

ST JAMES CHURCH, BRINDLE
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING (APCM)
THURSDAY 7th MAY 2026, 7.00pm

BOOK OF REPORTS



**ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING (APCM)
2026 REPORTS**

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1. BRINDLE ST JAMES APCM 2026
RECTORS REPORT
REV JON PRICE

We are the Body of Christ, and each one of us is a part of it
1 Corinthians 12:27

There are many ways in which we participate in being part of the Body — ways which give glory to God and help to build each other up as we follow Christ together. Not all of those ways are noted in a document. However, each year, I try to capture different areas of our church life here, and this forms a key part of what is reported at our APCM. I apologise in advance if anyone's contribution has been unintentionally missed from the list. You are all very much appreciated, and I give thanks to God for each one of you.

Worship

Everything at St James's begins and ends with the worship of God. In word, sacrament, prayer, and music we are formed as disciples and sent out to reflect God's Kingdom in the world. I am deeply thankful for all who faithfully gather week by week and month by month to take part in our worship, whose presence and prayer are at the heart of our life together.

Each service is supported by many faithful people: sides people and welcomers, flower arrangers, moppers, servers, Churchwardens, bell ringers, clergy, the Ministry Team, musicians, choir, organist, Choir Director, AV and sound desk operators, intercessors, readers, those who provide refreshments, social media helpers, rota planners, and Mailchimp organisers. Thank you to you all.

I am grateful for the growth of the junior choir and the continued development of our sung worship. New adult singers -particularly basses and tenors - would be very welcome.

Our Sunday School meets regularly in term time and is a valued part of our worshipping life. It is a joy to see children growing in faith and taking part in services at Christingle, Mothering Sunday, Palm Sunday, Easter, Harvest, and Christmas. I am deeply grateful to the leaders and helpers who give their time so generously, and to the children whose presence and enthusiasm bless our church family.

Through baptisms, weddings, and funerals, Sam and I are able to share in ministry at significant life moments. Thanks to Diane (Baptism Administrator), Jean and Judith (Baptism Assistants), Lorraine (baptism teddies), and Gill (Wedding Administrator) for their dedicated care.

I am also grateful for the opportunities to take worship beyond our church walls through our regular involvement with Brindle St James' Church of England Primary School (Sam especially) and St Michael's Church of England High School, Chorley, where we lead and support a variety of services, assemblies, and events throughout the year, strengthening our links with the wider community and sharing the life of faith with younger generations.

Discipleship

Discipleship remains central to our life at Brindle St James as we grow in faith together.

This year's Advent course, Diocese of Sheffield *Travelling Light*, and Lent course *Journeying with Jesus* provided welcoming spaces for reflection and learning. The he Sycamore Course has supported adults exploring confirmation or deepening their faith.

Preaching and worship continue to shape this growth. Sunday mornings offer deeper engagement and space for questions. Wednesday evenings provide a shorter, informal introduction to key themes of the Christian faith, with sermon series designed especially for newcomers.

Discipleship is also lived through pastoral care, shared with Sam, Rana, Lynn, Ann, and others, helping us remain connected to those unable to attend church. We give thanks that Elaine is studying for ALM ministry, and that Ann plans to begin informal study focused on later-life care.

Finances

Over the past eighteen months, the financial position of Brindle St James has improved. Following a period of pressure, a renewed emphasis on generous giving - including the 150 Plus Pledge - has helped move us from deficit to a surplus. God is good and I am immensely grateful for your generosity. Legacy gifts from the estates of Zoe and Joyce Kitson and Derick Artis have enabled works enabled essential fabric work identified in the Archdeacon's Visitation and Quinquennial Inspection, including repairs to the boundary wall. Future remedial repairs to the roof and windows mullions will need to be carried out, as well as other works identified. Fundraising events and additional donations have further strengthened both our finances and our fellowship.

While rising energy costs and ongoing maintenance remain real challenges, we need to **continue building momentum** in this area of our common life. With plans to employ an Ignite worker (see below) and the works outlined in this year's

Quinquennial Report, we remain deeply grateful for the generosity of time, prayer, and money that sustains our mission and ministry. I am thankful to Richard for his faithful service as Treasurer and to Sonia for her careful work with our Gift Aid claims.

Fabric ~ Please see the Churchwardens' report.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding remains a vital priority as we work to ensure St James's is a safe place for all, especially the vulnerable. With our Parish Safeguarding Officer, the PCC continues to strengthen both practice and culture in response to current challenges across the Church.

This year, 14 people have completed Foundation and Basic Safeguarding training, with further training planned for the summer term. Thanks to Karen Haydock in her role as PSO and to Janet Parr and Kathy Whyte for overseeing DBS processing.

Curacy Update – Rev Sam

Our curate, Sam, is now approaching the end of the second year of her curacy and continues to make good progress in her development and ministry among us. As she looks ahead to the next stage of her journey, we recognise that the coming year marks a time of transition, as Sam prepares for the next chapter of her ministry beyond Brindle St James. While the exact shape of that future is still unfolding, we hold this season with gratitude for all that Sam is, and has been, among us, and with hope for what lies ahead for both her and our wider church family. I ask that you continue to hold Sam in your prayers as she undertakes this next step in her formation and ministry.

As part of her continued formation, Sam began a placement at the end of April. This placement is an important element of her ongoing training, giving her the opportunity to experience the richness and variety of parish life in a different setting. For this reason, she will spend the fourth Sunday of each month at St Cuthbert's, Fullwood. We appreciate that changes to familiar patterns can feel unsettling, but this is a valuable opportunity for Sam to deepen her experience and bring fresh insight back to our shared life at Brindle St James.

Ignite Worker

As we look to the future and consider areas of growing ministry demand, alongside potential changes within our ministry team, we (the PCC) have discerned a clear need to invest further in this area. In line with the Diocese of Blackburn's vision to see children and young people come to know Jesus, we have decided to pursue the appointment of a full time or part-time Ignite Worker at Brindle St James.

These Ignite roles were created by the Diocese to strengthen parish ministry with children, young people, and schools, and are typically funded through a partnership between diocesan support (including Church of England funding initiatives) and a contribution from the local parish, ensuring both strategic investment and local ownership.

We envisage that this role will focus on developing youth and schools work and supporting Sunday school provision, helping more young people encounter faith and grow in discipleship within the life of the church.

In the meantime, starting in September, we will also be welcoming a curate on placement to join us here on the fourth Sunday of each month. More details will follow in due course.

I would like to offer a heartfelt word of thanks to Elaine and Roger, our Churchwardens, for their steadfast support, wise counsel, and generous commitment to the life of our church. Their faithful service behind the scenes and alongside me in so many areas is a great blessing, and I am deeply grateful for all they do. I am also deeply grateful to Sam and Rana, whose faithful service as part of the Ministry Team brings encouragement, care, and strength to our shared work. Their commitment behind the scenes and alongside me in so many areas is a great blessing, and I am deeply thankful for all they do.

2) CHURCH WARDENS REPORT

ELAINE COUTNEY & ROGER PARR

Since the last APCM, several developments have taken place in the on-going care and maintenance of the church fabric at Brindle St James.

Repairs to the Eastern boundary wall have been undertaken and some discussion is ongoing in relation to repair of the stone shed and possible further improvement to the boundary wall. An application to the Benefact Trust produced some contribution to the costs of repairs.

In terms of electrical safety, Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) and Fixed Circuit Testing have been successfully completed, helping to ensure a safe environment for all church users.

New 'Danger – Fall from Height' signage around the Eastern perimeter of the churchyard has been installed. Exposed pipework has been lagged. Gutters and downpipes have again been cleared.

Work has been carried out to remove some trees that were in danger of falling, in the space between the lower "garden" and the rectory drive and adjacent to Sandy Lane. Whilst not on church property, a part of the large birch tree on neighbouring land came down last year and the tree has since been removed making access to the rear of church and the rectory safer. As spring has progressed the additional light to the church and churchyard has been noted.

A churchyard inspection has been undertaken including topple testing to identify leaning and unsafe grave monuments. Work is ongoing to identify the owners of the unsafe grave monuments and the leaning but not unsafe monuments will continue to be monitored.

The Quinquennial Inspection was carried out in the latter part of 2025 and we have recently received the report. It is generally considered that Brindle St James is well maintained and there are no areas where urgent repairs are required. However, some areas have been identified where work is required over the coming years, particularly to the roof and the mullion windows. Discussions and investigations have begun to seek quotes for these works and we will be liaising with Jamie Skuse at the Diocese in relation to funding.

Thanks to a donation, beautiful new gates have been installed at the lychgate and further maintenance work and cleaning has occurred to the lychgate woodwork. A further donation has allowed a new wooden shed to be installed. Our grateful thanks go to the Mike and Joan Hopcraft for the donations that have allowed these works to be carried out to maintain and improve Brindle St James.

The boilers received their annual service and it has been identified that the oldest 2 are coming to a stage when they will need to be replaced. Investigations have been undertaken as to the most appropriate form of heating system for the church, with consideration given to electric and other newer forms of heating to improve our environmental impact position. After investigation and discussion with a heating engineer, the Diocese heating specialists, the architect who performed the Quinquennial inspection and the Diocese it has been determined that the 2 boilers should be replaced with 2 new gas boilers. These replacements will be more efficient and hence produce some reduction in our environmental impact and we will continue to look towards further reducing our environmental impact over the coming years as technology develops. Grateful thanks are given to donors who have offered significant contribution to this work, but who wish to remain anonymous.

Wear and rot to the main porch doors was identified and thanks to a generous donation and with the agreement of the PCC the doors are to be replaced over the coming months. Again, grateful thanks are given to the donors for this work who wish to remain anonymous.

Grateful thanks also go to the Moppers and the Saturday morning team who do a great job of keeping Brindle St James church clean and safe. Additional thanks to the gardening team who maintain and improve the churchyard and congratulations to this team for their wins at the Brindle Village show in 2025. We maintain an ongoing contract with Millers who cut the churchyard grass. Our thanks are also extended to the Flower team who work hard throughout the year to provide the beautiful floral displays that we see in church.

A church workday in July 2025, on possibly one of the hottest days of the year, removed the old shed and allowed for a somewhat deeper clean of the church. Thanks to all who came along. We also extend our thanks to Mike Hopcraft for the work on various maintenance tasks throughout the year including recent clearing of overgrown hedging and re-planting adjacent to the new graveyard.

We receive dedicated support from volunteers, who give generously of their time and expertise to help maintain the church building and its surroundings. Their contribution is invaluable, and we extend sincere thanks to each and every one of you. More volunteers would always be welcome and if you feel that you can assist then please talk to a member of the clergy or to Roger or Elaine.

As church wardens Roger and Elaine would like to express our thanks to the Ministry team of Jon, Sam and Rana for their continued support over the last year, their energy and encouragement. We would also like to express our gratitude to the congregation for their prayerful and practical support in our roles.

20th April 2026

3) SAFEGUARDING REPORT

KAREN HAYDOCK (PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER)

Safeguarding remains a key priority in the life of Brindle St James and is a standing agenda item at PCC meetings, ensuring that it is regularly reviewed and embedded within our governance and decision-making. The PCC continues to work in line with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance and is committed to promoting a safe and supportive environment for all.

In accordance with our formal obligations, the PCC confirms that it has complied with its duty under Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, having due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

I continue in my role as Parish Safeguarding Officer, offering guidance and oversight across all areas of parish life. Safeguarding responsibilities are shared appropriately,

and we are working towards putting processes in place to support safer recruitment and good practice.

The Parish Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed and noted by the PCC during the year, ensuring that it remains up to date and reflective of current guidance. In addition, a new risk assessment for Sunday School has been produced, alongside a clearly defined role description for Sunday School leaders, strengthening our provision for children and young people. Work is also currently underway to develop a new Pastoral Care Policy and associated risk assessment, which will further support safe and appropriate ministry.

In terms of safeguarding learning and development, 14 members of the PCC and Sunday School team have successfully completed the required safeguarding training. Over the coming summer term, this training will be extended to additional teams and cohorts within the church, ensuring wider compliance and awareness.

Our Parish Safeguarding Dashboard currently stands at 58% (Level 2 of 3), and the areas of development outlined above will help to strengthen our practice further and move us towards fuller compliance.

We continue to work towards full alignment with the Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance, recognising this as an ongoing area of development as roles and activities evolve within the parish.

I am pleased to report that there have been no safeguarding incidents or concerns raised during the reporting period, and no referrals have been required.

The PCC remains committed to maintaining a culture of vigilance, care, and accountability, ensuring that safeguarding is at the heart of our common life and ministry.

Karen Haydock, 14th April 2026

**4) REPORT OF THE PCC (PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL)
TO ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING, MAY 2026
WRITTEN ON BEHALF OF THE PCC BY KATHY WHYTE**

The PCC met on 5 occasions from May 2025 to April 2026. As well as considering the regular business, the PCC looked at a major initiative to develop and support the faith of families and young people within the church community. Strong safeguarding arrangements would be particularly important in the care of young people, especially as high-profile cases of historic abuse continued to emerge nationally. The PCC also

considered how it might contribute to celebrating the centenary of the Diocese of Blackburn.

Throughout the year finance continued to be an important and challenging issue for the PCC and it received regular updates on this topic. Efforts to encourage regular giving and to raise funds continued and it appeared that these were bearing fruit. There was no room for complacency, however, because costs were increasing rapidly and international pressures implied that this would continue.

Small but dedicated groups continued to maintain the church buildings and grounds and to carry out all its regular activities. The PCC was grateful for the efforts of all who helped in any way with the operation of the church, its services and activities.

5) ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

JULIE PAWSON

Report to be delivered at the APCM and added to this compendium afterwards.

6) REPORT OF THE MOPPERS FOR THE APCM

JENNY EVANS

The Moppers continue to clean the church on a monthly basis and I am extremely grateful to those who are able and willing to fulfil this vital role. Two Moppers from the Thursday evening group moved to a Friday morning and we gained 1 new Mopper for a Friday following an appeal making a total of 22.

The Moppers have been cleaning the church for 20 years, having started in 2006 and clean the church on a Friday morning from 9-10 or a Thursday evening at 6.00p.m. by those who are at work and new members are always welcome.

I wish to express my thanks to the Moppers for their hard work and commitment this past year.

Jenny Evans.

6) COMBINED SOCIAL AND PASTORAL MINISTRY REPORT

LYNN PACKER

Brindle St James Social & Fundraising Events

Rather than having a standing Social Committee, we bring people together as needed to shape future plans, inviting others to join in and help organise each event according to their gifts and availability.

Three Open Gardens were hosted in June and July 2025 creating enjoyable social occasions and raising a total of £565.00 from donations.

On 20th July 2025 we took the opportunity after church to join Sunday School and participate in various activities and a picnic to celebrate the end of the summer term.

A Harvest Event and Auction was held on Saturday 4th October 2025 preceded by a scarecrow contest to encourage further interest. With a reduced hire rate for the hall, sponsorship to cover some of the expenses and many people giving their time, the final figure raised was £1364.40. This was shared between church and the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution, which offers support to farmers, so the benefit to each was £682.20.

During the harvest event a raffle was drawn for a premium ticket for four people to see Gladiators Live in Manchester, plus two t-shirts. These were donated and raffle costs were covered so £232 was contributed to church funds.

Jim and Annette organised a wonderful Christmas Hamper draw and all tickets were sold meaning £1005 was added to church funds.

The annual After Christmas Quiz took place on 29th December 2025 and was well supported with more people attending than expected. It was another enjoyable evening and raised £288.00.

On 22nd March 2026 was the Hunger Lunch, offering soup and a roll (and cake) in return for donations. As a result £104 each was donated to the Trussell Trust and the Disaster Emergency Committee. It was appreciated that the Community Hall recognised this charity event and did not charge for the use of the hall.

The Coffee mornings and afternoons continue, usually on two occasions each month. They are primarily social events but donations from regular attendees have amounted to £440.70 over the past twelve months.

More plans are already in hand to encourage participation in Open Gardens in 2026, and a concert by Helen Latham and Outreach Opera at the end of November. In order to get the most benefit from the concert we are investigating selling tickets via one of several websites.

There have been some queries regarding Spring, Summer and Christmas fairs which used to be held regularly and the answer has always been that anyone willing to organise one should put themselves forward.

Social media has become a regular way of promoting events plus the weekly notices on Mailchimp and old-fashioned posters.

We really need to be able to form a proper Social Committee with more people willing to help support and organise events on a regular basis. Any new ideas would

also be very welcome. Not everything is aimed at raising money but it is not easy to differentiate between fund raising and socialising as they overlap and none of them would be successful without the participation and generosity of our church family.

Baptisms

During 2025 there were 22 baptisms including babies, toddlers, young children and adults. So far in 2026 there will have been 6 by the date of the APCM.

Nearly all the families received a visit prior to the baptism. As well as advice and any questions being answered, in 2026 we have introduced a small booklet which encourages the parents to consider what baptism actually means. They are also invited to come to church if this is not their usual practice, to introduce themselves and request a copy of the baptism service.

At each baptism, families are given a knitted teddy and a baptismal candle as a reminder of the church's welcome and prayers. We then keep in touch by sending a card on the anniversary of the baptism each year, continuing this for children until they begin school. Families consistently express how much they value this ongoing care and support.

Pastoral Team

Visits are made as requested and every effort is made to keep in touch with a person needing support. Home Communion is also available and is currently received on a regular basis by one person who is no longer able to attend church.

Most of the pastoral care experienced in the parish is initiated by friends and neighbours caring for each other.

The responsibilities of the pastoral team still need to be developed but a regular notice encourages people to get in touch.

7) SCOUTS, CUBS & BEAVERS REPORT ***ANNE HARDMAN***

Brindle St James scout group remain a popular choice for young people living in Brindle and the surrounding area. Scouting is open to all children between the ages of 4 to 14, with an explorer group for 14 to 18 year olds. Explorers is a district led group with Brindle St James scouts acting as one of the 3 local scout groups that feed into this. Numbers in all sections are only limited by the number of adult volunteers. Each section meets at the Community Hall on a different evening of the week, during term time.

Our squirrel group has now been open over 2 years and have 12 children on role. The Beaver drey have 22 children, our cub pack has 23 members and the scout troop have 31 children on their register. We are thrilled to have 7 young leaders who assist with different sections, helping the younger children, whilst at the same time developing their own leadership skills and sharing their skills for life learned in their own time in scouting.

We have welcomed a new squirrel leader this year and said goodbye to one of our cub leaders. We have 13 adult leaders in total, 2 of whom continue to volunteer in more than one section. Without this we would not be able to offer scouting to all the children who wish to join. We are starting to build a waiting list and welcome enquiries from children and adults alike who would like to join the scouting family.

All sections leaders are committed to helping all children attain their top award (acorn, bronze, silver and gold) in each section, through earning badges, learning new skills and undertaking challenges as they progress through the scouting movement. These achievements are closely linked to the wide range of activities leaders plan into their programmes on a weekly basis. This year has seen many fundraising events, including an Easter bingo and a quiz night. These have helped raise money for much needed new camping equipment.

Scouts continue to offer an exciting programme of outdoor and adventurous activities to all our members, and this year has seen this extended to our adult volunteers. We now have several leaders with permits to lead archery and climbing activities as well as overnight camping permits. We are planning a whole group camp in June and look forward to having all our adults and young people face new challenges. A team of our scouts came second out of over 20 teams in "The Bowlander" competition; a 2 day walking and camping self-sufficiency event held across West Lancashire Scouts.

We continue to seek people who might be interested in becoming a Trustee to support our ongoing work. We are also looking for support with our treasurer role as well as administration and organisational help.

If anyone is interested in volunteering in any capacity, either as a trustee or working with the children, to share their skills or develop their confidence, we would love to hear from you.

Thank you Anne Hardman (Group Lead Volunteer)

gsl@brindlestjames.co.uk (07790 868582)

8) RINGERS REPORT

STUART CROSBY

I think I should start this report with an appeal. St James' bellringers are in urgent need of new recruits to learn the ancient skill of ringing church bells. Over the last twelve months we have lost two of our most experienced ringers, one returning to New Zealand and the other succumbing to a shoulder problem. Although our numbers have been sufficient to ring for every Sunday plus other occasional service during the year, we are relying on visiting ringers for practice nights and some of last years weddings. Also a significant proportion of the band are well past retirement age, myself included, and we will not be able to ring forever. Some new members young, old or even middle aged should ensure that the bells of St James will be rung by the local band for years to come.

We are slowly improving the capabilities of the band and we are having occasional extra practises on Friday mornings (one advantage of having ringers who are retired). The objective is to have a band that can ring competently and accurately every Sunday even when are numbers are reduced by holidays and illness. Bell ringing is an unique skill in the only way that we improve is by ringing together or practising with other ringers at other towers.

The bells are in good order, the bell ropes are starting to show signs of wear but should be ok for a few more years. We have not noticed any problems with the tower and the ringers do tend to go up and down the tower more often than anyone else.

To repeat the initial request, we do need new people to join us so if you are interested or know someone who might be interested in learning how to ring come and see us on a Monday night. Or have a word with me, Ann Greenland, Jill Tasker or Dan Kirkwood who are all in church at different times

Stuart Crosby
Tower Captain

9) ST JAMES FLOWER TEAM REPORT

JOAN HOPCRAFT

The flower ladies are still hard at work arranging flowers in church. We do our utmost to provide a variety of colours throughout the year and to ring the changes as much as possible. We are grateful to the sponsors of the flowers but as with everything else the costs are going up. We are quite good at making funds go as far as possible. Many thanks to all the helpers in all capacities.

Joan Hopcraft

10) BRINDLE ST JAMES PRIMARY SCHOOL REPORT

MATT DRAPER (ACTING HEADTEACHER)

I am pleased to present this report to the PCC, reflecting on a positive and productive period for the school.

As you may be aware, I, Mr Draper, have been acting in the role of Headteacher to cover for Mrs Tracy Austin during her maternity leave. I am delighted to share the wonderful news that Tracy has given birth to a beautiful baby boy, Elliot. Both mother and child are fit and well. Tracy has remained in close contact with the school and has visited on several occasions, ensuring a smooth transition and continuity.

During this time, we have continued to strengthen our links with the wider community. We have worked closely with the Community Centre and would like to extend our sincere thanks for their support in lowering the hedges and for continuing to allow us to use their car park for drop-off and pick-up. This ongoing partnership is invaluable to the smooth running of the school.

In response to concerns around speeding within the village, we have worked collaboratively with members of the community to raise awareness. As a result, signage has now been installed around the village, including our new banner displayed on the church railings. We are very grateful to the church community for their support in helping us promote this important safety message. Our pupils did not stop there, they wrote letters to The Right Honourable Sir Lindsay Hoyle, and we are incredibly proud that he was so impressed with their work that he is now planning a visit to the school to discuss how we can make the village a safer place to be.

We have also continued to develop and strengthen the relationship between school and church. By working closely with Rev. Jon Price and Rev Sam Nicol, we are striving to present a unified vision, ensuring that the links between church and school remain strong and visible within the community.

In support of environmental awareness and our local farming community, we have worked alongside the Charnley family, who have helped to tidy the public footpath and construct a new wall. We would like to thank Greg Taylor and Co for their hard work and contribution to this project.

We have also successfully secured a grant to develop our outdoor provision, with a focus on growing and promoting healthy lifestyles. As part of this initiative, a polytunnel will be installed. We hope that this will become a shared resource involving the school, church, and wider community. We warmly invite anyone who may be interested in being involved to get in touch.

Academically, we are extremely proud of our Key Stage 2 outcomes this year:

Subject	Expected Standard	Higher Standard
Reading	91.6%	50%
Writing	75%	33%
Maths	100%	33%
Combined	75%	—
National Average (Combined)	61%	—

These results reflect the hard work and dedication of both pupils and staff, and we are delighted with the outcomes, particularly in mathematics where all pupils achieved the expected standard.

Mr Draper will continue to support the school through to the end of the academic year. It is clear that Brindle St James' CE Primary continues to go from strength to strength, and we look forward to building on this success in the months ahead.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mr Draper

Acting Headteacher

Brindle St James' CE Primary School

11) MOTHERS UNION REPORT

RANSA SHIHADAH

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families



This year's programme has been another lovely mix of talks and more 'gentle' meetings.

Early in the year, not long after she helped bunch daffodils for Mothering Sunday, we sadly lost our beloved Brenda Ward. Brenda was a strong friend of our MU branch, always helping at events, and will especially be missed every November, which was always her month to lead us in a lovely Christmas craft activity. In November last year, Cherry kept the spirit of Brenda alive when she led a session on 'Spreading our

wings', including a lovely Christmas craft activity, making beautiful shell angel hanging ornaments.

This year, Cherry has organised the worship for the start of every MU meeting. She has created a lovely service, in line with the MU theme for the month, with a thoughtful reflection added in. Our meetings are built on faith and fellowship, and these services have always set the tone beautifully. Thank you, Cherry.

In March, Joyce, Cherry and I joined members from across the Diocese, for a Faith Sharing Day in Blackpool. I and others were invited to speak and it was a very encouraging day of fellowship. Also in March, we delivered the 27 toiletry bags we put together last January to Brindle Ward at Chorley Hospital, where they were gratefully received. Each bag contained a card with a prayer from us.

This year, Carolyn ran a lovely Easter planting workshop, and Christine Harrison and Katherine led a wonderful, colourful, (and slightly sticky!) workshop for us, where we made silk lanterns, reminiscent of their Far East Asian holiday. Thank you to both! Our Fruity Summer Sports Day in July, run by Rachel and John, was a lot of fun!

Speakers this year have included Lucille Porter with her light-hearted take on Life as a Bishop's wife, and Rev Claire 'Bobby' on From Policing to Priesthood. We were also joined by our Diocesan President, Susan Willoughby. A visit to The Bee Centre for one of our meetings left us buzzing!

We had a couple of 'Cake and Kindness' meetings, plus a Beetle Drive, which is always a fun favourite.

Our Mothers' Day cake stall was another delicious success. Thank you to everyone who baked, set up, sold and bought... there is power in cake!

Our summer outing to Lytham Hall, with afternoon tea, was a huge hit with everyone who attended – a lovely day out with one of the best afternoon teas I've ever had! Our Christmas party was held in the Community Hall for a change, with a catered buffet. Everyone agreed that this was preferable to The Cavendish, as it was intimate and felt like home... we may do it again!

As well as a £243.92 donation towards the MU caravan from the Mothering Sunday cake stall, £143 from the monthly meeting raffle money bought 13 Literacy For Life gifts from the Mothers' Union literacy programme, which helps learners across the world.

Thank you to Sheila Lewis who arranged daffodils for Mothering Sunday; these were bunched by members and handed out at the service.

On the 15th of May, a few members and I represented the branch at the Deanery Festival.

We continued to announce meetings in the notices at the beginning of the 10:30 Sunday service closest to meetings, which has again resulted in new attendees at various meetings and new members. We will continue this and encourage more people to attend/join.

Judith Hindle confirmed the Baptism team has assisted in 23 baptisms this year. Thank you to the baptism team!

Thankfully, we have a strong committee and all of this is very much a team effort. We will hopefully continue to grow and encourage more people to join us for fellowship and cake!

Rana Shihadah.

SUNDAY SCHOOL REPORT CATHARINE CUMMINS

Reporting Period: February 2025- February 2026

Brindle St James' Sunday School has enjoyed another full and rewarding year on our Sunday School journey. Our dedicated leaders, alongside Rev Jon, have worked together to plan and deliver engaging themed sessions that embed Christian values through Bible-based activities. Each session is thoughtfully designed to support and nurture the children in their faith journey. We have been delighted to welcome many new families this year and continue to receive positive feedback from both parents and children.

Our Sunday School is a lively and well-loved part of church life, with children ranging from 3 to 11 years old. We warmly embrace this wide age range by offering a variety of activities tailored to meet the needs of each child. At times the children gather in two age-appropriate groups: preschool to Year 3, and our newer youth group for Years 4 to 7. This allows us to create nurturing spaces where children feel comfortable to ask questions, build friendships, and explore Bible stories in greater depth as they grow in their understanding of the Christian faith.

Sunday School Prayer

Brinkle is our church
Respecting all others
In our hearts let us follow your example
Never alone, you are with us
Developing our faith
Learning and growing together
Everyone is welcome.

Guiding principles

Our Sunday School is rooted in Christian faith and guided by values that reflect God's love in action. Kindness, care, and inclusivity are central to all we do, ensuring everyone feels welcome, valued, and accepted. We encourage love, respect, forgiveness, patience, and compassion, helping children to live out these values in their everyday lives.

Through sharing, prayer, and Bible stories, children are supported in growing in confidence, developing empathy for others, and understanding the importance of helping those in need. Being part of the church family is celebrated, with opportunities to build cross age relationships, make new friends, and learn from one another. Together, we nurture a welcoming and faith-filled community where children can grow spiritually and feel God's love around them.

Sunday school sessions

Sunday School sessions continue to take place in the Community Hall, providing a welcoming and familiar space for the children. On the first and third Sundays of each month, the children enjoy walking together up to the church towards the end of the service to proudly share their activities with the congregation. Sessions break during school holidays.

Parents drop off their children at the Community Hall and collect them after the church service, giving them a valuable opportunity to relax, socialise, and enjoy refreshments together, strengthening connections within our church community.

Several of our older Sunday School children, who have now moved on to high school, have returned as young leaders. Their willingness to give their time and share their experience is greatly valued, and they are a wonderful source of help, encouragement, and positive role modelling for the younger children.

Our sessions offer a wide range of age-appropriate activities that reflect our vision of inclusive, joyful learning. Many ideas are inspired by Messy Church resources and include games, crafts, physical activities, quiet and mindful moments, cooking, singing, acting, and outdoor play. These activities allow children of all ages to learn, express themselves, and grow together.

When children arrive at Sunday School, they are warmly welcomed alongside their parents. We share contact details and take a register, helping families feel known and cared for. Sometimes the children are invited to write their name on a heart and take part in a short prayer, with time to share who they would like to pray for. This helps create a calm, reflective start to the session and encourages children to think about others with love and compassion.

Example of a Sunday school session

- Arrival and prayer time
- Welcome circle Introductions – and new people.
- Special news
- Birthdays
- Activity input and groups explained linked to bible passage through bible video and acts.
- Activity introduction– each leader introduces their activity linked to the bible message.
- Activities – in small groups, with a leader guiding the activity with the key principles explained.
- Snack and chat themed café.
- Travel up to church to share the Sunday school theme and receive blessings.
- End sessions in the community hall together with parents.

At certain times in the year, we will hold our Sunday school sessions in church or take part in the service. This is a special time when we can be together with our Church family of all ages.

Leaders: Catharine Cummins, Claire Fleming, Karen Haydock, Sally Price, Andrea Isherwood, Emily Cummins, Nicola Loughlin and Toby Yaghooby-Masihy

Young leaders:

Our young leaders play a valued role in supporting Sunday School sessions, generously helping with activities and caring for the children. We are currently supported by three young leaders, and we are incredibly proud to share that Felicity Isherwood, Olivia Haydock and Charlie Atkinson recently completed Duke of Edinburgh Award through their school, using their Sunday School volunteering hours as part of this achievement.

Our young leaders play a very special role in supporting our Sunday School sessions, helping with activities and offering encouragement to the children. We are fortunate to have three young leaders who give their time so generously, and they are a valued part of our Sunday School family.

Although the young folk in the choir can't attend the Sunday school sessions, they are included in activities where possible and when Sunday school is held in church and have helped with sessions. Along with the leaders, the Sunday school is supported by wider members of the church, with preparation, accounts and administration tasks.

Attendance

A register is taken at each session, and over the past year we have been delighted to welcome an average of 30–40 children per session. Our Sunday School is open and inclusive, with no expectation of minimum or regular attendance. Children and families are warmly encouraged to join us whenever they are able, knowing they will always be welcomed.

When travelling from the Community Hall to the church, children are carefully counted and walk in pairs under the close supervision of our adult leaders. Pavement safety and road crossings are managed with care to ensure everyone arrives safely. Each session is led by experienced leaders and is supported by thorough risk assessments.

All Sunday School leaders have completed safeguarding training, and risk assessments are undertaken in advance of new activities to identify any potential hazards and ensure appropriate measures are in place. The safety, wellbeing, and happiness of the children remain our highest priority, allowing families to feel confident and supported as part of our Sunday School community.

Trips –Brindle player’s pantomime 30 tickets paid by the church for Sunday school.

Additional community session – Family Games night 21st June 2025,
A special thank you goes to Richard Isherwood 'Exchange Coffee Company' for all his support and generosity at our events.

Planning sessions

Leaders meet with Rev Jon each term to share ideas, embed the diocese rolling programme and incorporate themes from the church calendar.



GAMES EVENING
 SATURDAY 31st JUNE
 5.00pm - 7.00pm
 CONSUMABLES ONLY
 BRING A BOARD GAME
 BISTIA SAUCE
 JACKET POTATO TEA
 £5 / ADULT - £3 / CHILD
 A portion of the proceeds from this evening will be donated to the local charity of your choice. Please let us know on the evening. info@stjamesps.co.uk
ALL WELCOME!

June

Brindle St James Walking Day Service
 Takes place on Sunday 6th July



9.45am Gather outside the school for a **10.00am** start, walking round the village before returning to church for the **10.30am** service.
 If you prefer you are welcome to sit in church as usual and wait for everyone to arrive.
All welcome



July



September



October



December





INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

PREPARED BY RICHARD HOWARTH ACA FCCA

Treasurers Report of the Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 December 2025

Prepared by Richard Howarth ACA FCCA

The accounts show:-

- Surplus of income over expenditure of £41,703.
- Legacy payment of £37,000 received during the year.
- Cash at bank at 31 December 2025 of £81,061. Designated funds are £52,542.
- Parish Share for 2025 paid in full. In agreement with the Diocese, the annual share was reduced to £60,000.
- 2026 Parish Share is £65,998.
- Outstanding Gift Aid processed early 2026.

The statements attached are:-

- Bank Summary year ended 31 December 2025.
- Income and Expenditure Account year ended 31 December 2025.
- Notes.

Report to Brindle St James PCC
Audit Opinion of the Receipts and Payment Account and Treasurers Report 2025

In my opinion, the receipts and payment account, as presented by the Treasurer, is a true record of the movement of funds during the year and the correct bank balance at 31.12.25.

Note that the audit can only be based on data that was available with an entry in the bank account. It cannot capture data which has not resulted in a cash transaction other than me seeing some sheet in the file.

Gill Taylor

15 April 2026

G Taylor ACMA

BRINDLE ST. JAMES CHURCH

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

<u>Income</u>	Year	Year	Year
	<u>31-Dec-25</u>	<u>31-Dec-24</u>	<u>31-Dec-23</u>
	£	£	£
1 Tax Efficient Planned Giving	60,659	51,746	49,980
3 Cash Collections at Services	13,660	11,556	11,323
5 Other Non Recurring Giving	9,100	4,400	5,377
6 Gift Aid Recovered	2,611	14,197	16,012
7 Legacies	0	0	0
8 Grants	0	0	0
9 Fundraising Activities	3,419	7,167	3,517
10 Interest & Dividends	545	546	309
11 Fees	10,918	8,967	9,761
Total income	100,912	98,581	96,280
<u>Expenditure</u>			
18 Mission Giving/Charitable Giving	916	470	500
19 Parish Share	60,000	46,116	64,462
20 Organist fees	2,200	2,527	3,677
21 Expenses	4,854	3,806	3,927
23 Church Running Expenses	15,413	14,837	15,194
24 Utilities	11,778	13,960	9,086
27 Repairs	1,049	6,146	5,623
Total expenditure	96,209	87,862	102,468
Surplus/(Deficit)	4,703	10,718	-6,189
Bank account at start of the year	39,358		
Bank account at the end of the year	81,061		
Surplus	41,703		
Legacy	37,000		
Surplus above	4,703		

BRINDLE ST. JAMES CHURCH

BANK SUMMARY

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

<u>COMMUNITY ACCOUNT</u>		£
Brought forward 1 January 2025		39,358
Carried forward 31 December 2025		81,061
Reconciliation	£	
Bank statement 31 December 2025	85,582	
Cheque Payments not cleared	5,000	
	5,000	
Receipts not cleared	479	
	479	
Sub total not cleared	<u>-4,521</u>	
Closing balance	81,061	

TOTAL BROUGHT FORWARD 1 JANUARY 2025	39,358
TOTAL CARRIED FORWARD 31 DECEMBER 2025	81,061
SURPLUS FOR THE PERIOD	<u>41,703</u>

Summary of funds

Funds held at 31 December 2025	<u>81,061</u>		
Surplus from Heating/AV	Donated	12,650	
Costs incurred		<u>11,773</u>	
		877	877
Donation October 2021 (Wheelchair Sanctuary)		6,000	6,000
Susan Boulton			1,165
Brenda Ward			5,750
Trust			1,750
Legacy			37,000
Total Designated			52,542
Undesignated			28,519
Total funds held at 31 December 2025			<u>81,061</u>

BRINDLE ST. JAMES CHURCH

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

NOTES

INCOME

1&3 Giving

Increase in both planned giving and collections

6 Gift Aid Recovered

There are Gift Aid monies unclaimed at 31 December 2025

5 Non recurring giving

Benfact Trust Income £1,750 plus Brenda Ward funeral giving £5,750

9 Fundraising

2024 included promise auction

11 Fees

Funeral & wedding fees

Expenditure

19 Parish Share

Monthly amount £5,000

21 Expenses

Includes Council Tax £3,664

23 Church running expenses

Main items

Garden maintenance

Insurance

Sunday school

Village hall hire

Copier

24 Utilities

Reduction in gas & electric costs

27 Repairs

2024 included carpet £2,300, Millars £1,800