



# ST. JAMES THE GREAT CHURCH & ST PAUL'S CHURCH

## FEAST OF PENTECOST – 24<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2026



### ✦ TODAY AT ST JAMES:

- 08:00 — Said Mass.
- 10:00 — Parish Sung Mass.
- 4pm Confirmation Class at the Rectory

### THIS WEEK:

**Tue. 26<sup>th</sup>** 09:00 to 10:30: : Church Cleaning

**Wed 27<sup>th</sup> 6.45 pm** Baptism of Abigail Christine Walker

**Thur. 28<sup>th</sup> May 12.30 pm** Mass at Church

**Fr. Midday:** Rosary Prayers

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> Trinity Sunday:** 08:00 Said Mass. 10:00 Parish Sung Mass.  
4pm Confirmation Course

- 🙏 **PLEASE PRAY FOR The Infirm and Housebound:** Adam, Ava Mills, Gaby, Christine & Emma, Clive French, David Beattie, Donna Canning, Marlyn Mary Canning, Flavianne, Joyce & Ralph, Jackie Bliss, Lubomira, Madeline Bates, Noreen Cunliffe, Naomi & family, Peggy Lewis, Sheila Townsend, Sharon,

**The Recently Departed:** Ronnie Cunliffe, Marlene Critten, Shirley Ann Raynes

**The Years Mind:** 24<sup>th</sup> Maud Poulter. 25<sup>th</sup> Robin Twinn 26<sup>th</sup> Cuthbert Kent, Cecil Heasman. 27<sup>th</sup> Ruby Rowles, Francis McCracken. 29<sup>th</sup> Arthur Sparling. Philip Mitchell. 30<sup>th</sup> Lily Leuchars, Margaret Long, Dorothy Fryer.

## The Pentecost Gift Day: Today

Today, the Feast of Pentecost, marks our Parish Gift Day. It is a moment of deep generosity and a profound opportunity to offer a thank offering to God in a way that suits your personal circumstances:

- **A One-Off Offering:** A specific, generous gift, clearly labelled as a "Pentecost Gift".
- **A New or Increased Commitment:** A private note placed in an envelope—visible *only* to our Treasurer—stating your new or increased monthly commitment through the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS).
- **The Parish Giving Scheme:** Moving your regular giving to the PGS remains the most professional and compassionate way to support our community.

## OFFERING AND COLLECTION DETAILS TODAY (24<sup>TH</sup> MAY)

These offerings will be collected during the Offertory as the collection plates and bowls are passed around. The sidespersons have been asked to take a great deal of time during the collection, specifically to ensure that nobody feels rushed and everyone has the unhurried opportunity to deliberate and place their gift in the bowl.

If you miss the collection during the service today, you are most welcome to hand your gift in afterwards.

Please ensure it is clearly marked and pass it directly to our Churchwardens, Desirée Campbell and Michael Sheeran, or to our Deputy Churchwarden, Jean Hecker. They will ensure it is placed securely in the safe for counting or passed on to Lucy Mason. Alternatively, you can contact our PCC Secretary, Clare Moles, to arrange your gift.

### **An Urgent Act of Pastoral Care**

Transitioning to the PGS is a direct, practical act of mercy for our Treasurer, Lucy Mason, who is the only person who records the parish giving details. Lucy is currently undergoing the gruelling rigours of intensive chemotherapy as she awaits surgery. The manual counting and processing of physical paper envelopes is an exhausting task that we can lift from her shoulders immediately.

Paper **PGS forms** also remain available at the back of the church for you to take home. Let us approach this Pentecost with the confidence that our collective generosity will ensure St James remains a beacon of the Gospel for generations to come.

Out of 113 members on our Electoral Roll, only 24 individuals or households currently use the PGS. Some may feel hesitant about providing financial details, but please be assured that the PGS is an entirely secure external system. Your individual giving records remain completely confidential and are never seen by the Parish Priest. Furthermore, while the scheme offers an option to automatically increase your gift annually in line with inflation, there is absolutely no requirement to do so and you can tick not to do so.

If you need any assistance filling in the physical or online forms, Marina Lostal will be available at the back of the church after the service today to guide you through the process.

## Stewardship Covenantal Transformation

Our regular giving data from May 2026 demonstrates the dedicated core that keeps our church going. However, looking at our current reality with absolute honesty, we face a significant gap: we have 53 regular households or individual givers, yet our Electoral Roll stands at 113, and our wider contact database reaches 190 people.

The financial reality is straightforward: the only resources this church possesses to fund our gospel work are those we ourselves sacrificially give to God. Let us make a decision through prayer, seeking a covenantal transformation and stability for our church.

<b>Gift Range</b>	<b>Monthly Givers</b>	<b>Weekly Givers</b>	<b>Total Givers</b>
£5 - £10	3	5	8
£10 - £20	8	5	13
£20 - £30	5	2	7
£30 - £40	1	0	1
£40 - £50	7	0	7
£50 - £60	0	0	0
£60 - £70	3	0	3
£70 - £80	0	0	0
£80 - £90	1	0	1
£90 - £100	0	0	0
£100 - £120	2	0	2
£120 - £140	5	0	5
£140 - £160	2	0	2
£160 - £180	0	0	0
£180 - £200	1	0	1
£200+	3	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>53*</b>

*\*Note: The source data reflects the active distribution of our regular givers as per ChurchWarden/ Treasurer – Lucy Mason*

If we achieve a collective increase of **£1,000 a month**, we will halve the pressure on our parish budget almost overnight. This target is entirely within our reach if the entire church family shares the weight of the load:

- **10 households** giving an extra **£100** a month.
- **20 people** offering an extra **£50** a month.
- **40 people** offering an extra **£25** a month.
- **60 people** offering an extra **£16.67** a month.
- **80 people** offering an extra **£12.50** a month.
- **100 people** offering an extra **£10.00** a month.

### **AN HONEST REFLECTION ON ECCLESIASTES 3**

To frame this difficult but necessary conversation, let us reflect on the wisdom found in the Book of Ecclesiastes:

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted... a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together..." (Ecclesiastes 3:1-2, 4-5)

I hold to the primacy of honesty with our church family and wider congregation, and it means acknowledging that we are navigating a distinct and challenging season. Many households are facing real dilemmas right now, balancing the rising cost of everyday living and household bills against a deep desire to support the life of the church.

The spiritual challenge of stewardship is that it asks us to look at our resources through the lens of trust rather than anxiety or scarcity. That is incredibly difficult when everyday pressures are rising. No one should ever feel a sense of failure or distress because their personal circumstances limit what they can physically afford to give.

Instead, Ecclesiastes reminds us that there is "a time to gather stones together" to share the load. When we plan our giving intentionally as a church family, the burden does not fall heavily on a few. It becomes a collective act of mutual care, ensuring our giving remains a source of peace rather than domestic anxiety.

Please pray about your giving and respond today with the generosity that defines our faith.

**CONFIRMATION 14<sup>TH</sup> JUNE AT 6PM**

Almighty God, We pray for your servants preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation: Eloise, Eliza, Adele, Thea, Lily, Millie, George, Georgia, Hedy, Eshan, Ayo and Lucy T.

Fill them with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, strengthen their faith, and draw them ever closer to you. Prepare their hearts for the sacramental ministry of the Right Reverend Luke Irvine-Capel, Bishop of Richborough, on Sunday 14th June at 6pm. Bless their families, godparents and sponsors as they journey with them.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## CONFIRMATION REFRESHMENTS

Our church family will gather for a moment of profound significance as candidates stand before God to confirm their faith and baptismal vows. This is far more than a formal rite; it is a vital missional milestone where these individuals publicly claim the faith of the Church as their own.

✦ In the New Testament, the breaking of bread and the offering of hospitality are central to the life of the faithful. To honour this occasion, we wish to host a reception at the Pilgrim Centre following the **6pm service**, extending the joy of the altar to the fellowship of the table. 🍷 🍞

We invite you to support this celebration by sponsoring refreshments. By contributing, you are doing more than providing food and drink; you are participating in an act of communal hospitality that welcomes these candidates into the fullness of our shared life in Christ.



👉 If you feel led to support this particular ministry of hospitality, please speak offer your donation in an envelope, and mark it CR (Confirmation Refreshments) and hand it in at the Offertory during the Mass. Or use the QR code and let Lucy Mason know by emailing her in at the Offertory 🙌

Thank you for your generosity and your steadfast prayers for our candidates as they prepare to take this courageous step. 🙏 🌸

## **ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING (APCM):**

We give heartfelt thanks to God for our APCM, which was attended by 38 parishioners. We are grateful that all annual reports were formally received, and we celebrate the following appointments and elections to our shared leadership:

- **Churchwardens:** Dr Desirée Campbell and Michael Sheehan were nominated and appointed to serve our parish.
- **Deputy Churchwardens:** Fr James confirmed that, in addition to Jean, Flavian, and Carlos, that Keith Alford has kindly agreed to accept the invitation to serve as a Deputy Churchwarden.
- **Deanery Synod Representatives:** Desirée Campbell, Lucy Mason, and Philip Prior were elected as our three representatives to the Deanery Synod.
- **Parochial Church Council (PCC):** Election of Vida Adibzadeh, Jean Hecker, Lucy Mason and Clare Moles to the Parochial Church Council: Each were duly appointed for a period of three years.

Thank you to everyone who attended, voted, and continues to give their time to the governance and spiritual health of St James.

### **VOLUNTEER MINISTRY VACANCIES:**

- **We require a Fundraising Team** (2–3 people)
- **Food Hygiene Lead.** Please speak to Desirée Campbell. Training for 10 people on Saturday, 30<sup>th</sup> May. Please sign up.
- **Caring for the Church:** We require more volunteers for our Tuesday cleaning rota (9:00 am – 10:30 am). To care for the fabric of this sanctuary is a liturgical act; every polished surface is a silent prayer.
- **Practicing Hospitality:** We must broaden our team responsible for Sunday refreshments. Please sign up to help.
- **We specifically need volunteers** for refreshment as we host the Deanery Synod at our Church on **17th June at 7pm. Thank you to those who have offered to help.**
- **We need help with refreshments post the Confirmation Mass** 14th June. Hospitality at the Pilgrim Centre (5 East Hill). Please sign up
- **Walsingham Outreach:** Jane Southward on Saturday 11th July.
- **Confirmation:** Sunday 14th June at 18:00 with The Right Reverend Luke Irvine-Capel – Bishop of Richborough.

## CHURCH NOTICES – JUNE DIARY

- Dear friends, Please note the following dates for your diaries:
- **Tuesday 2nd June at 1pm Organ Recital** by **Samuel Bristow**, Assistant Director of Music at Chelmsford Cathedral.
- **Thursday 4th June at 7pm Feast of Corpus Christi** A solemn celebration of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.
- **Saturday 6th June Diocesan Synod** at Chelmsford Cathedral (daytime). **1:00pm** – Wedding of **Jack Dixon and Abigail Christine Walker**. We pray God's richest blessings on their marriage.
- **Thursday 11th June Swearing in of the Churchwardens**. We thank them for their service to the parish.
- **Sunday 14th June 8:00am Mass** followed by **Morning Prayer with Sermon**. **6:00pm** – **Confirmation Service** presided over by **The Right Reverend Luke Irvine-Capel**, including Holy Communion and Mass. We pray for all those being confirmed.
- **Wednesday 17th June at 7:00pm Deanery Synod** hosted here at the church. All welcome.
- **Friday 19th June at 10:30am** We welcome a delegation of around 40 clergy and lay leaders from the Diocese of Singapore, together with visitors from Thailand, Nepal and Indonesia. They are exploring Anglican heritage in England and will begin their day here with Mass in the Anglo-Catholic tradition.
- This is a wonderful opportunity for our deanery. If you are free, please come and help welcome our brothers and sisters from Asia.
- **Wednesday 24th June Said Mass at 12 noon**, followed by the **first Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting** of the new term.

Please keep all these events in your prayers and support them where you can. May God bless you all.

### SANCTUARY LAMPS

- Blessed Sacrament lamp: Is not sponsored this week.
- St James the Great lamp: Is not sponsored this week.
- The Aumbry Lamp: Is not sponsored this week.
- The Lamp for Iran: Dedicated to the people of Iran, especially the faithful diaspora within our church and City.

## A Message of Thanksgiving

We give thanks to Almighty God for His boundless grace and tender mercy, so richly poured out upon our parish in last Sunday's Service of Healing and Renewal. Many came forward in faith to receive the sprinkling of holy water from the Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, sought the ministry of anointing and prayer for healing, and knelt before the Blessed Sacrament in Exposition and Benediction. We praise the Lord for this powerful encounter with His healing presence and pray that He will continue His deep, profound work of restoration — in mind, body, and spirit — for all who came forward, and for those dear to them for whom they interceded. May God's sanctifying grace bring lasting wholeness, strength, and peace.

We also offer grateful praise to God for His goodness in our Church School community. We thank Him for the joyful welcome of over 240 children this past week, who moved class by class through eleven unique prayer stations, reflecting, responding, and giving thanks to the Lord. We bless God for the recent Church School Assembly, the celebration of Mass at Rolph School and at St James the Great Church School, the wisdom and faithful service of the School Governing Body, and the generous contribution of St James' Singers, whose voices enriched our Healing and Renewal Service. May the Holy Spirit continue to renew and bless all these ministries for the glory of God and the building up of His people.

\*\*\*\* **Affiliation: St James the Great is a parish of The Society and Forward in Faith, under the care of the Bishop of Richborough.**



### PARISH CALENDAR & THE DAILY OFFICE

The Daily Office: You are invited to join Jean and Fr James in church Tuesday–Saturday.

Morning Prayer: 07:45  Evening Prayer: 18:00 

### CONTACTS & SAFEGUARDING

- Safeguarding Representative: Mrs Clare Moles 07751 329314
- Fr James McCluskey SSC: 01206 860419  
|infostjamesthegreat@gmail.com
- Churchwarden: Dr Desirée Campbell 01206 617263
- Churchwarden: Michael Sheehan
- Treasurer: Mrs Lucy Mason 01206 386766