ensured that the church passed its annual inspection by the Archdeacon's representative, and kept our records up to date.

We held work parties in May and again in September. These are days when lots got tidied, weeded, cleaned and polished. We need to do a few more this year to tick off some of the quinquennial task, so please do volunteer if you can spare some time to help look after your church building.

## Church inventory

We have to keep a record of what the church owns, and declare things that we have acquired or disposed of during the year. The PCC has approved this list at its meeting on 1st April 2020.

## Staff

The church employs two staff, Bryony Johnson and Paul Robinson-Beswick. The PCC is their employer, and has delegated the line management of the staff to the vicar, Laura. The wardens support the vicar in the management of the staff, including reviewing contracts and recommending levels of pay to the PCC.

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## eanery Synod

St James is one of 16 churches within the Barnet Deanery, an area bounded by South Mymms and Little Heath to the north, New Barnet to the east, East Barnet & Totteridge to the south and Elstree to the west. The Deanery is currently led by Revd. Tim Seago, Vicar of St Andrews Totteridge and Revd Laura Hewitt is Assistant Area Dean.

Each vicar is automatically a member of the Synod; St James is also entitled to three lay members elected for a three-year term. In 2019 we were represented by Bob Bayman and, from April, by Rosemary Leaver - with one position remaining vacant for the remainder of the year. The current term expires in 2020.

The Synod meets three times each year. Meetings generally host a guest speaker leading discussion on a topic of particular relevance to the issues the church is facing, as well as brief coverage of Deanery "business" and policy matters affecting the diverse group of churches in the Deanery. There is also regular feedback from Diocesan and General Synods.

February: St Michael & All Angels, Borehamwood

The Revd. Kate Peacock - Diocesan Church Growth Officer described her role and addressed the meeting on parish mission and Mission Action Planning. Discussion continued on a number of ways churches, particularly those with a traditional culture, could develop and sustain growth.

The routine business of the meeting also covered safeguarding progress and some positive feedback from a Diocesan conference of Area Deans & lay Chairs on church growth.

June: Christ Church, Little Heath

A wider than usual representation of church membership had been invited to this session, with the intention of discussing a number of specific topical issues. The meeting was arranged around five focus groups: Churchwardens, Treasurers, Administrators, Safeguarding Officers and Young People's work. Through discussion each group identified a top three issues and a series of potential solutions, leading to a number of concepts for further development.

October: St Michael & All Angels, Borehamwood

The first topic for the meeting was again based on church growth, led by The Revd Harry Steele, very recently appointed to the post of Diocesan Church Growth Officer. Harry described a new programme entitled Leading your Church into Growth (LYCIG), and explaining how this sits alongside the existing Reaching new People initiative, which will continue to develop.

The Revd Louise Collins, Team Vicar at Elstree & Borehamwood, then outlined her vision for celebrating nature, with a concept of why and how this could be developed, including a proposal to create a half-time post within the Deanery for a limited period.

Church members are always welcome to attend meetings of the Synod - so keep an eye on Newlink for forthcoming sessions and have a word with one of the members if you are interested.

Bob Bayman

March 2019

## Summary

The financial focus for 2019 was to be good stewards of the church's money and build up our reserves, while also making sure that we invested in maintaining and building up key areas of mission such as youth work and outreach. We had our annual Gift Day in May and we also held a special appeal during the autumn for our youth work.

We had a surplus for the year of £8,961. This was encouraging as it allowed us to build up our reserves a little, but we are still significantly below the level of reserves recommended for churches (intended to allow them to get through financial dips). Therefore, in 2020 we still plan to focus on building up our reserves to the recommended level while still investing in the ministry and outreach of the church.

Maintaining a reasonable level of reserves has become even more imperative during the Coronavirus crisis as income is now much more uncertain but we are still trying to keep our ministries going. See the reserves policy at the end of the finance report for more detail on the church's reserves.

## Income

Our income increased from £147,851 in 2018 to £152,851 in 2019. This was partly due to the youth work appeal in Autumn 2019 which raised £6,818 (including £1,247 in gift aid) and increased income from room hire, weddings and youth groups.

Here is a breakdown of our 2019 income:

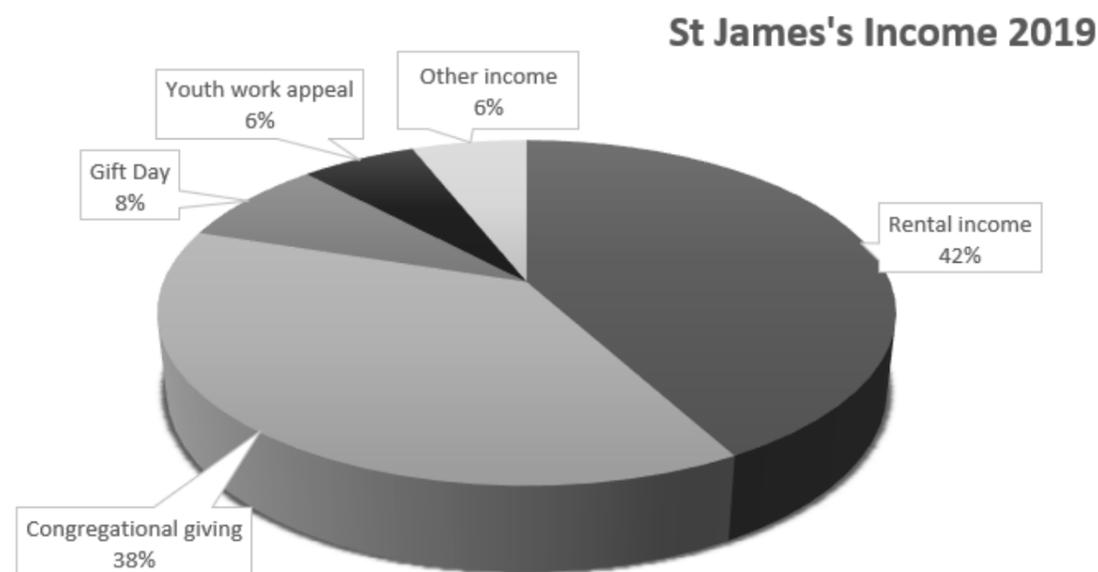
42% from rental income (either from our rental property in Victoria Road, or renting out rooms to Kids Choice nursery and other room hirers)

38% from regular congregational giving, either by standing orders or weekly cash collections

8% from our Gift Day in May

6% from our youth work appeal in the autumn and other donations restricted for particular purposes such as youth work and the hardship fund

6% from sundry other sources including youth groups and church events



## Expenditure

Our expenditure decreased significantly from £158,171 in 2018 to £143,890 in 2019.

This is largely due to careful financial management which allowed us to make significant savings while still investing in key areas. Spending in discipleship, outreach and church ministry went up a little, but spending in several other areas went down. For example, service costs went down from £3,934 in 2018 to £2,178 in 2019; costs of the youth and children's work went down from £3,041 in 2018 to £2,838 in 2019 (the 2019 figure doesn't include youth work spending from a couple of small restricted donations); repairs and maintenance went down from £6,658 in 2018 to £4,940 in 2019.

Other reasons for the reduction in expenditure were reduced salary costs – down from £37,434 in 2018 to £28,887 in 2019. This was largely due to the youth worker post being only part time for the first few months of the year. Also, in 2018, there were £12,580 of payments made which we don't know the reason for and which are subject to an ongoing police investigation. No such payments have been made since.

## Cash

We had a healthy cash balance throughout the year to make sure we were able to deal with any unexpected dips in income. We were partly able to do this by deferring our Parish Share payments temporarily, with the consent of the Diocese, to allow us to build up our reserves. (The Parish Share payments are those each church makes to their Diocese to allow the Diocese to support the ministry of all their churches.)

## Reserves Policy

The free reserves are the total funds available to the PCC, excluding funds tied up in our rental property in Victoria Road and funds designated to be used on specific items.

It is the PCC's policy to:

keep three months' running costs (approximately £30,000) in free reserves to cover essential expenditure in the event of loss of income

save up funds in a 'fabric and large projects reserve' to cover unexpected fabric repairs and other large projects

Due to the situation outlined in last year's financial report, our reserves fell far short of this target at the end of 2018, but from 2019 we have been taking steps to rectify this. We have now managed to build the free reserves back up to £13,485 as at 31 December 2019, compared to £992 at the end of 2018. This is a much healthier amount and closer to our target of £30,000. It would have been unrealistic to be able to build up our reserves fully to the £30,000 in just one year, especially as we were keen to keep our mission and outreach going. However, for our reserves to have gone up as much as they have in one year is very encouraging and we thank God for this.

# Safeguarding

Thank you to everyone who has taken time to do safeguarding training, and for all the work you do in church with our children and other vulnerable members of the congregation. It is important that thinking about safeguarding doesn't stop when we have done the training. Please keep thinking about how you could apply what you have learnt in all our activities.

The Parish of St James is committed to its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. To achieve this, the Diocese of St Albans requires certain actions to be taken in order to fulfil our responsibility. The purpose of this report is to lay out clearly those responsibilities and requirements and to report on our current position in relation to them.

Ensure that all those authorised to work with children and vulnerable adults are trained appropriately for their roles, including Diocesan Safeguarding Training. – All volunteers are asked to complete the Church of England Safeguarding training, either C0, C1 or C2 course depending on their role. This year 27 volunteers who work with children in our church have completed online training. We are also rolling out the training to the prayer ministry team, worship leaders, Jim's Café and updating PCC members.

The PCC has considered (at its meeting of 17th May 2020) the Church of England's Safeguarding Policy, as laid out in the publication 'Promoting a Safer Church' (The Archbishops Council, 2017). The PCC has taken account of this Policy Statement within St James's own safeguarding policy. The Policy Statement underpins all safeguarding work within St James and guides us in our drive to improve safeguarding practice. The PCC has also approved the following documents at its meeting of 1st April 2020:

- Our safeguarding action plan
- Our procedure for dealing with safeguarding allegations or concerns
- Our policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders
- Our list of activities where safeguarding matters have to be addressed

The PCC also approved the information about safeguarding on the church's website and on notices posted around the church. Over the next few months, the PCC will also review risk assessments for our activities, and support Jenny and the Churchwardens as they prepare formal role profiles for volunteer roles where safeguarding could be a concern.

The full policy and the Church of England's documents are available from Laura, Jenny or the Churchwardens. Please contact Jenny in the first instance if you have any questions or concerns about safeguarding at St James.

# Welcome Team

Our welcome team at St James's is said to be one of the most important groups in the church – after all, the first person most people meet when they come into the building on a Sunday morning is a member of this team.

As well as greeting people at the door, welcomers (sometimes known as "sidesmen") give out any books or papers needed for the service and help with the conduct of the service in many ways, with extra tasks at communion services. They do a great job giving visitors any additional help they need.

Since we took on the organisation of this team early in 2019, we have been continually encouraged by the enthusiasm of individual members of the team – both those who only joined last year and those who have been involved for much longer. Our heartfelt thanks to all who have given us such a welcome!

The team now has 25 members, which means there are normally four people available at each main Sunday service, together with a few reserves. In the past year we have had some training sessions, so we hope everyone is well equipped for the tasks they are to do. We aim to continue to meet together occa-





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## Children and Youth Work Report

Since I have taken over as Youth Pastor, we have instilled a few changes. I believe this gives us a better platform going forward and is more sustainable for the future.

**Base Camp and Girls Only** have merged and become Zone and we have reduced the cost to £2.00

**MSG** now covers School year 7-13 cost £2.00

**Girls Bible study** is now known as Bible study - cost-free

**Baby and Toddlers** is now under the remit of the Youth Pastor and capped to 50 costs £2.50 per family

**Kidschurch** we have rationalised groups and increased the age range to school year 13. Ignite runs every week

**Our Place** started by Becky Craggs for children with special needs - cost-free

**First Aid:** I am collecting names and will pass on to the leadership team to hold an in-house first aid course. This is essential when running any work within the church.

**Children's information:** We have now collated all the personal details and emergency contacts for all external groups. This is stored on Google drive and we have an emergency file with registration as a hard copy for the leader of the group taken. The next step is to hold better records for Kidschurch as we only hold registers at the moment. We need to hold emergency details for each group so that the leader is more up to date and prepared in case of an emergency.

**Prayer:** We have instilled in every group that we should start with a prayer, This is a very important part of our Christian life and it should be a priority within our groups. We have now got the children to pray before eating at both MSG and Zone using the prayer dice.

**Meetings:** This is an area I need to improve and hopefully in 2020 we will have them more frequently. However, I am available either face to face or over the phone whenever I am needed.

**Stocktake:** In February half term we did a stocktake of all the resources we have for children's work. We were able to get rid of broken items and make the baby and toddler's storage room safer to work in. This reduced the need to work at height. We also steam cleaned all the play equipment to maintain hygiene. This will hopefully happen every February half term. We are still working through all the stock which means very little was bought this year. I will keep reducing stock until it is at a more reasonable level

**Zone:** This has now become weekly and the response back from parents is very positive, this is a more realistic representation of life in our community. On average we have 20 children who come to this group with only 3 of these children from our church families. This is a very positive outreach to the community. The ideal number for this group is no more than 25, this is because the main part of this group is to sit down and eat a meal together which builds up relationships. We had a few sessions in the vicarage garden which enabled us to enjoy the great outdoors and Zip along the garden at a safe speed

**Our Place:** Becky and her team have done a fantastic job here, she has seen a need and acted. They have approx 10 children with special needs and have made important links with the health care clinic who run weekly sessions onsite. This has been fantastic. What a response to prayer this has been, to help people who need it most. Let's hope this keeps growing in faith. When you see grown people cry at the impact this has on their lives you just know that God is working in this group. This is a free resource to the community

**MSG:** This group is not growing and if we want to attract more teenagers, we may need to change this totally. However, the teenagers who do come love it and get a lot of time to talk and have also reached out to us in times of need. The problem is if we grow then the relationship side may slip. We have an odd age range, we have 3 who are 12/13 yrs old and 5 in the sixth form, so the younger ones need a lot of attention and don't mix easily with oldest. We have 8 teenagers at present with a 50% split with non/church families.

**Baby and Toddler Group:** This is a very busy group covering newborns to 5-year-olds. We reduced the numbers to 50 children plus parents and carers, this has really helped build relationships in the community. The team of volunteers are stretched but we are looking to increase this on certain weeks. We have also fostered links with Fostering at Children's services Barnet Council and also Family and Children Services within the London Borough of Barnet who advise on potential families regarding Free Education for 2 and 3-year-olds as well as any 30-hour queries that they may have.

**Kidschurch:** I have had a big push at getting the rota out as quickly as possible and reducing the number of overlaps with other rotas. The registers are going well and we will now need this to include emergency contacts. Flames and Blaze covered the main characters of the Old Testament, who and what did they do and then building on this information. In Ignite we finished a Scripture Union course a bit like Alpha to investigate the Christian faith and to look at the truths and myths surrounding our faith. Ignite now has its own meeting room which has been transformed from a dumping ground to a place to feel proud of.

**Creche:** This is now not manned on a Sunday and feedback has mainly been positive. They can listen to the service through the sound system and still have a safe place to escape when children get stressed or bored.

**Livingston school:** We are still in a close relationship with this school and this is shown in the number of pupils that come to zone. The garden Sue Walsh and I tend is looking transformed with crops of tomatoes, corn and potatoes as well as wildflowers. We also enjoyed having them hold their Christmas service at our church which was full with parents and teachers.

**Pancake day event:** This went down well with a clear Christian message and ethos. A great outreach to the community. 86 people turned up.

**Lent:** We looked at the 40 challenge and this was given out at the Pancake event, Zone, MSG, and Ignite. This should have a positive effect on our community as it is about having a generous heart for others

**Youth Events:** we are looking at holding one-off events for all our teenagers to come together, the first one was held at the vicarage with a talk and then BBQ in the garden held at the same time as the church service. This went down well and was attended by 11 people we will look to build on this in 2020

**Easter Messy Church:** We set up the church so we could walk through the story of Easter using a passport-style book-let and lots of interactive areas from taking the last supper to the resurrection. This was open to the whole community and was well supported.

**Community Fun Day:** The team supported this event by running different stalls activities and bouncy castles which were all free to the community.



**East Barnet Festival:** Once again we took part and provided a safe haven for families to come and be part of our church family. This was well supported and for the first time we linked up with Oakleigh church which shows the community that churches work together and support each other. All craft was supplied free of charge, in an age where there is a cost for everything this was an oasis of Christian beliefs.

**St Mary's School:** Laura and I have done several assemblies at the school and at St Mary's church. Let pray this relationship keeps growing.

**Soul Survivor:** We took 7 Teenagers to this amazing event and we were lucky enough to be part of the last soul survivor camp ever. This was an amazing event for everyone who went. This transforms lives. The weather was glorious and the worship inspirational every age group should attend one of these in their lifetime.

**Holiday club:** was held with the theme Superheroes and this was well attended by the community. Thank you Carol and team, who went over and above and created an inspirational day

**Light Party:** we used Zone to hold our very own light party to fight back against dark Halloween traditions

**Trips:** I joined up with an organisation LIFT, who runs free events in North of London. We attended 2 free Christian concerts this year. This will hopefully help in meeting other Christians and other Youth workers.

**Christingle:** What better way to spend Christmas eve, than with your family and thinking of others less fortunate.

**Staffing of groups:** I think this is at a good ratio of children to Adults in every group. However, we are always looking for new help. Thank you all, for an amazing, job you are an inspiration.

# O ur Place

During the year Becky Craggs realised that there was a need for a toddler group where children with additional needs and their parents could meet in a safe, friendly and supportive environment.

Our first session was on 28 November, where we all sat with our coffees but no children - and this set the pattern for the next few weeks. But we persisted, established some links with with the Special Educational Needs team in Barnet and in the early weeks of January it started to take off, and by March 2019 up to 10 children were attending. This is an important new ministry complementing the established children's work at St James. The group is led by Becky Craggs and supported by Pam Bayman, Liz Smith and Michelle Mohamed.

*Pam Bayman*

# M usic

"Over the past year, Simon Perera and David Mulford have taken over the leading of the worship music from Steve Craggs, (Thanks Steve for all you did).

The worship team has continued to progress in leading worship and we now have four key worship leaders, Simon Perera, David Mulford, Zoe Jones and Simon Vincent for the morning and Encounter services.

We are truly blessed at St James that we can lead the worship using different musical influences and that we have a variety of talented musicians and singers of various ages we can call on to help lead the worship. Worship music though written over recent years remains the core of the worship music used in the services. We are truly blessed at St James that we can lead the worship using different musical influences and that we have a variety of talented musicians and singers of various ages we can call on to help lead the worship. Worship music though written over recent years remains the core of the worship music used in the services. We have also had to say unfortunately, farewell to Helen and Leon Hamilton as they have moved to Exeter. We pray that they will find a church in Devon and can be actively involved. We also said a farewell to Elizabeth Vincent as she went to study music at Oxford University (fortunately, Elizabeth has been available when terms have finished). We thank you Lord for all their contributions. We are excited though that we have and continue to have people who are interested in and want to be involved in being part of leading the worship at St James and that we can lead the worship with a mix of ages. Its great to have a number of teenagers involved. We are excited though that we have and continue to have people who are interested in and want to be involved in being part of leading the worship

# M en's Ministry

The men's ministry continued to develop during 2019, led by David Hall. We have tried to follow the principles of 'up, in and out' in our programme. We look 'up' to our Father in heaven through the teaching, prayer and worship at Men's Breakfasts. We look 'in' to support each other through the time we spend with each other at the breakfasts and at our regular pub trips. And we look 'out' to bring the good news about Jesus to our friends and those around us in New Barnet, through the events that we run for the group and with the wider church. But all our activities have elements of up, in and out, and Jesus is at the centre of all we do.

In 2019 we held 3 men's breakfasts, with talks from David Burrowes (former MP for Enfield South), David Hall and Simon Vincent. People from the team helped organise the family night in April and our quiz night in November, and we have established regular evening trips to local pubs.

After taking on the challenge of establishing the men's team, David Hall has now stepped back from leading the group, but Martin Smith, supported by Simon Vincent and Andrew Cooper, will be carrying on the work. In 2020, we will develop some new areas of work. We will continue the termly breakfasts at church, and will focus on inviting external speakers to visit. In between those events, we will have breakfast together once a month at the Railway Bell, and this will include a time to pray for each other. We will carry on meeting in local pubs about once a month, and we also have plans for a special event in the spring that we can invite our friends to.

For more details about the men's work, please talk to Martin Smith.



# W omen's ministry

We at St James are committed to offering the women of our church a chance to socialise together and grow in faith. This year we have run several Women's Brunches where we have the opportunity to eat together and invite guest speakers along who can help focus us spiritually as well as create an opportunity to get to know each other better. These events enable us to also invite friends along as well as increase our connections with other local churches. We have also, with Laura's help started a once a year Women's Day which gives us a whole day together to explore an area of faith. This is something we are looking forward to expanding in the year to come.

We have also had several enjoyable social events which have included a curry night, museum trip, and a couple of film nights- and we are currently working on plans for a summer walk. We are lucky to have a committed team who are dedicated to trying to bring the women of St James together so that we can better support each other as a Christian family.



# Daytime Prayer Meeting

The Daytime Prayer Meeting continues to meet on the third Monday of each month.

We are a small group who thank God for the privilege of prayer. Following the guidance of St Paul in Philipians 4:6-7 we pray for our nation, our world, neighbourhood and church, for one another and for friends and loved ones.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition with thanksgiving present your requests to God. And the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus”

Often prayers are silent in our own hearts or we may pray aloud as we feel led. Sometimes we might bring a prayer from a book. Always we pray for discernment and guidance in our praying.

Special thanks to all who come along regularly; all are welcome to join us. Thanks too for Caroline and Rosemary who share in leading, and to Marion who welcomes us to her home for our Quiet Day in summer.

Leaflets and information can be found in the church annex.

# Prayer Ministry and Prayer on the Streets

Over the last year the Prayer Ministry Team has grown in number and developed through training and a constant reliance on God’s faithfulness. We are grateful to Him for the provision of the team and on a Sunday morning have continued to offer a quiet corner and listening ear for anyone needing God’s blessing and the reassuring comfort of His presence. We continue to be excited by the reviving work of the Holy Spirit and are encouraged by the way praying for each other is becoming a more visible part of the end of each service.

In addition, on the second Saturday of each month the ‘Prayer on the Streets’ team have gathered at 10.00am to offer tea, coffee and prayer to the passing community of New Barnet. We have prayed for a great variety of people including those who live in the neighbouring streets and those who thought they were on a train journey to Luton, but ended up sitting in the St James Café, hearing stories of the transforming power of Jesus. It has provided a good opportunity to hand out church publicity and proven to be a great faith building exercise for those of us on the team. Throughout the year our testimony has been that God is good and we continue to thank Him for all the answers to prayer.

Christine Mulford and Rich Coombes



# Meditation Group

The core members of this group are the people from the Edge group but others are most welcome and we have people from beyond St James's. Part of the purpose of this group is to attract people from outside who are interested in meditation. We have been exploring contemplative prayer, centering prayer and meditative reading. We use guided prayer journeys and silent prayer. Friday is the preferred evening to meet, and Church is the appropriate venue so we have not met while the night shelter has been on. However we had a meditative afternoon hosted by Marion.

# The Edge

This is a small group that is similar to the Lifegroups, made up of people who are relatively new to St James's. Trevor and I take turns in hosting the meeting at home and we usually share a meal together. Our programme is based on finding out about Jesus and what it means to follow him. For this we have read through John's Gospel, looking at 'Who is Jesus?' and discussing the impact his life and teaching have on our lives. 3 of the group asked to be confirmed and we used part of the Alpha course on video as preparation for Confirmation. We are currently following the Prayer Course and join with Martin and Liz's 'Walking with God' group once a month. Trevor has been a co leader and now Sue Walsh is also involved.

Rosemary Leaver

# Jim's Cafe

Jim's cafe opened in November with a Monday morning session where 1 adviser from CAB was available. From January we also opened the cafe on a Wednesday and we have 4 advisers from CAB. The cafe offers free tea/coffee and cake with a donations box, this brings in about £20 a week. This has started slowly but it now growing quickly, the cafe is not always big enough and so we have set up an overflow cafe in the main church hall.

We are starting to make some good relationships with individuals who come in regularly and we are supporting them through various issues and trauma, offering practical support and prayer. We spend time on the phone to various local services trying to help people sort their complex issues out. CAB have limited resources for this. They also say the biggest need is to help people fill in forms online.

On a Wednesday CAB can have up to 24 people coming for help, this is 24 people who are coming into our church for the first time and seeing the space and activities that happen here. We hope that everyone sees this as a blessing for the community to be able to mix with members of our congregation. It's wonderful to see our Communion Service is able to work along side our services to the Community.

We work closely with HAB, Barnet Fostering, Kickstart homes, Food bank, CAP among others and are looking to expand this network. We also have a great relationship with the local community police officers and have recently worked with



We are also praying and looking into providing support for people who have no access to the internet to apply for council tax or universal credit, we are being giving some free training for this through the Foodbank. This will require some laptops but this is a work in progress and we are working in conjunction with Foodbank.

Since November we have been trying to apply for a grant to provide a salary for a Jim's manager, the work load is growing quickly and we want the work to be sustainable. We are trying to work with Cinnamon Network and are also starting to look for others as this is very slow moving.

## **C**hristians Against Poverty (CAP)

St James has been a partner church with CAP since 2016, and has run a variety of CAP Money Courses including some tailored for specific groups of people. The CAP course helps people to manage their money better, avoid debt, and to have some funds left over for some nice extras or treats.

A total of eight members of St James have now been trained by CAP as course coaches, of whom six have been active throughout 2019 – these are Andrew Cooper, Bob Bayman, Pam Bayman, Fiona Perera, David Mulford and Martine Whitaker.

General courses were run in March and September-October 2019, each consisting of three 2-hour sessions. A one-day pre-uni/college session was run for school leavers in September. In each case the number of people attending was at the low end of viability, but the courses remained very worthwhile to delegates. Further coaching was arranged with a few delegates who were unable to complete the course or who experienced particular difficulties. A planned Saturday session at St Peter's Lyonsdown in connection with the Food Bank did not take place due to a lack of delegates, but two of our team have been providing money coach support at Colindale and Edgware for the local CAP Debt Centre.

A one-off evening session was held in July, open to all previous delegates, as a reunion and opportunity to review developments.

Publicity for courses has been developed through the year, with more flyers distributed; we were represented at the Unity Service at Barnet in January and had a stand at the ecumenical Fun Day at Cat Hill in June. Information about courses has also been circulated to other churches in our Deanery and to other local denominations. This work will continue to be expanded, but the greatest opportunities to reach more people in need are probably through Jim's and its links to the C.A.B. - this liaison was being actively developed by the end of the year with a new course planned for January 2020.

The team continues to consider prayerfully the longer term future, which is linked to St James' work with the homeless, the Foodbank and other agencies through the hub formed by Jim's. Discussions have taken place with the local CAP organisation, which are likely to result in closer links with other CAP activity in the area and, when resources permit, extending our partnership into Life Skills work, while also developing adaptations to the money course to address the specialist needs.

Bob Bayman



## **T**he Shop

We have had to make several changes in the last year. We are going to have more bibles, cards, prayer guides to help us all to understand the word and less cards. We have asked the congregation what they would like us to sell.

Heather Gill

## **K**nit and Natter

We have been very happy in knitting. The blankets and hats etc have all gone to help raise funds for a blood monitor and help in the baby unit. There is also more people joining who don't come because of work but are involved. We had a lovely thank you letter from Barnet General. Please see Heather if you wish to read it.

Heather Gill

## **O**pen Church

Open Church has been as busy as ever this year, with one or two significant changes. With her mobility becoming more difficult, Rosemary reluctantly had to give up leading the sessions after fourteen years dedicated service to regular "customers" and those dropping in from time to time.

We would like to thank her for her care and dedication to all those non-church and church people who have enjoyed a friendly welcome, and a chance to chat and laugh over coffee and amazing variety of home baked cakes.

Rosemary still comes along to meet and greet the regulars but with some of the other dedicated helpers also finding it more difficult for various reasons, we needed to look for more people to take it on as closing was not an option.

We would like to thank Liz Smith for offering to get a new rota up and running and with one or two new people joining it, Open Church has continued to thrive along with Wednesday morning Holy Communion.

By the end of the year Jim's Café was up and running on Mondays, and in the New Year extended to Wednesdays as well. The resultant move of Open Church into the main church and running alongside the Communion service and the Craft Café needed careful thought and as we look to the future will continue to "bed in" as the church as a whole develops a strong and thriving outreach programme, of which this activity remains an important part.

Pam Bayman

## **A**rts and craft Space

Arts and Crafts was originally known as 'Create and Relate' or 'Craft Cafe'. Now under different leadership we have re-named it 'Arts and Craft Space'. A place and time to be creative and make friends. We are using materials donated by friends and Martin Nelson whose wife, Carol was our craft teacher and sadly died. Everyone is welcome to either bring their own work or use our resources.

Helen Langley

