

VESTRY MEETING

and reports for the

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Sunday 17 May 2026, 11:30am

Including the

**ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE PAROCHIAL
CHURCH COUNCIL**

For the year ending 31 December 2025

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What is the Annual Parish Meeting (APCM) all about? A brief introduction

The APCM is an important meeting for the whole church. It is the opportunity for members of the congregation to elect the people they want to represent them on their Parochial Church Council (PCC). It is an opportunity for the congregation to ask questions about the finances of the church, the state of the buildings, or about any matter of concern to the life of the parish. The PCC must take account of views expressed at the APCM, and matters may be taken forward into the subsequent PCC meeting for discussion. St James' Church Weybridge PCC meets six times a year to conduct the business of the church.

Please do read these reports thoroughly and come to the meeting with questions, as we share together as the family of faith in the renewal of our life together, in sacramental worship, and fellowship. We do this in a Christian spirit of mutual respect and love, as friends in faith. We come prepared to look forward, as well as reflect upon the past year. May the Lord of all guide our thoughts, words and actions to his Glory and the building up of the Kingdom in Weybridge.

Agenda for the Vestry Meeting (Meeting of Parishioners)

Sunday 17 May 2026, 11:30am

1. The opening of proceedings with prayers
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes
4. Election of Wardens
5. Nomination for approval of Deputy Wardens (honorary supportive role)
6. End of Vestry Meeting

(At this point those not named on the Church Electoral Roll should leave the meeting)

Agenda for the Annual Parish Council Meeting (APCM)

Sunday 17 May 2026, immediately following the Vestry Meeting

Apologies for absence

Minutes of the previous APCM

Matters arising

1. Elections and Appointments
 - a. Election of PCC Members
 - b. Any outstanding Electoral Matters
 - c. Approval of sides persons (to assist wardens with services duties)
 - d. Appointment of sides people to assist Treasurer with banking
 - e. Appointment of the Electoral Roll Officer
Note that the PCC Secretary, Treasurer and Vice Chair of the PCC will be agreed at the Parochial Church Council, not voted for at the APCM (as they are officers of the PCC).
2. Reports – see written reports – questions may be asked

- a. Report on Electoral Roll, distributed
 - b. PCC Secretary – report on the proceedings of PCC
 - c. Parish Reports, distributed
 - d. Churchwardens report including Fabric/Terrier, distributed
 - e. Accounts – Financial Report 2025, distributed
Approval of the Report and Accounts for the financial year ending 31 December 2025
 - f. Appointment of the Independent Examiner for 2026 Accounts
 - g. Note on Deanery Synod Report, distributed
3. Any other business – to be notified at least 24 hours in advance
- a. Questions and answers session – questions please at least 24 hours in advance to the Secretary of the PCC. Thank you.

The meeting concludes in prayer and with the Grace

VESTRY MINUTES of the meeting held on Sunday 18 May 2025

Meeting held in Church at 11.30 am following the 10.00 am Choral Eucharist

	ACTION / NOTES
Father Damian Harrison-Miles (chair of the meeting) welcomed everyone to the Vestry Meeting at 11.35 am with a prayer.	
Present were Father Damian Harrison-Miles, Jill Wilson (Churchwarden), Steve Mason (Churchwarden), Alan Knowles (Treasurer), Donna Miller (PCC Secretary), and 57 members of the congregation. Apologies for absence were received from Charles Beresford, Barry Hengist, Sue Hengist, Ann Nash, Neill Rubidge, Susan Rubidge, Chris Woodhouse, and Jean Woodhouse.	
The minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2024 had been circulated prior to the meeting. There were no matters arising from the minutes. These were approved as a correct record, and then duly signed and dated by Father Damian.	
Two applications for Churchwarden were received from Juliet Marsh and Steve Mason. The nominations were accepted and unanimously approved. Father Damian stated that we all owe a tremendous amount of thanks to Jill Wilson for serving as a Churchwarden for 20 years. Revd Brian Prothero also sent his thanks and his love via text.	
Five Deputy Churchwardens were re-elected for the year. They are Sue Barnes, Hilary Butler, Howard Freeman, Jane Mason, and Donna Miller. Kathy Goodliffe was elected as a new Deputy Churchwarden. A vote was taken that passed unanimously.	
The Vestry Meeting was closed at 11.50 am, and Father Damian asked those not on the Electoral Roll to please leave the meeting.	

Reverend Damian Harrison-Miles

Donna Miller – PCC Secretary

Date

Date

APCM MINUTES of the meeting held on Sunday 18 May 2025

Meeting held in Church at 11.50 am following the 11.30 am Vestry meeting.

	ACTION / NOTES
<p>Father Damian Harrison-Miles (chair of the meeting) welcomed everyone to the APCM meeting.</p>	
<p>Present were Father Damian Harrison-Miles, Jill Wilson (Churchwarden), Steve Mason (Churchwarden), Alan Knowles (Treasurer), Donna Miller (PCC Secretary), and 57 members of the congregation.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Charles Beresford, Barry Hengist, Sue Hengist, Ann Nash, Neill Rubidge, Susan Rubidge, Chris Woodhouse, and Jean Woodhouse.</p>	
<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2024 had been circulated prior to the meeting. There were no matters arising from the minutes. These were approved as a correct record, and then duly signed and dated by Father Damian.</p>	
<p>The following elections and outstanding election matters took place:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Charles Beresford, Hilary Butler, Trish Dodds, Lindy Fozard, David Hutt, Deborah Langston, and Sue Scrivener were elected as PCC members. b. Alan Knowles was thanked for his ten years of service as Treasurer. Father Damian noted that there is a need to find a permanent church treasurer to replace Alan. c. The list of sides people was circulated in advance, and all were approved for Sunday duty. d. Charles Beresford and Brian Davis were approved to assist the treasurer with the banking. e. Sandra Burston was re-appointed as the Electoral Roll Officer. 	
<p>The following reports were submitted in advance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Report on Electoral Roll b. Report on the proceedings of the PCC c. Parish reports d. Churchwardens Report 	

Alan Knowles presented the set of **financial statements** that were approved by the PCC and reviewed by the independent examiners.

Alan stated we recorded nearly £400,000 in income and £350,000 in expenditure. Our income was up £35,000 from last year due to three main areas. First, we had a strong Christmas giving campaign due to matching donations from a member of the congregation. Second, our Parish Centre hire lettings have increased from the previous year. Finally, our planned giving campaign in the autumn of 2024 meant that we raised an additional £7,000 into our account. A big note of caution though – our Parish Giving Scheme, other regular giving, and weekly offertory money is still not covering the costs of our Parish Share, so there is more work to do. Our obligation to the Diocese in Guildford through the Parish Share was £114,000 in 2024.

We released a significant accrual in unrestricted reserves in 2023 relating to the heating system as this was subsequently funded through restricted funds – partly by a PCC restricted fund and by a £15,000 grant from CIL (Elmbridge Borough Council). This consequently led to a year end surplus in our unrestricted funds which allowed us to designate £15,000 into the new Families and Children fund. This will give us the collateral we need to build funds in the future.

We also used unrestricted funds to refurbish the Parish Office and to do some upgrade/refurbishment work at the Curate's house at 87 Greenlands Road.

Our restricted funds have increased by £42,000. This was largely due to a big donation from the Friends of St James' in late 2024 (£40,000). We also received £15,000 from CIL, £5,000 from Surrey County Council, and £4,000 for the Alleluia Fund. We spent £41,000 in restricted funds over and above 2023.

We spent the remaining Access for All restricted fund as part of our church re-ordering plan, and further expenditure on the heating system/boiler replacement will be depreciated over the next ten years.

Alan added a further word of caution. The balance sheet looks rosy – but it is not. Significant unrestricted funds are designated for specific purposes, and once funds are set aside to maintain the PCC reserves policy, there are far less funds available for general use. Consequently, we must continue to prioritise our spending.

Thank you to Edward Behrendt who is standing down from handling our payroll. He has been a staunch supporter of the various PCC treasury functions over the last thirty plus years, and his contribution has been invaluable.

Alan proposed the statutory accounts should be approved. This was seconded by Gretchen Spalt and approved unanimously by the congregation present.

<p>Alan recommended that we reappoint Warner Wilde as the independent examiner for 2025. We intend to use them for ongoing bookkeeping and other financial matters, including payroll processing. The firm is of a size whereby they can segregate duties and not have a conflict. This was proposed by Alan Knowles and approved unanimously by those present.</p>	
<p>Father Damian had some comments on the Deanery Synod report which had been distributed to the congregation. He stated that Living in Love and Faith has been discussed by the Church of England for years. Big decisions will be coming to General Synod this autumn and in January 2026. There will be lots in the press and we will all hear about it. Voting will take place in Diocesan Synod in September and in the General Synod in November. An overall decision will be announced in January 2026.</p>	
<p>Father Damian's comments on St James' Church along with AOB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. We pay £114,000 to the Diocese for our Parish Share. What do we receive? A rector with a rectory house, a stipendiary curate and pension, retired clergy pension, clergy training, and support from the Diocese. <p>Our giving needs to cover the ministry costs of our church (our Parish Share). That is currently not the case. On Sunday 7 September, we will have Stewardship Sunday in church, followed by lunch. We are too dependent upon our Parish Centre lettings to cover our expenses. If we were to have another pandemic or an emergency and the Parish Centre closes, we couldn't begin to cover our expenses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. The Alleluia Fund is working and it's lovely. We would love to have a sound system worthy of the 21st century. Technology has moved on and we haven't. c. We would like to get a church calendar in place with key events and festivals running from September through to August. The dates won't be set in stone, but it will be fluid and a good guideline for what's happening. d. The Liturgy and Ministry team produced a prayer calendar so that every day there is something to pray for. We will update this quarterly. e. ChurchSuite is working well. The system is in the cloud and our data is secure. f. Our website is less clunky and more contemporary. If you have recommendations or updates, please send them to Fr Damian and Tom. g. The PCC had an away day in January where we came up with many ideas to add to our Church Development Plan. We have set four vision evenings in June so that everyone can come together to share ideas. Please invite your children, friends and neighbours. <p>Ann Parsons said that the new hymnbooks don't fit on the pew ledge. Father Damian stated we have reduced our printing by having them in place. We have gone traditional and bought books. They do fit nicely sitting beside you on the pew.</p> <p>Helen Allen stated a concern with Equippers Church announcing a Sunday morning service at 9.30 am and how that might affect our car parking.</p>	

<p>Steve Mason recorded his thanks to Father Damian and the huge number of achievements that have taken place in the two years since he arrived.</p> <p>Tom Musson said he can't believe it's almost been one year since he arrived. He has felt so welcomed, accepted and affirmed here. He is really grateful and is so looking forward to his first Eucharist on 29 June.</p>	
<p>The meeting closed at 12.35 with the Grace being led by Father Damian.</p>	

Reverend Damian Harrison-Miles

Donna Miller – PCC Secretary

Date

Date

RECEPTION OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL IN ADVANCE OF THE APCM 2026

This revision of the Electoral Roll had been prepared by the Electoral Roll Officer, Sandra Burston and previously examined and accepted by the PCC. Its reception was passed unanimously on 20 April 2026 at 7.30 pm.

REPORTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2025

Rector's Report on 2025

2025 was a very significant year for St James' Church as we began to use all our newly re-ordered spaces in creative ways to grow our community and offer an inclusive welcome for all. We started small groups that met monthly, following the Diocese of Guildford template, which have been a real joy, and I have heard such positive feedback from the participants - do join one if you haven't already. We ran a course in Lent, concluded Faith Confirmed (and saw several people Confirmed!), and ran Emmaus. The Compass Group began meeting monthly, often in Church, and the Ark, our Monday morning toddler group, grew further - beyond all expectations! We ran a workshop for children on Good Friday that was inspirational and had one of our best Easter Day attendances at 10am, with 39 children present - the Junior Church team coped so well! It is a joy to see our buildings used daily in so many ways, not only for traditional worship - the vision for renewal and change that I inherited, being realised. We celebrated the completion of the Access for All and re-ordering projects with a very special Candlemas Eucharist, led by the Bishop of Dorking.

Behind the scenes we saw the most change, with a significant new system for organising our finances, digital media, and changes in key leadership roles. Jill Wilson stepped down as Churchwarden having served for 20 years. Jill didn't retire completely, taking on the chair of the Properties Committee, which works so hard behind the scenes keeping our buildings maintained and leading on projects from sound system to re-pointing, and designing the new Garden of Remembrance for the burial of ashes, among many other things. Juliet Marsh was elected as Churchwarden and hit the ground running. What a pleasure it is to work with her. Steve Mason temporarily took on the role of Treasurer, while remaining Churchwarden, and studying for ministry in the Caleb programme - an enormous workload, for which we are so thankful. He also set about work to digitalise our systems and introduce work emails and a secure platform for our data management. Alan Knowles stepped down as Treasurer and has supported Steve behind the scenes throughout 2025 in a time of great transition. We moved from QuickBooks to Zero for financial management and engaged more services from Warner Wilde to manage our books. At the same time, we appointed Alyson Percival as our Parish Administrator, first as a temp, then from Easter 2025 as our employee. What a gift she is. Let's be frank, no organisation would really wish to change so many roles and financial and digital systems all at once, and it has at times seemed like a perfect storm. A credit to all involved. We have navigated that storm and achieved so much together, and the benefits of transition are evident. The standing committee including Donna Miller our outstanding PCC Secretary and Safeguarding Officer, along with Lindy Fozard, brings a wealth of experience which have steered this ship through some choppy waters. We owe them all a massive thank you for their considerable time, commitment and skill.

And we have achieved the final phases of the heating project which saw new boilers commissioned and radiators installed, along with some electrical upgrades. I am so thankful to The Friends of St James' for their financial support. This extensive work enables us to keep our fabric, and worshippers warm, and is helping us work towards our goal of reducing our carbon emissions and heating costs.

From brilliant events such as the Cream Tea, Summer Picnic, and Harvest Lunch to the Christmas Festival on Advent Sunday when we again welcomed so many to Church, we can be thankful that our outreach is making a real difference and bringing new faces to regular worship. We also welcomed Bishop Andrew Watson to Christingle, who stayed on to enjoy the afternoon, and even drew the hamper raffle! Fr Tom Musson, our Curate, was Ordained Priest in June and celebrated his First Eucharist, followed by a BBQ party. It was a tremendous occasion, and it has been a joy to see him grow in ministry, leadership and teaching. His musical gifts have also inspired us (and at times been just what has been needed at the right time!) and we are thankful he is part of our community - a blessing. Our Director of Music Lindsay Bridgwater was particularly unwell towards the end of 2025, and we have kept him very much in our thoughts and prayers. We are thankful for the musical gifts of Iain Cowden who stepped into the breach, along with support from Philip Buckmaster. The choir have coped so well, and we are delighted Lindsay is back part-time in 2026. Music is one of the hallmarks of our church tradition, and so I am thankful for all who contribute in any way to sustaining such an important aspect of our life together.

One of the blessings of St James' is our diverse team that keeps every aspect of church life working, and our community thriving. Of course, all we do is for God's glory and the building up of the Kingdom, and so I am also very thankful for each and every one of you, your love, kindness and generosity in so many ways.

With every blessing,

Father Damian Harrison-Miles

Report of the Electoral Roll Officer

In April 2025 we had a renewal of the Electoral Roll, and the total number of applicants was 164, of which 79 reside in the parish and 85 reside outside the parish. Since the renewal, we have had another 16 applicants, 10 of which reside in the parish and 6 reside outside the parish. Three members have been deleted making the total on the roll to date 177.

Sandra Burston, Electoral Roll Officer

PCC Secretary's Report 2025 on the work of the Parochial Church Council

Membership

The clergy, church wardens, and lay representatives on the Deanery and Diocesan Synods are members of the Parochial Church Council ex officio. In addition, 12 lay members are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules, making 20 members in all.

During the year the following served as members of the PCC

Rector	Damian Harrison-Miles	
Curate	Tom Musson	appointed 1 July 2024
Reverend	Barry Hengist	appointed 20 May 2024
Church Warden	Juliet Marsh	
Church Warden	Stephen Mason	
Lay Representatives on the Diocesan and Deanery Synods	Neill Rubidge	
	Susan Rubidge	
	Jill Wilson	
Elected Members	Jane Alexander	to April 2026
	Jane Mason	to April 2026
	Gretchen Spalt	to April 2026
	Donna Miller (Secretary)	to April 2027
	Margaret Wicks	to April 2027
	Charles Beresford	to April 2028
	Hilary Butler	to April 2028
	Patricia Dodds	to April 2028
	Lindy Fozard	to April 2028
	Deborah Langston	to April 2028
	Sue Scrivener	to April 2028
	David Hutt	to April 2028

The PCC maintains oversight of all the main activities of the Church. It does this by receiving regular reports from the officers, Standing Committee, other committees, and group leaders. All these are fully reported elsewhere in this review.

The PCC meets six times per year, with the occasional extraordinary Zoom meeting for voting purposes. All meetings were held in the church, bar one, which was held via Zoom.

Donna Miller

The Wardens' Annual Fabric Report for January – December 2025

We would like to thank all those on the Properties team and others who have worked tirelessly during the year to maintain the condition of the Church, the Parish Centre, the church grounds, and 87 Greenlands Road. We are very grateful.

We would also like to thank Jill Wilson, who retired from her role as Church Warden following the APCM in May. Her hard work and commitment to St James' over many years was wonderful and greatly appreciated by all. Indeed, such is her commitment to St James', she has continued to lead the Properties team for which we are extremely grateful

Church Building

Heating System

The new heating system is now up and running. A new boiler was commissioned and work completed in July. A sump pump alarm has been fitted in the vestry to indicate flooding in the crypt. In November the old, condemned fan radiators were replaced, including a new radiator in the Lady Chapel. The thermostat and timer are set to keep the church at 12 degrees with individual daily requirements being programmed. The two porch heaters were replaced. All relevant DAC papers were completed and submitted. The crypt is now available for some storage. Information about the costs for this work will be covered in the finance and accounts report from the Treasurer.

Insurance Claim

Due to the non-functioning of the gas heating system over the winter of 2024/2025, we boosted the heating by using electric radiators. We discussed with Ecclesiastical a potential insurance claim for the cost of electricity plus the cost of repairs to the vaulted ceiling in the crypt. However, Ecclesiastical indicated that any claim would have to be against Boiler Pro insurance. Currently, no claim has been progressed against Boiler Pro and therefore the costs for the repair work and excess electricity have been absorbed by the PCC in the 2025 accounts.

All Souls Chapel

As part of the Access for All project, completed in 2024, the removal of the pews and addition of the Jacobean Altar has led to a re-orientation of the seating to create a small chapel in the round. The carpet, underfloor heating and upholstered chair seating has given a welcoming and flexible space which has been extensively used. Two moveable TV monitors – one for the church and one for the Parish Centre were purchased in November with a grant from Richer Sounds Foundation to provide a screen for meetings and courses and enhanced viewing of services in 2026.

Lady Chapel

With the addition of a radiator in November and the under carpet heating this chapel has become a comfortable space for private reflection, morning prayer, PCC subgroup meetings (e.g. Finance and Stewardship) along with Clergy meetings with parishioners.

Piano Location – North Aisle

After the new radiator was installed in November a new carpet was fitted in the piano and library area.

Tower Steps and Church Tiles

General repairs to the Tower steps and tiles at the back of church have been carried out during the year.

Sound and Video System Upgrade

The automatic mixer is working well, and goose neck mics were wired into the lectern and pulpit. The remainder of the work will be carried out in 2026.

Glass Doors

After vandalism to the North porch glass doors, replacement doors were installed in July with all costs covered by Ecclesiastical Insurance minus the standard deductible.

2023 Quinquennial

Spire Project

John Bailey at Thomas Ford obtained quotes for repairs to the Tower and JP Conservation were commissioned to carry out the work. Their quote of £28,566.83 was a good deal lower than any others because they were proposing to use ladders and ropes, not scaffolding, and they came with a recommendation from John Bailey. It was agreed that a date would be found in early 2026 to carry out the work.

Funding for the survey and repairs will come from a grant of £3,362 from National Churches Trust and the 2024 donation from the Friends of St James’.

Churchyard

Garden of Remembrance

Suma Services Ltd surveyed the grounds to ascertain the position of services to the church. We are waiting for a design from Thomas Ford & Partners.

Street Notice Boards

Paving stones were laid under the street notice boards and sockets for lighting the boards were fitted. Drawings were commissioned and we have an outstanding grant application to the County Council to cover the cost.

Memorial Bench

A memorial bench to Fr Dick Chown was fitted in the garden below the east window.

Princess Charlotte's Tomb

Thanks to an overseas donation in the amount of £1,000, the tomb has been jet washed and the railing repainted and gilded.

The Low-Level Iron Pipework

The low-level iron pipework on the church was repainted.

Parish Centre

The Small Hall and foyer were both redecorated.

Ladies and Gents Toilets

Improvements were made to the toilets with new valves to increase flush efficiency and a new toilet was fitted into the small toilet.

Gravel Area

Weeds and nettles were cleared in the gravel area behind the Parish Centre. This is a continuous task so we are looking for an ECO solution.

Storage Shed

Security was improved after the break in. The lawn mower and strimmer were replaced and have been securely fixed in the shed. Ecclesiastical Insurance reimbursed the costs of replacing the equipment minus the standard deductible.

87 Greenlands Road

Following agreement/authorisation by the Standing Committee, the washing machine was replaced. The gas safety check was completed.

Churchwardens Juliet Marsh and Steve Mason

Safeguarding Report 2025

Father Damian and the PCC of St James' continue to give due regard to the guidance issued by the House of Bishops relating to safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. The PCC has reviewed and adopted the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy together with the supporting safeguarding practice guidance and signed the Statement of Safeguarding Policy. This is displayed in the church and on our noticeboards. All safeguarding policies are updated and approved annually by the PCC.

The Parish Safeguarding Dashboard introduced by the Diocese Safeguarding Team has proved a useful tool that allows the Parish Safeguarding Officer to complete an audit of safeguarding practice at St James'. The action plans serve as a reminder for general procedures such as essential safeguarding training and for annual reviews, for example, agreeing policies. This is not a one-off exercise, but a regular tool that is reviewed monthly. This ensures that safeguarding is top of mind in Weybridge.

Donna Miller

Emly Deanery Synod Report 2025

The Deanery Synod met three times during the year. The subjects discussed were:

- Being a Christian Monday to Saturday, e.g. in the workplace/school/pub;
- Single Friendly Church Network - making single people feel welcome in Church, despite the Church's concentration on families; and
- A discussion on what we celebrate and what we pray for.

The new Synod to be elected this year will be responsible not only for electing Diocesan Synod next year, but also for electing the new General Synod, so will be playing an important role in Church governance both locally and nationally.

Neill Rubidge

OTHER REPORTS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

The Ark

The Ark toddler group continued to meet in Church, Mondays in term time from 9.15am – 11.15am. We increased in numbers attending and now regularly have 40 – 45 babies/toddlers plus their parents/carers.

Our volunteers, on a rota basis, are me, Barry Hengist, Trish Dodds, Helen Allen, Patricia Vacher, Alison Lornie, Sophia Davis, Donna Miller, Jill Wilson, Hilary & Stephen Gillam-Smith and Alan Knowles. We said goodbye to Shirley Rhodes during the autumn due to family commitments. Our thanks to her for all the time she has given over the past year. Fr Damian and Fr Tom are also with us when they are available.

There is free play during each session from 9.15 am till 10.30 am, followed by singing time in the All Souls Chapel, where we sing well-known nursery rhymes plus one or two toddler-friendly Christian songs. We have playdough/colouring tables and refreshments are served throughout the session, including toast. We always thank our tea ladies (Helen & Patricia) at the end of our singing time with 'I'm a Little Teapot'!

We celebrated Christmas with a party at our last session in December, including the Nativity story, led by Fr Damian. Our thanks to Fr Tom for accompanying the carols and Christmas songs on the keyboard. We advertised the Christingle and Crib services and some of our Ark families did attend. There have also been a few requests for baptism, and there may be a wedding in 2026.

We are increasing our charge from £1 to £2 per child from January 2026. This was well received by all the parents/carers who felt it was long overdue!

Again, many friendships have been formed among the adults and toddlers, and we find plenty of opportunity to lend a listening ear and there is a strong feeling of trust.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all the volunteers who have helped keep The Ark afloat throughout this year. If you feel this is something you would like to participate in, please contact me.

Sue Hengist

Bell Ringers

There has been little in the way of change in the tower this year. Our band membership stands at ten; quite healthy compared to the other 14 towers in the Chertsey District. Neill Rubidge, our tower captain, has been unable to join us for a further year due to ongoing health issues.

We generally have six bells ringing on Sunday mornings with more attendees on practice night. Ringers come from neighbouring towers to give support, boost numbers and bring greater expertise to the mix.

We have one learner currently, who is very keen but not yet ready to join us for service ringing.

We were delighted to have a couple of extra ringers for Candlemas. The Rt Revd Paul Davies, Bishop of Dorking, unexpectedly joined us for service ringing, as did another Bishop - Alex, son of our previous curate, Louise Bishop. Both were very welcome.

We also had visitors ringing on Ascension Day; passers-by (from Oswestry) who heard the bells ringing and came in to join us.

Three visiting peal bands have been successful in their attempts to faultlessly ring over 5,000 changes in around 3 hours.

A fourth band were unsuccessful but managed to complete a quarter peal, (around 1,200 changes), which was dedicated to a prominent local ringer who had sadly died that day.

Our services were requested at only three weddings; the number down on previous years, but there are so many possible wedding venues nowadays that it is not surprising.

In line with the rest of the country, we rang the bells to celebrate VE 80 on May 8th.

June saw our tower included in a mini outing for the district along with Walton and Hersham. About twenty ringers, of all abilities, came to St James' to enjoy a morning of call changes, Bob Doubles and more.

On Remembrance Sunday we rang the bells half muffled for both the morning Eucharist and the Civic Service at 3pm.

Finally, in December, a group of 14 enjoyed a Christmas meal at a nearby restaurant. This is always a busy time of year in the church and indeed the belfry. I was pleased to have a good turnout for the crib service at 5pm, Midnight Mass and a bumper nine of us on Christmas morning!

Linda Strange

Choir

In this my annual report, I must acknowledge my enforced period of absence, due to ill health. I would like to thank Father Damian, Tom, Donna, and all the choir and congregation for their support, prayers and warm wishes. I must thank, too, Iain Cowden who has stepped in to deputise and has kept the choir in great shape.

The choir continues to grow, and I am delighted that we have been able to welcome four new members during the year Andy Jackson (bass), Christine Darmon, Flavie Belanco, (sopranos), and most recently Isabel Sinagola (alto). They have added substance to their respective parts, and this opens the means to perform more repertoire where the musical lines are subdivided. Sadly, we had to bid farewell to Amanda Liu, who has moved to Italy with her Italian husband.

Tom has again continued to be supportive, suggesting new repertoire, and playing the piano for some services.

We are always happy to welcome new members and those with an interest in singing with us should contact our musical director, Lindsay Bridgwater. We rehearse from 7:30 to 9pm on Wednesdays.

Lindsay Bridgwater

Christian Aid

The main Christian Aid event in 2025 was as usual Christian Aid week. We were thrilled at the commitment of volunteers who delivered envelopes throughout Weybridge. Over £1,000 was collected in the church but to that we can add all the donations from the delivered envelopes which were sent direct to Christian Aid.

The social committee also held a fundraising event for Christian Aid and brilliantly raised another £1,000.

Ann Davison

Church Cleaning

The cleaning teams operated throughout 2025 with cleaning taking place fortnightly, mostly on Saturday mornings, with one team working on Friday mornings. During 2025 there were just four teams, with each team cleaning once every ten to twelve weeks. It would be wonderful if more people would come forward to give a hand. My thanks to everyone who has been on the rota during 2025 and to most of those on the rota who have been cleaning for many years!

Sue Scrivener

Eco Group

All matters relating to the Eco Group in 2025 have been considered by the Standing Committee on behalf of the PCC.

Eucharistic Ministers

The Eucharistic Minister team assists with communion administration at our weekly services. We have a good-sized group, which means that most of us commit to helping once or twice per month.

If you are a church attender, this is a lovely way to get involved without having to make a time commitment outside of your regular church attendance. We are always looking for new people to join our team, and training is provided.

Please reach to me or Father Damian if you have an interest in joining us.

Donna Miller

Family Service

We meet on the 2nd Sunday monthly at 11.30am for a non-Eucharistic service with a slightly more informal feel, aimed at children and families. The service follows a similar structure to the Eucharist with a welcome, time of confession, gloria, collect, bible reading, talk and then craft activity, prayers, exchange of the peace, notices, and blessing. It has been encouraging to see increased attendance throughout 2025. Therefore, consideration is being given to expanding this service to twice monthly.

Father Damian

Flower Arrangers

Our loyal team of Flower Arrangers continued to create and maintain flower arrangements in the church during 2025 on a weekly basis (except during Lent) to brighten up our beautiful church. Most of us simply have commitment and a love of flowers rather than any expertise or training. New members with a similar enthusiasm are always most welcome.

We are especially lucky that one of our team is also a professional florist and we are grateful for her help and support in taking a lead for significant annual events such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest, and when we have weddings in church.

We continue to be hugely grateful to our congregation for supporting us with their very generous donations. Each year we make special collections at Christmas, Easter and Harvest and these were once again well supported and enabled us to fill the church with flowers at these times. We would also like to remind everyone that donations are welcome throughout the year!

With thanks, as ever, to our team and to our donors.

Louise Beresford

Friends of St James'

The Friends of St James' had a very successful 2025. Our total income for the year was £17,712. This included income from membership fees of around 170 supporters and ongoing fundraising throughout the year.

During 2025 we held several successful events including a quiz, Table Magic and Supper evening, a talk on "Great Railway Stations of the world" and running the bottle tombola at the Summer and Winter Weybridge Festivals. Our most successful venture was held in autumn where we asked for donations of vintage items for sale to Vintage Cash Cow, local antique and jewellery shops as well as eBay. This project was well supported and netted £4,800. We are signed up for Easy Fundraising with 54 registered supporters. This gives us a modest but steady monthly income.

As a result of our efforts, The Friends were pleased to be able to donate £15,000 towards the church heating project.

Lindy Fozard

Handbells

During the year ending 31st December 2025, St James' Weybridge Handbell Ringers unfortunately lost several members due to ill health. However, with an advertising campaign in the local freebie magazines, we managed to recruit three new ringers and have twelve ringers many of whom have been with us from when we started thirteen years ago.

We are members of the Handbell Ringers of Great Britain and through the year have enjoyed ringing at many local rallies and a National Ringing Week. Even with four relatively new ringers we were able to ring at the Weybridge Christmas Festival at St James' Church.

We are always looking for new ringers and will continue to advertise in the local Weybridge and Elmbridge magazines. We will give a warm welcome to anyone who is interested in joining our friendly group. No previous experience of handbell ringing is required just enthusiasm. We have planned a full programme of ringing to local groups and organisations during 2026.

Alan Sharps

Intercessors and Readers

We are fortunate at St James' to have many readers and quite a few trained members of the congregation to prepare the Intercessions. Thank you so much for your support, it makes the services even more special to hear the different voices from our congregation.

If this is a ministry that you would like to join, please do talk to Jane, Donna, Father Damian or Father Tom.

Jane Mason

Junior Church

During 2025 there was a small, but steady, number of families attending Junior Church. Sessions took place every 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th Sunday each month during term time. Some of the Junior Church children read at the Christingle service and many past and present members of Junior Church attended that service. St James' was very full! More children attended the two Crib and Toy services on Christmas Eve and on Mothering Sunday and Easter Sunday. The Christmas party for all church children in December was great fun. There were several wonderful, willing parents helping at each session and their support and enthusiasm was invaluable.

Each session followed the lectionary readings and usually consisted of a game, a children's version of the reading and then craft or other activities to reinforce the story. There has continued to be an open invitation to anyone who would like to join a Junior Church session to see what goes on.

Grateful thanks to everyone who has been part of the Junior Church team during 2025 and to the parents and children who took part.

Sue Scrivener

Lego Club

We meet on the 3rd Sunday monthly at 4pm in the Small Hall in the Parish Centre. We begin with a bible story, reflecting upon a theme and then think about how we could turn that story into a Lego model. Then the children have one hour to construct their designs, with themes including creation, the crucifixion, Zacchaeus, Jesus calling the fishermen to fish for people, Harvest festival and the parable of the Sower, the feeding of the 5000, Jesus calming a storm and the miracle at the Wedding at Cana in Galilee - water into wine! We then go around to see each other's constructions before we share a prayer of blessing and then enjoy a meal - sometimes pizza, pasta with various sauces, salad, waffles and beans or something else yummy, often followed by a cookie or cake for pudding. Attendance costs just £3 per child and a parent is expected to stay for the whole session. Ideally, we would like parents to book their child in before the session to help us with catering - info@stjamesweybridge.org.uk - attendance varies month by month but on average 12 children are present.

Father Damian

Liturgy and Ministry Team

We have the joy of preparing for regular worship, Sundays, festivals and other occasions and coordinate across various groups of people from music, the choir to the vestry team, pastoral team, and clergy. We prepare a plan for services, several months in advance and submit key dates for approval by the PCC.

Each meeting begins in prayer and an opportunity for participants to share the items they bring before the Rector/clergy, offer their thoughts, and a list for future services, dates, and times is prepared. Minutes of our meeting are then circulated to the next PCC.

If you would like to make suggestions about the worshipping life of St James, please contact one of the Clergy or Lindsay Bridgwater, Valerie Bird, Jane Mason, Liz Drapper, Richard Kirkbride, Ann Davison or Jane Alexander with your ideas and feedback. Do also share your favourite hymns with us, as we have a long list which we use to help with planning music.

We have committed to take forward the desire of our Church Leadership and PCC, for a greater sense of inclusivity in our worship and where possible use material with inclusive language.

Father Damian

Pastoral

'Lord Jesus Christ, you have put your life into our hands; now we put our lives into yours.'

These words come towards the end of the service of Home Communion used with those who are house-bound and unable to come physically to St James' Church. They remind us that through pastoral care and home visits, we receive the very presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and are strengthened to continue in our Christian discipleship, amidst illness and vulnerabilities.

At St James' Church, we have a fantastic pastoral team who work so hard to ensure that those who are visited and regularly called and cared for may continue to feel a key part of our community and worshipping life. We are in regular contact with an ever-increasing number of individuals we seek to pastorally support, continuing to hold monthly services and visits at Norfolk House Care Home and Bridge Court. Over the Christmas period, our choir at St James' visited Norfolk House to sing Christmas Carols which was much appreciated by staff, residents, and their families.

My personal thanks go to all on the pastoral team - Annabelle Yeomans, Jane Alexander, Julia Obermajer-Navratil, Jane Mason, Pat Boothman Baragwanath, and the remaining clergy for all their work. Together, we remain in close contact to ensure all those in need can receive pastoral care, whether at home, in hospital, or via the phone. We, of course, would very much welcome any additional members to the team to help within this nourishing and profound

ministry. If you would like to find out more, please speak with myself or Jane Alexander.

Fr. Tom Musson

Servers (Acolytes and Crucifer)

We have a lovely group on the serving team. They are all willing to help each other and we try to look as professional as we can. Obviously, we all have our different skills but that is what makes us a team.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the team for their dedication and reliability. If anyone is interested in joining us, please do ask, we would love to train up more servers. To be a server is very special and almost invisible.

Jane Mason

Sidespeople Team

Sidespeople are probably the first person a visitor or member of the congregation will meet when entering the church for a service. Sidespeople help to form an impression of the church and offer a warm welcome, ensure everyone has what they need for the service (service sheet, hymnal, notices, etc.) and suggest Junior Church to families with children.

Before the service, sidespeople prepare and handout hymnals/service sheets as people enter the church, and guide people to pews where needed. During the service sidespeople look after the collection, guide people to Communion and assist the church Wardens and congregation where needed or in case of emergency.

After the service, sidespeople collect hymnals and tidy pews. There is a rota for sidespeople to cover each Sunday of the month, optimally with 3-4 sidespeople per Sunday and special services.

Currently we have 16 sidespeople covering 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and the occasional 5th Sunday as well as special services during Advent and Lent.

We would love to have 2-3 more people join the team ... for just one Sunday a month!

No experience is necessary ... just a desire to:

- warmly welcome people to the Church
- get to know other members of the congregation
- contribute to the church community.

A heartfelt "Thank You!" to the sidespeople for their dedication each Sunday!

Gretchen Spalt

Social and Fundraising

Our remit is to organise Parish social events around the church calendar, raise the profile of St James' in the community and raise funds for St James' separate to those raised by the Friends of St James' or through stewardship.

2025 was a very busy year for the Social and Fundraising Committee.

Epiphany Party 5th January 2025

We started the year with organising a bring and share party in church after the Epiphany service.

Candlemas 2nd February 2025

This was a Sung Festival Eucharist in thanksgiving for our "Access for All" and "Reordering" projects. After the service we hosted a reception for 200 guests in the Parish Centre. Bishop Paul joined us for the service along with local dignitaries, Diocesan Clergy, previous Incumbents, suppliers and donors involved in the project. Because this celebration was meant to thank the many members of the congregation who participated, we chose to hire serving staff for the reception. This allowed everyone to fully enjoy the event.

Easter Vigil shared supper 19th April 2025

We organised a bring and share party after the service. Many people stayed and it was a chance get to know each other better.

Tom's Ordination BBQ Sunday 29th June 2025

In celebration of Fr Tom's Ordination, we held a BBQ in the church garden. It was a bring and share of salads, desserts and drinks and we bought the BBQ food. Fr Tom's family and friends attended, and it was a lovely occasion.

Summer Festival 21st June 2025

At the Summer Festival we served cream teas, cakes and refreshments in the Parish Centre Main Hall. It was well attended and was an enjoyable day.

Stewardship Sunday lunch 7th September 2025

On Stewardship Sunday there was a presentation during the service to explain St James' finances and to encourage people to make the weekly collection through PGS. We supported the Stewardship team by preparing and serving lunch after the service. We catered for the 72, as on the signup list, although 20 didn't attend. It was very successful and gave people the opportunity to pose questions about stewardship and church finances. We hadn't charged for the meal but have decided that we will charge in future to cover our costs. We ran a cash bar.

Christmas Festival 30th November 2025

The format of the festival changed this year as the farmers' market relocated from Churchfields carpark to Baker Street, thereby splitting the festival in two. We continued as before with craft stalls in the Parish Centre, and mulled wine/ mince pies and a Turkey BBQ served in the church carpark. Santa was again very popular, and we added a Carousel in the church garden for young children. We ran a very successful raffle, and the cake stall was

popular. During the afternoon music groups performed in the church followed by our Christingle service. As usual attendance was high, and we were delighted that Bishop Andrew joined us for the service.

Funds raised from these events can be seen in the 2025 Accounts.

None of the above activities could have been achieved by the S&F team without the committed support of our church family. You have been generous in your financial support and have given so freely of your time. In so doing you have helped us to raise funds for St James' and raise our profile within the community as well as drawing us closer together.

Our grateful thanks to you all.

Juliet Marsh

St James' CofE Primary School

Father Damian, Pippa Graeme, and Jane Mason are Foundation Governors at the school. We all have our different areas of responsibilities. e.g. Father Damian goes into school every other week to lead the Collective Worship for the whole school, a congregation of well over 400. (Father Tom leads it every other week.) The children and staff appear enjoy this inclusive, invitational and inspiring service. Father Damian is on the Finance and Accommodation Committee. Pippa has done a lot of work with the school's gardens physically as well as strategically, and she is on the Personnel & Equality Committee. Jane Mason is on the Learning and Welfare committee and will be in school observing procedures during SAT's week as one of the trained Governors to do that. We all attend Full Governing Board meetings in addition to other responsibilities. It is always a pleasure to go into the school to be greeted by polite, smiling children.

The Governing Body has member with a wide variety of skills. In addition, every year we are obliged to undergo safeguarding training as well as other trainings. This year it was fascinating to learn how to use AI safely and with integrity and to discover the ways in which teachers may use AI to assist with their workload.

Jane Mason

Stewardship Group and Charitable Giving

Our Parish Giving Scheme (PGS), which is run by a third-party provider, is the main way that parishioners give to the church. The number of donors using the scheme has sadly declined this year as we have lost some significant donors because they have either moved away, moved to another church, or have passed away. This has had a big impact to our annual income and is a reason why we must continue to promote the Scheme as much as possible to increase our income in the future. It's so easy to do, and once signed up, one doesn't

need to give it a second thought! Please speak to me or a member of the team if you are interested in joining the Scheme.

Our online platform through Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) continues to perform well for us. CAF manages the gift aid claim for us, so there's no administration on our part and they only deduct a small fee for their service.

Our Lent campaign was in aid of the Manna Society, and we raised £3,877.15.

In May, we sent £1,140.00 to Christian Aid for Christian Aid Week.

Our Christingle service was on behalf of the Children's Society, and we raised £742.52.

Our group has worked closely with the Communications Group to try and capitalise on the use of the St. James' website, the weekly newsletter, and social media.

As ever, the Group would like to express its appreciation of the support of its work by Father Damian, wardens, PCC, and the congregation.

Donna Miller

Vestry Team

Sadly, the Vestry Team lost one of its longest serving members this year, when Heather Brittain passed away in December. She will be greatly missed, having led the team for many years. On a happier note, the team welcomed Brian Davis and now comprises Valerie, Roy, Charles, Brian & Chas. As ever, it quietly continues to do its work behind the scenes, ensuring each of the services at St James' have the requisite elements and necessary, clean, accoutrements. It also manages the changing of the altar frontal, when the liturgy requires, monitors usage and replacement of the many candles and sanctuary lights and keeps the shine on our various brass works and Nave altar.

It is also responsible for counting, and banking on a weekly basis, any monies collected at the various services and events throughout the year.

This year saw the decision to introduce oil filled candles for the High Altar, which offer cost-effectiveness, cleanliness and consistent long-lasting performance compared to traditional wax candles. To accommodate these, the existing candlesticks were adapted and fitted with new holders, manufactured locally by Becon Engineering of Byfleet. This project was funded via donation, and it is hoped that a switch to oil filled candles, with similar new holders for both the Nave Altar and wooden Lectern candlesticks, will be possible next year.

Chas Burston

Church Development Plan

The PCC met on Saturday 31 January 2026 with the purpose of coming together to set priorities and strategies for the next two years. We talked about our strength and opportunities, along with all the things we are currently doing at St James'.

As a group, we focussed on the following areas:

Communications

Continue to shape website as a functioning and dynamic space with a crossover with ChurchSuite

Explore Instagram

Pursue links with local schools and with the library/HUB – opportunities to share news and events with other users

Improve presence in local magazines/other websites to share our events and services

What else can we be offering to our online viewers on Sundays?

Excited about our external notice boards and our porch poster boards!

How can we work more closely with The Bid?

ECO Church

Regular space in newsletter about eco initiatives

Food waste – in church and in parish centre

Improved parish centre and church recycling streams

Join community litter pick (and organise our own)

Create an eco area in the churchyard – insect hotel, recycled water, wildflowers, raised vegetable and flower beds, hot composting

Stronger relationships with Men's Shed, Weybridge allotments (Pippa Graeme), Weybridge in Bloom, local beekeepers

Host a speaker to talk about recycling at home

Solar panels on the parish centre

Create an empowered team of eco warriors

Reinstate the food and veg exchange after church on a Sunday

Continue to investigate the community fridge idea – could this be housed at the library?

Grow Community/Grow Diversity/ Missional Activity

Look at changing Compass age parameters to 18 to 35

Review Compass frequency – move to fortnightly

Paid family and children's worker

Children's choir

Holiday Club in October

After school drop in space for teens

Relationships with schools – Brooklands College, Manby Lodge, coffee mornings at nurseries

Increase diversity outreach – different cultures and communities

Growing Discipleship

Inclusive Church – more transparency on what it is – better explanation of the breadth of inclusive

Time and Talents audit – redo in 2026

External networks visibility – Facebook, The Bid, Surrey County Council, local schools

St James' badges – can be worn externally at events - Fr D needs a hoodie

Advertise our heated space

Review our opening hours

Create prayer cards for specific situations – praying for a loved one, praying for someone who has died, someone who is ill, etc. Tom did something similar for Remembrance Day

Expand our music licenses to include 'other' music so more music can be played in church (outside of services)

Use our small group participants – could they help with welcoming, reading in services, etc.

The PCC will be hosting vision sessions on Tuesday 9 June at 10.00 am and at 7.30 pm in church with the plan to fleshing out our next generation Church Development Plan for 2026-2028. Please join in and contribute to our plans!



Alleluia Fund



Current Needs/Wish List (in no order of priority)

Church

- Restoration of high altar linen/cover
 - Repair or replacement of high altar frontals
 - Repair of high altar/All Souls altar woodwork
 - Restoration of liturgical hangings
 - Porch noticeboards replacement/upgrade - £1,000
 - Sound system upgrade to replace analogue equipment with digital, new speakers and dynamic microphone for pulpit (estimated cost around £20,000) – this project can be broken down into separate components**
 - Improved under tower storage area with folding doors
 - Two accessible toilets**
 - Large capacity communion wine flagon**
 - Redecoration of Lady Chapel
- ** denotes priority projects

Churchyard

- New dedicated garden of remembrance for the burial of ashes**
- ** denotes priority projects

Garden/Outside

- Replacement of external signage at car park entrance - £1,200
 - Garden planter bike racks for Parish Centre car park - £700
 - Re-design of Parish Centre car park**
 - Two electrical vehicle charging points**
 - Drainage system works**
- ** denotes priority projects

Parish Centre

- Improve accessibility with automation of main door
 - Updated CCTV system for church and parish centre
 - Cordless stick Hoover** - £330
 - Solar panels for the roof**
- ** denotes priority projects

General

- Items for the Ark – new table and chairs, bookcase, plastic boxes for Ark storage - £500
- ** denotes priority projects

Completed Projects or Funding Pledged

- Additional power sockets in Chancel, Vestry, Piano Chapel, and All Souls Chapel (£2,000) - *funded as part of the Reordering Project/AfA2*
- Garden bench (£1,152) – *funded by single donation*
- Fixed power supplies for decorative lighting displays, future signage lighting and sound (£3,000) - *funded by Surrey County Council's YFS Community Fund*
- Under carpet heating pads in the Lady Chapel and All Souls Chapel (£2,502) -*funded by Surrey County Council's YFS Community Fund*
- New PTZ camera for live streaming services in church (£500) – *funded by single donation*
- 2 bike rack garden planters (£700) - *funded from PCC reserves*
- Live streaming movable sound desk/cabinet (£2,334) - *funded by two donations*
- A lighter processional cross for use during worship – *funded by single donation*
- Six wooden candlesticks replace wax with oil candles (£800) – *funded by single donation*
- Replacement microphone for lectern (£220) – *funded by single donation*
- High Altar replace wax candles with oil filled
- LED digital displays for All Souls Chapel – *grant from Richer Sounds*
- Additional radiators – East Chapel, North Aisle, All Souls Chapel - and reconfiguration of some of the existing radiators
- Princess Charlotte Memorial Grave cleaning and redecoration
- Replacement of amplifier that runs our sound system along with some additional speakers (£500) - *funded by single donation*
- Cordless stick hoovers for the church and the parish centre – *funded by single donation*
- Church Street noticeboards replacement** £1,554 - (*donation pledged*)
- Handheld microphone for church – (*donation pledged*)

General Rules/Conditions

- People can donate anonymously or otherwise
- If possible, donations should be gift aided
- We will disclose the ongoing performance of the Fund in the Annual Accounts and periodically in our newsletter
- We won't disclose donor's/organisation's names unless they fund all the project and even then, it will be at their volition
- Expenditure for a particular project will not begin until all the money has been pledged and/or donated, unless the PCC decides to use its own unrestricted funds to top up the budget