

Letter from the Vicar Rev Fabian Wuyts Vicar of St James

Healing and Wholeness

For many of us, summer brings a chance to pause, rest, and be restored. Summer holidays, whether they involve travel, time with family, or simply slowing down at home, can offer gentle healing for both body and mind. Of course, not everyone experiences summer in this way.



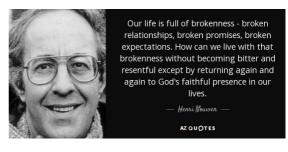
For those who are retired, life may feel much the same all year round. Sometimes, the quieter months of September and October, when travel is cheaper, may be the true time for rest. Still, we all recognise the need for refreshment, the longing for wholeness, and the goodness of being restored.

Throughout Scripture, God's intention is clear; He desires to heal, to restore, and to make whole. This is not limited to individual lives, but relationships, communities, and ultimately the whole creation. The Bible shows us that the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions of life are deeply interconnected. Jesus' ministry of healing was never only about curing diseases. When he healed, people were restored to community, given back their dignity and invited into God's way of life. In the Gospels, healing and salvation are often intertwined words. To be healed is not only to have pain lifted but to be drawn into God's reconciling love.

At the same time the New Testament is honest about the struggles we face. There is a recognition that our struggles are not simply private or personal. The Bible speaks of forces (social, political, spiritual) that weigh heavily upon us and shape our world. These 'powers and principalities' are real in their influence, even if they are ultimately defeated in Christ. Healing and wholeness, therefore, are not only about personal renewal but about God's victory over all that distorts and damages life. To pray for healing is to confront these powers and to proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord.

A healthy church places healing at the heart of its ministry. It is part of our witness to the world and part of our life together. When we pray for healing, lay

hands on the sick, or anoint with oil, we are not doing something strange or marginal; we are living out the good news of Jesus Christ who is making all things new. Healing prayer belongs within the worship of the whole Church, because healing belongs at the centre of the gospel.



Of course, this must always be done with care. Jesus himself warned against linking sin and sickness too quickly. Forgiveness may open the way to healing but it is not a simple equation. Likewise, medicine and the skill of doctors are gifts from God and should never be set aside. Finally, we should remember that physical or emotional cures are not the only way Christ meets human need. Healing is about wholeness, peace, reconciliation and hope, even when the struggle continues.

This September we will begin a series on Healing and Wholeness. Together we will explore what it means to pray for healing and to be agents of God's healing in the world. It is both our privilege and our responsibility to witness to Christ's reconciling power, not only within the walls of St James' church, but in our families, workplaces, neighbourhoods and community. We will be asking:

How can we encourage one another in the ministry of healing? How can we bring hope to a hurting world? How can we allow God's Spirit to shape us into a people of healing?

My prayer is that as we step forward in faith, we will see God at work in clear and tangible ways – restoring lives, renewing hope and transforming situations and places. Let's continue to pray for growth and renewal as we allow the Holy Spirit to guide us and as we use the gifts and abilities he has so generously given. May we go with confidence as God's chosen children, bearing witness to Christ, building one another up and living as visible signs of his healing and wholeness in the world God loves.

Fabian

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Many thanks to all the contributors to the Magazine. If you have something to share for the December '25 - February '26 edition, do contact the Editor - details on page 40.

Deadline for copy is Tuesday 18 November 2025

This edition of the Magazine covers the autumn season which includes Harvest and Remembrance Sunday. Richard Carpenter looks at Land and Nature in his coverage of the Eco Church survey, while Sue tells us about the inspiration for the harvest banners. Continuing the theme, Philippa Johnson presents two poems about our stewardship of nature. Our Harvest contributions go to Open Door and Susie Peeler, a volunteer there, writes about the history and the day to day running of the charity and what it means to the clients and volunteers who give their time.

Jenny Wakefield remembers names on our war memorial of those who died in the Far East as she writes about VJ Day. Andrew Wright tells of a village where all those who went away to the World Wars suffered no fatalities and of some people he knows who were fortunate enough to return from WW2.

You will also find a thought provoking message and a poem from the new Pope Leo XIV and Mother Theresa respectively, as well as John Wesley's original manifesto, just as relevant today as when it was written in the 18th century. I take a look at some church 'mice', we thank Ian White for his service as he retires from his role as caretaker and, sadly, we say farewell to two members of St James' who have passed away.

There's more in our usual articles and news round-ups. I hope you enjoy this edition.

Ed.

Once you've read the magazine, do feel free to give it to someone who otherwise might not get to see it. The magazine is also published online. Please let friends and neighbours know how they can access this and previous editions through the

St James' website: www.stjamestaunton.org

The views expressed in the magazine may not necessarily represent those of the Editor or those of St James' Church



Letter from Michael Beasley Bishop of Bath and Wells

Generosity begets generosity

In August I was privileged to dedicate the restored clock in the tower of Montacute church. It's not just any old clock. In fact, Montacute's is amongst the oldest in the country. Built in the village in around 1400, the clock is so old that it is held in place by iron wedges. At the time of its construction, the nut and the bolt wouldn't be invented for another hundred years!

The Montacute clock is an artefact that seems to generate generosity. In the 1980s the clock was restored by Humphrey Hamlin, for whom it is now named. Humphrey poured time and energy into its mechanism, preventing it from being scrapped. During the last two years, heroic efforts by the people of Montacute have led to its further restoration. All this was marked last month by a whole village gathering. The community choir sang, morris men danced, the local pub provided a hog roast, cake was dispended in huge quantities.

Montacute is a beautiful example of how generosity begets generosity. Like a chain reaction, one act of generosity, the restoration of the clock, led to another, another and another. As a result, a whole community was brought together in celebration and joy.

In his second letter to the Church in Corinth, Paul writes of the church in Macedonia that 'their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity' (2 Cor 8:2). Having nothing, the Macedonians discovered that they could still give. In turn, their generosity enabled Paul to challenge and encourage the church in Corinth to do the same. All to help the struggling Church in Jerusalem.

As I travel around our diocese, I see this pattern of generosity begetting generosity happening in so many places. One person starts, another adds their contribution, more join in and soon we learn that together we are so much more than the sum of our parts. This is the economy of God. It's an economy that all of us are invited to join.

Michael - Bishop of Bath and Wells

Starting in October we invite you to come along and...



Offering of a time of reflection, contemplation and ending with a short time of silent meditation in the peace of the Side Chapel

So as many people as possible can access these sessions they will be held on the

1st Thursday each month

alternating 10.30am to midday and 7pm - 8.30pm

There is no need to sign up, simply come along and leave when it's right for you. We will be dipping into material from the Northumbrian and Iona Communities,
Wild Goose, Lectio Divina, Lectio 365 and others.

Something different each month

Our first meeting will be at 10.30am Thursday 2 October All welcome

For more information speak to or ring Felicity on 07508 287808 Lyn on 07772 881463

A date for your diary! 'Simply Pray @ Hilfield Friary' on Saturday 22 November for their Pre-Advent Quiet Day Retreat. Pick up a leaflet or go to their website www.hilfieldfriary.co.uk
We will be arranging car sharing

VJ Day 2025

"We will remember them"



As we commemorate the 80th Anniversary of VJ Day and the end of the second World War, we remember with gratitude those who paid the ultimate price, sacrificing their lives.

The St James' War Memorial contains 41 names of men and one woman from this parish who lost their lives during the 1939-1945 war. At least eight are known to have fought in the Far East and India as part of the British and Commonwealth forces.



These include *Private Percy Wood* who died as a prisoner of war, commemorated on the Kranji Memorial in Singapore. *Corporal Lionel Berry* who died in the Battle of Kohima one of the fiercest and most significant battles of the war in North India and the only woman on the memorial, *Lieutenant Edith Robson RAMC* who died in India

Percy Chambers, Harold Conibeer, Frederick Jeavons, Harold Silk and William Snell also served and died in the Far East.

War memorial information can be found on our website: https://stjamestaunton.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/WW2-Memorial-Biographies-short-1.pdf
The epitaph on the war memorial at Kohima is perhaps familiar:

"When you go home tell them of us and say for your tomorrow we gave our today"

Those who served in the Far East have been called the Forgotten Army, especially those who were Far East Prisoners of War. Many who returned were so affected by their experiences that they found it difficult or impossible to talk about them; they felt no one would believe them or were told to put it all behind them

This decadal commemoration, likely the last when veterans will be present, has been particularly poignant. It is important that we take the opportunity to reflect on the human cost of conflict and the lifelong suffering it involves. We give thanks for those known to us who have the courage to serve, and pray earnestly for peace and wisdom for leaders as they navigate the difficult path of international negotiations.

...and these returned

The village of Stocklinch near liminster has a small plaque on the village hall

recording the fact that it is one of a few localities in the UK that does not have a war memorial – because no-one from there



died in WW1 or WW2. So, they have nowhere to lay wreaths each 11th November. There is a tendency to think that Remembrance Day is only about remembering the dead rather than all those who fought for King and Country. The experiences of 5 men I knew show how varied experiences of war can be. A lot of time is spent training, held in reserve or in transit.

Bob's father joined the Royal Artillery reserve in Edinburgh in 1938, he got married in the summer of 1939 and when war was declared on 3rd September, he received his mobilisation papers and joined up in the second week of September. After Basic Training, he sailed on a troopship for Australia where his gunnery training took place. He had a spell in India before being posted to the Mediterranean. He eventually went to Italy and for 6 weeks shelled the monastery building at Monte Cassino which the Germans were using as an observation point allowing them to observe troop movements up to 50 miles away. He eventually arrived back in the UK to resume his marriage in early 1946.

The father of Lillias was, in later life, the Chief Engineer for the new town we lived in. He had qualified as a Civil Engineer just before WW2 started. He was quickly called up and after Basic and Military Engineering training he was posted to the military backwater of Huddersfield. There he taught new sappers the skills of Military Engineering for the rest of the war. He would sum up his war with the comment, "I gather we were fighting some people called Germans...but I never saw one in five and a half years."

Ted's father worked for the GPO. When the secrets of the Enigma machine and Bletchley Park were made public in the 1970's, there was a programme on TV explaining how the Enigma coding machine worked. Eventually Ted

found the story too complex and said so. Leslie, his father, replied, "Just listen. I'll explain it later." After the programme Leslie explained how the Enigma machine worked. Ted was surprised his father knew about this highly secret device. Imagine Ted's surprise when his father said, "We had one in North Africa." Leslie was an NCO signaller attached to 8th Army HQ. Using the decrypts from Bletchley Park they were able to decode messages that were only 2 or 3 days old so getting insights into German troop movements.

Adam's father was conscripted into the Army into an elite unit. He was awarded the Iron Cross for his part in the German advance on Moscow. He surrendered to the British in the final days of the war (his medal being taken as a trophy by a British squaddie). He then became a bus driver in Edinburgh and on one occasion a group of German tourists paid the minimum fare but rode all the way to the end of the route. The bus driver controlled the doors! He kept the doors locked and reprimanded them for cheating and made them pay up. Their real surprise was he addressed them in 'Officer Class' German. He refused to explain why. He had been forced to serve in an SS group.

Maurice joined the Royal Navy in 1943 and found himself waiting in Essex for the invasion of Normandy. His group sailed from Essex and went ashore on one of the British beaches in the late afternoon of D Day; he was part of the Beachmaster's Party who marshalled troops across and off the beach. He spent over 100 nights on the invasion beach. One day he showed me his scrapbook of that time. There were photographs taken by his commanding officer using a camera he had smuggled in his kit bag. The officer had the sense to keep the film until the war was over. He had the film developed when he was posted to Sri Lanka and then sent the photos to the mothers of his squad to avoid the Navy discovering his action. As far as Maurice knew, the Imperial War Museum and the Royal Navy Museum did not know of the existence of the photos.



Andrew Wright

(Stocklinch is one of two in Somerset, and of only 17 in England and Wales, that are known as Doubly Thankful Villages - they didn't lose any young men in either of the two World Wars - Ed.)

Behind the scenes...

Many of you will know the Beatrix Potter story, 'The Tailor of Gloucester'. In it, the tailor is commissioned to make a new waistcoat for the Mayor's wedding on Christmas Day. After cutting all the pieces for the waistcoat, the tailor realises he needs more thread. Aiming to finish it after a good sleep, he goes to bed but falls ill and has to stay there for days. By Christmas Eve the coat is still not finished so, overnight, the mice in the workshop stitch together all the pieces and embroider the coat beautifully. In the morning, the tailor finds the coat all finished except for one last button hole.

Well, here at St James' we are fortunate to have a band of 'mice', just like the tailor's, who scurry around, working behind the scenes often when no-one is looking, and get things done. For example, during August, several people took part in the summer work parties and these pictures show only a few of them. Thank you to *everyone* who took part in those sessions.

But there are more...see the article opposite about lan

White who has laboured tirelessly for many years as our caretaker. Many of you probably never see him at work but he has done so much over the years to keep St James' clean, tidy, with chairs in the right place and so much more. It would not be fair of me to mention other names in case I leave someone out but think of the people who prepare your cups of tea and coffee for after the services on a Sunday morning. Then there are the people who prepare the services themselves, choose and play the music, write the sermons, put the Powerpoint presentation together, operate the camera and sound system, greet people at the door, run the children's work, arrange the reading rota, arrange the flowers, put the screen up and down, put out the banners at the right time of year...

We have a treasurer who makes sure bills are paid and that the finances are sound, and there is someone who administers the planned giving system. The Church Administrator takes bookings for the church and the hall, prepares the Bulletin, prints, photocopies, liaises with all sorts of people...and probably does a whole lot more that I don't know about. Somebody else maintains the website, monitors the maintenance schedule, books and supervises the contractors, while others arrange working parties to repair chairs or make new banners. Others prepare notes for home groups, or check on those who are more vulnerable, monitor and liaise with our Missionary Links, run the safeguarding programme...

There are people who run other events different from the Sunday morning services; Thursday Fellowship, Art Group, Hymns and Tea, The Room – and there are Home Group leaders and someone who co-ordinates them. Then there's the

prayer ministry, the prayer chain, people who arrange special prayer events at other times, those who write and rehearse the drama including the Christmas and Easter events...there's even someone who edits, designs and sets the Church Magazine!

Members of the Parochial Church Council discuss and make decisions on a whole range of issues including many linked to the things mentioned above. And, as Martin notes in his report on PCC activities, there are still some vacancies that need to be filled...

There are probably many more 'mice' (and please forgive me if I haven't mentioned 'your' role), but they get on and do essential things when nobody's looking to keep St James' running. But...could you become a 'mouse'? Do you have a skill, an aptitude and a bit of spare time when you could help 'stitch a waistcoat'? Why not have a think about what needs doing and putting in even a little to help out. Talk to members of the PCC, or Fabian or the co-ordinators of different activities to find out how you can help. At the very least, let's say, "Thank you" to those 'mice' who scurry around to keep St James' Church running and pray for more people to come forward and take on some jobs that need doing 'behind the scenes'.



Thank you, lan

lan White, our wonderful church caretaker is heading for a well-earned retirement.

lan has been a huge part of the life of St James', accompanied by his faithful friend 'Henry the Hoover', since his appointment in 2017. Ian has kept our church spick and span, our toilets clean and tidy, our corridors mopped, kitchen shiny, windows polished, and our front doors finger print free. If we could count the chairs he's moved as the church has changed from worship space to blood donor clinic, to holiday club,



to exhibition or concert venue, it must be into the millions. Amidst all his work, he's always had time for visitors, making them feel welcome and valued, and our regular hirers have greatly appreciated his generous support and helpfulness. It's all been done with a smile and such good grace that he is an example to us all.

Of course, it's not 'Goodbye' as Ian and Cherie will be with us on a Sunday and at Thursday Fellowship, but it will be someone else sweeping up the crumbs and checking the cleaning supplies in future.

316 JOURNEY INTO LIFE

A couple of things this summer set me thinking about fulfilment. Before winning the Open Championship, the No.1 professional golfer in the world, Scottie Scheffler, astonished golf journalists when he said that his job (which has brought him fame and fortune) did not give him a fulfilling life. Other things, including his family were more important, he said.

Then, at this year's Taunton Flower Show, the Chaplaincy/ Street Pastors stall had the theme, 'Journey into Life'. Parked next to our stall was this double decker bus. The significance of 316 on the destination board is that in the Bible, in John chapter 3 verse 16, Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life." He adds, "No one comes to the Father [God] except through me."



Is 'the way, the truth and the life' the key to fulfilment? I think that behind Scottie Scheffler's remark, he probably thinks so. He is a committed Christian. I have realised that these three words: way, truth and life, are interconnected. The way to live

is what Jesus taught us, the truth is what we can trust, and this leads to the sort of life God wants for us and explains why he created the human race in the first place.

The Bible is where we find the truth that Jesus is talking about. It is not found by asking Google or generated by AI. Coincidentally, 316 appears again in 2 Timothy Chapter 3 v16. Paul writes, 'all scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realise what is wrong is our lives'.

We don't decide that kind of truth, we discover it by being changed and renewed internally, in our mind and soul. God has given us free will, which allows us to ignore spiritual truth if we want to, but we do so at our own risk. This is a different kind of truth from one where facts must be proved to be true; for example, the discovery that the world isn't flat, because ships don't fall off the horizon.

For all sorts of reasons the world tempts us to accept versions of the truth, often to derive commercial advantage. In our modern scientific age I think we are encouraged to believe that technology can solve all our problems, that destiny is in our hands and that we're able to shape the world for our own purposes.

Absolute truth does not change with time. If you had lived in a farming community in this country in medieval times, you would have gone to church to pray for the harvest. People literally lived or died by the harvest; it was crucial for survival. Starvation was the alternative. Expectant mothers used to go to church and pray to the shrine of St Margaret, the patron saint of motherhood, for a safe delivery of their child. Childbirth must have been an even more daunting ordeal without

the modern medicine we know today. You might say that people had a dependence on God which people in 21st century Britain would not recognise.

Today, communications through the internet move in seconds. Back then, they moved at the speed which someone could walk. A person travelling on a time machine into our modern world might think that there would be nothing humankind could achieve with all the progress in communications, agriculture, medicine, etc, that we have now. But would they notice that our world is in a mess? Or that some churches are curiously empty? Why is it that 1 in 2 of every person who uses mental health services today finds religion or spirituality helpful to manage their difficulties. People are looking for fulfilment, but where do they find it?

Many questions, for which our world seeks answers. There is, however, one truth. At its most basic, it is that we can trust in the goodness of God. That applied throughout history, applies today and will for future generations. Times change but God does not. As the Bible puts it, his faithful love endures forever.

If you are interested in finding answers to some of these questions, St James runs Alpha courses during the year to explain what the Christian faith is about and to give you the chance to ask about it. Keep an eye on our website to check for dates. The Bible says 'Seek and you will find'. What you hear may change your life and bring the fulfilment you are looking for.

Andy Hall

Alpha - what to expect The course runs for an initial 6 weeks you can just try the first one and see what you think. Connect You'll meet other people with questions just like yours. Watch We watch a 25 minute film together that's designed to inspire questions. Discuss There's an open discussion where you can share your thoughts in small groups. If you are interested about trying Alpha, get in touch by visiting our website http://stjamestaunton.org/alpha, emailing info@stjamestaunton.co.uk or contacting the office on 01823 272931 We are looking forward to seeing you there!



Land and Nature



In this series, we are looking at the new set of questions for the Eco Church survey, in particular, their impact on us as church and as individuals. We continue with the section looking at Land and Nature.

As usual, they begin with a commitment to the basic principles, asking if:

"Our church recognises the significant contribution churches can make to the UK's target of 30% of land protected for nature by 2030. We have established a plan to manage our land for nature to help us do this in the most impactful way."

We have long approached this aspect of our eco-journey with the understanding that such spaces are special in many ways. Our work has therefore been informed by groups such as Caring for God's Acre¹ and Wilder Churches². The latter is a ioint initiative between Somerset Wildlife Trust and the Diocese.

Back in 2020 one of our members was part of the team that produced the diocese's Environment and Climate Change policy.

We already have plans for our care of the churchyard and in time these will be joined by those looking at how we can most fruitfully use our outside spaces.

The first section – Biodiversity – asks us to consider how we encourage wildlife; how we manage the mowing of the grass areas and the development of trees and hedgerows. A final question looks at the way we look after the actual soil itself.

We have two bug hotels. The first was constructed by our own children's group back in 2019. The creation of the second formed part of a Leavers' Day activity for children from St James school. Working with the local council team, Sue Carpenter has put in place a detailed mowing regime – some areas are allowed to grow right though until the summer while the central area is cut regularly. The wildflower areas are scythed around the end of July, after we have harvested any seeds we need. Some of the 'edges' are left undisturbed throughout the autumn and winter. This will help any over-wintering wildlife.

https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/https://www.somersetwildlife.org/wilder-churches

The second group – Monitoring and citizen science – looks at three key strands:

- How we monitor and review the impact our plan for nature is having on biodiversity
- Whether we take part in citizen science projects such as the Big Garden Birdwatch and how we add data to national systems such as iNaturalist.
- How/if we engage with A Rocha's Target 25 project (or similar initiatives).

We keep a regular eye for what creatures and plants are on our property. Sue has currently made 299 entries into the iNaturalist citizen science database. Beyond that regular drip-feed of information we've hosted several 'bio-blitz' events – a comprehensive survey of wildlife carried out with the help of the Somerset Botany Group and other local experts. In 2021, they found 120 species of vascular plants (wildflowers, trees and ferns) in the churchyard alone.

Finally, the questions examine how people are involved both in nurturing and protecting our land but also through actions such as community litter-picks and the like. It asks about how we encourage people (including those beyond the church community) to access and enjoy our space and whether we use our ground to grow food. To close this section, it asks us to think through how we are planning and acting for land-based climate resilience.

It's some time now since our church council looked at ways to unlock the space around our church for both our own and the wider community around us. Much of that depends on access. At present, we can't progress that element. First, we will have to ensure that the newly (re)discovered tomb vault just east of the Link has been properly investigated. We now have two picnic tables (wheelchair accessible) both for our own use but also as a first step to making visitors welcome with – it is intended – elements that help them both gain from the peaceful space itself but also provide pointers and stepping stones for a spiritual journey.

Next time we'll look at the revised questions covering Community and Global Engagement.

Richard Carpenter

(Apologies to anyone whose work and initiatives I may have missed or misstated in putting these thoughts together - Richard)

These two poems extol the wonder, beauty and power of nature but also exort us to love the world God created for us. It seemed fitting to publish these during the time of year when we celebrate harvest, and now that we are more aware of the change in climate conditions and our responsibility to care for the world - Ed.

Hand in Hand with Mother Earth

From the ridge, her garment of fields sweeps away, hedge-stitched, a careful rib of Hawthorn & Beech, Blackthorn with their sloe-beads, more beautiful than any bride's train or embroidered panel; buzzards & gulls weave the thermals, call & cry; winds tumble;

the Holy Spirit hovered over the deep, God's vital songs of power mountain-sculpting, river-blessing, His hand in all we see:

step from her high fields to meadow-slopes, shaded in Copper Beech, peat streams flowing with their tones, the same orange-bronze in sunlight: Stonechats & Meadow Browns, iridescent beetles in purple & green; hills' arcs, sheep-clipped moors, clouds stroking their wooded flanks;

He chose silver for the Birch, gave different greens to every tree, carved bark to veins, wove ivy to shelter the wren & her brood;

in the lanes, her heavy-headed Foxgloves & Nettles, purple-pink Knapweed, & trailing Cow Parsley perfume the hedgerows; Bracken-layers screen deer; an old Oak sprouts Holly & Rowan, holds hands with saplings, dances slow; her petticoats of Sedge & May dip to Beech-mast & cool tributaries;

in each sepal & flower, each mushroom, dragonfly, a life given & irreplaceable: God's painstaking love in the purpose of all beings:

between gold & purple grasses, Stonecrop blushes over sandstone, the moor's cloak thick-pelted with undercoats of Thyme & trimmed with Heath Bedstraw's seed-pearl white; mosses bed crevices & soften turf, snugged shoulder-close with Fairy Flax, threads of leaf, lichen hair;

Christ walked & graced each blade of grass, each thorn, knew them, for He made us, from greatest to smallest, to live hand in hand with Him.

Philippa Johnson

Body of Nature

Lungs of oak & hair of willow, Smile of foxgloves, words like wheat, Eyes of oceans' blue-green billow: Help me tread this earth with Jesus' feet.

Brain of clouds & hope's hawk soaring, Shoulders broad like granite tor, Swan-strong neck to rise above things: Open me to treat Your world with awe.

Arms of beech that bend & shelter, Hands that nurture like sun's rise, Tongue of clear stream, love's truth-teller: May I see this world through Jesus' eyes.

Strength of stag & leap of brown hare, Diligence of honeybee, Knees of grass to bend in heart's prayer: Keep me giving as earth gives to me.

Skin of moss & flanks of heather,
Backbone strong as faithful hills,
Ribs of rowan, touch of feather:
Send me where Your Holy Spirit wills.

Rain's sweet kiss & lark's elation—
Grant me, Lord, to grasp the worth
of every part of Your creation:
Give me grace to love & serve Your earth.

Philippa Johnson

Narvest banners

In the previous edition of the Magazine, Sue Carpenter told us about the banners the team created for Pentecost.

This time she tells us about the inspiration for the harvest banners.

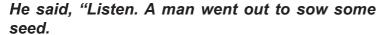
The creative people who designed and made the banners are another example of those who work 'behind the scenes' to enrich the life of our church at St James' and we thank them for it - see page 10

Our harvest banners will be on display for the harvest service in October. They are a series of six banners to celebrate the season.

The following passage from Mark chapter 4 was an inspiration for the banners. But also see John 12:24 and 2 Corinthians 9:10.

Jesus began to teach people by the sea again. Many people came to him. So, he got in a boat on the sea and sat down. The people were by the sea on the land.

He told the people stories and taught them many things.







"As he sowed it, some of the seed fell on the road. Birds came and ate the seed.

"Some seed fell on the stony ground. Not much ground covered the stones. The seed started to grow right away because it was not deep in the ground. When the sun began to shine, it was too hot for the new plants. They died because they had no roots. "Some seed fell among the weeds. The weeds grew up and made the new plants die. So no seeds grew on them. But some seed fell on good ground.

"That seed grew and the plants gave more seed. Some plants gave thirty seeds. Some gave sixty. And some gave a hundred."





Jesus said to them, "Everyone who has ears to hear, listen!"

Some of Jesus' disciples didn't understand the parable, so Jesus explained it to them. You can read this in verses 10 to 20 in the same chapter.

Do have a closer look at the banners in church and consider what the images may have to say to you...



Sue Carpenter

Your harvest contibutions of non-perishable foods we give to Open Door. See 'Focus on Mission' and read Susie's article (on page 20) about the history and day to day running of Open Door to see what a difference this makes - Ed.

Open Poor

All about Open Door

Open Door is a small charity based in Taunton. The charity exists to relieve need, hardship or distress in Taunton. In practise, this means providing a daytime hub for people who are street homeless; the people you often see in shop doorways at night, or pitching

a tent in various grassy areas around the town. We see a wide range of individuals and each story is unique. For some ill health meant they could no longer work and pay the rent and so they lost their home, others have had complex family backgrounds involving trauma and time in the care system. Yet others are living with addiction or PTSD and are unable to fit neatly into society.

At Open Door whatever their history we accept people for who they are and we value them as individuals. We offer respectful listening without judging and encourage appropriate use of language. We enable people to start on the journey of helping themselves whilst signposting them to appropriate services.

How did Open Door start?

We were founded in 1996 by local churches and originally operated from a small building in Wood Street. In 2009 we formed a new charity and moved into a purpose-built centre in the old school rooms of the Unitarian Church (1A Mount Street) with a lease running till 2132. The main building was built in the 1880s and unfortunately, we have now reached a point where our roof and the belltower are in need of renovation. The fundraising campaign for this has now raised enough for the first phase of our renovations to begin. The aim of this article is to give you an insight into what we do and how we work.





How is Open Door organised?

Open Door is overseen by a group of six trustees who are all volunteers. We employ three staff and would not be able to operate at all without our amazing team of over 35 volunteers. We are open every weekday morning

for our clients. During that time, they are offered a full cooked breakfast, a cooked lunch, the option of a shower, fresh clothing and the option to get their laundry done. They are also able to access a range of other support (see overleaf).

How is Open Door funded?

We could not operate at all without generous donations from individuals, community groups, churches, the council and various trusts. One of our trustees spends most of his time applying for grants which is extremely time consuming but often really worthwhile! Many people are aware of us at harvest time when local schools and churches donate non-perishable foods, toiletries and cleaning items. With careful planning these items will last us until the next harvest donations start arriving. As we give out clothing to clients, we are also grateful for people who donate clothes to us on a regular basis.

Some statistics

- 259 individual clients last year (some one-off visits)
- 4073 total visits
- over 5000 meals served
- · over 5000 pieces of clothing handed out
- 1300 showers taken
- 172 sleeping bags handed out
- 1300 tins of baked beans used!

Our volunteers...

...come from a range of backgrounds, many are retired and have previously worked in the health or education sectors, many are still working and take time out of their busy schedules to help us. One volunteer has been with us for around 17 years and loves to spend her whole shift washing up! Some prefer to be behind the scenes and will pick up donations for us in their cars, we also have a dedicated DIY volunteer who as you can imagine is always in demand. Volunteers sort donations, clean the bins out, do laundry, make hot drinks and meals, chat to clients, play puzzles and do art work. Recently the core group of volunteers have set up a fund-raising team and organised jumble sales, car boot sales and a sponsored walk. Their boundless energy and enthusiasm is incredible! Additionally, a lot of local businesses regularly send their employees for an afternoon to help us 'blitz' a particular area (for example helping to paint a room or clear out the loft or basement).

We have developed links with the local colleges and schools and we regularly have health and social care students doing work experience with us. We also often have students who volunteer longer term (every week for up to a year) as part of Duke of Edinburgh or similar schemes. All volunteers have a thorough induction prior to starting.

What some of our volunteers have said:

"Not only do we meet, work with and make lovely friends with other like-minded volunteers we also meet and get to know clients who, in addition to wanting a hot meal, clean clothes and a shower, often just need a chat."

"I have thoroughly enjoyed showing the clients how to do gel painting and engaging with them in different creative activities and seeing their creativity within the art work."

"Every moment spent helping someone with clothes, food, having a chat or simply sharing a warm smile is a reminder that even the smallest acts can change lives — including my own. In giving I've found a deeper sense of purpose and connection and have learned the true meaning of 'anything could happen to anyone'."

"...Whilst I cannot solve all the clients' problems if they leave a little happier than when they arrive, I know we have made a big difference..."

"....it can be a little bit crazy (in a nice way), funny, sad, super rewarding, emotional, uplifting, self-reflecting, poignant, heart rending and occasionally boring (when doing the laundry!)..."

"...it is a joy to see the friendship and community that develops between our clients. I gain so much by being a volunteer at Open Door"

And one of our clients said:

"Open Door helped me when I needed it the most. I was here every day whilst I was homeless and before long all of the lovely volunteers felt like family. Thanks to them I have finally got a place off of the streets and I can't speak highly enough of the service. Thank you so much for your kindness."

An invaluable hub

Although Open Door initially sought to meet the immediate physical needs of street homeless as detailed above, we now offer a huge range of support by acting as a hub for other agencies.

Over the last few years, we have seen the value of providing a place where clients know they can come to access services that they would otherwise miss out on. The range of agencies who visit on a regular basis are the council homeless outreach team; housing officers, the homeless nursing team, a GP, a podiatrist, an optician, a hairdresser, advisors from MIND, the Somerset Drug and Alcohol Service, SWAN advocacy, the mental health team, smoke free Somerset and Somerset wide integrated sexual health services (SWISH).

Working with Other Charities, Organisations and Businesses – Nothing wasted!

Over the last few years, we have sought to develop links with other charities and community groups in Taunton. We work closely with Refugee Aid from Taunton (RAFT). Donations often include a lot of unsuitable clothing or bedding (high heels, dresses, large sizes, night wear, duvets, sheets) which we are unable to use. Fortunately, this does not go to waste as we are able to forward it to RAFT or other charities and they can always make use of it.

We give and receive from the community larders depending upon whether we have a glut of donations or a lack. Nando's has become an important source of chicken and we are able to freeze what we collect from them and use it over time. The company Cook also regularly donate fantastic pies, moussakas and lasagnes. Several local supermarkets also donate food that would otherwise go to waste. The lovely clients at My Day collect our weekly order from Bookers, and also Green Days Day Care help us to pass on our unwanted donations to RAFT or other charity shops.

Open Door is an invaluable asset to our town providing support to homeless people that they would not be able to access elsewhere. Of course, we can't solve everyone's problems but with the help of a dedicated staff team and caring adaptable volunteers we are continually trying to make a difference in the lives of those we meet. If you would like to come and see what we do please get in touch with me or our lovely manager Emma (01823 271996) and we can arrange a visit.

Susie Peeler

Time for Pantomime?

Oh yes it is! And the the secret's out! It's.... **Sleeping Beauty**

We are looking to our wider St James' family, to those who would enjoy doing something different with a group of others. Would you like to join in the fun, bringing your skills, talents and time? All Ages welcome. We will be starting rehearsals in earnest at the beginning of **September**, mainly on a Saturday afternoon, for production in the last week of **January 2026**.

Don't worry if you're not an actor or a dancer, we need lots of different people involved in the chorus, to help with lighting, sound, wardrobe, seamstresses, administration, catering, front-of-house, backstage, make-up, etc. Do talk to **Jenny Wakefield, Ruth Crooks, Susie Peeler** or **Richard Carpenter** if you want to know more.

When St James' does pantomime, it's the church-at-play inviting our local community with the same welcome and warmth we offer on a Sunday.



Two of our previous pantomimes – above Jack and the Beanstalk and below Aladdin and those unforgettable sheep from Stable Manners in 2023





DO IT ANYWAY

Some of you may remember Jane Dean, a former member of our church. She has now moved away from Taunton. Some years ago, we hosted a Christian Fellowship group where each of us shared thoughts about faith and life. This poem 'Do it Anyway' was one of Jane's contributions. Apparently, it was found on a wall in Mother

Theresa's house. Reading it now, you can see why this poem appealed to Jane.. People are often unreasonable, illogical, And self-centred: Forgive them anyway. If you are kind, people may accuse you Of selfish, ulterior motives: Be kind anyway. If you are successful, you will win some False friends and some true enemies: Succeed anyway. If you are honest and frank, People may cheat you: Be honest and frank anyway. What you spend years building, someone Could destroy overnight; Build anyway. If you find serenity and happiness, They may be jealous; Be happy anyway. The good you do today, People will often forget tomorrow: Do good anyway. Give the world the best you have, And it may never be enough; Give the world the best you've got anyway. You see, in the final analysis, It is between you and God; It was never between you and them anyway.



The news on our screens and in our inboxes often seems overwhelming. With war in Ukraine that seems to have no end in sight; war and humanitarian events in Gaza and the Middle East seem to be spiralling out of control, Yemen has gone out of focus but the impact of conflict is very present for the people there, recent reports from the Sudan reveal news of unimaginable atrocities and suffering... We are often left feeling powerless and tempted to reach for the TV remote to take us to a different form of reality. However, there is something we can do. We may not be able to get involved personally but through our support for actively involved missions we can:

- Increase our awareness
- Pray for the work on going
- Offer tangible support in terms of giving or fund raising
- · Lobby our own government on issues that they can do something about



In September we focus on **Samaritan's Purse** – their Shoebox campaign is well known for sending physical gifts of love to children who are caught up in the trauma of war, natural disaster or general

need. Sending those gifts with love and prayer can be powerful for the recipients, but Samaritan's purse also uses its medical and humanitarian resources to parachute in (almost literally) to hot spots where disaster has struck. See their website for their latest news or talk to Roger Fenton as a former worker with Samaritan's purse.





In October, we think particularly of **Open Door**, the charity that serves those who, for all sorts of reasons, have become homeless or roofless and are needing care and support to help them get back on their feet. You can read more in Susie Peeler's article about Open Door (page 20), a charity we support as a church with our Harvest contributions. Maybe you could consider

if you can give money, your own gifts or prayer. As Susie explains, it takes a lot of volunteers' time and cash to keep the centre going, so any help we can give is much appreciated.

Do check out their website, Facebook page or talk to Susie Peeler or Jonathan Sladden for more up-to-date information.



Tearfund is our focus in November and they too are working with churches and local communities to provide support, not just for the emergencies but

helping communities become more sustainable – employment programmes and safe water provision can make a huge difference to people's lives bringing hope in the midst of hopelessness. Do pick up a Prayer Diary and/or magazine, which are always available at the back of the church. Check out their website for the latest news and developments or ask Sue Doyle, she'd love to tell you about their work.

In November, Tearfund's annual national fundraising event, the Big Quiz, takes place. Many of you have taken part in previous years – Sue is considering plans for an event this year...look out for more details nearer the time.

Jenny Wakefield

Heritage Open Days

Ever wondered about the people who worshipped in our church years ago and what they were like?

The team involved in Heritage Open Day have been delving into the stories of our church and would love to share them with you. We've discovered things about Blackberry Jam Sundays, Bicycle Gymkhanas, tower demolition, organists lock-in, Fundraising Bazaars, removing the pews, doing hands on archaeology and more.



If you're over 8 there's there are great views from of the top of the tower. Come and say, "Hello" to Tom on his perch and have a pull on a bell rope. There's a 'virtual tower tour' planned for those unable to face the stairs!

So, we encourage you to come along. Meet 'Prior Stephen', explore the tower, spend your pennies at the Bazaar, have tea and cake with Mrs Redfern, or play in the children's corner...there's something for everyone!

This is a great opportunity to bring your friends and find out more about our church which has been part of the community for over 850 years.



School News St James' Church School

September sees the time for many to be preparing for the new school year; pupils, teachers, nursery providers, administrators, cleaners, dinner ladies, governors, parents, carers, and anyone who volunteers or is involved. Please pray for the intergenerational army that is dusting off their



curriculum plans, stocking up on supplies, checking if shoes and school uniform still fit, worrying about change of school or classes or juggling the schedule to see if they can manage work and pick up.



For the school, the last year was a proud one. Ofsted had been anticipated for a long time and when it came the school was recognised for being welcoming and inclusive and was praised for having a 'strong community ethos'. For those of us at church who had some involvement with school last year, we would certainly echo those sentiments and have felt included in that community.

So, what's been happening? School services at Christmas, Easter and end of term allowed us to share some of the excitement that children feel as part of their preparation. The school leavers' service at the end of term is still fresh in our minds, when Year 6 celebrated the end of their 7 years in primary and looked towards a new adventure in their next school. The service was full of memories, thankfulness and hilarity as they watched the antics of their teachers in the 'Goodbyes' video. For the team of about 20 volunteers it was a real joy to enable the children to have a fun day out of school, climbing the tower, playing the organ, enjoying lunch together and 'chilling out' doing lots of activities, but feeling a sense of belonging in a place they had been coming to since they were knee high.

Going in to school to take assemblies, read with children, spend time in one to one activities, or being invited to join in a museum or theatre trip or get a soaking on an end of term outing (!), is a huge privilege.

Our prayer meetings, twice a term, are open to anyone who has an interest in the school and would like to pray for the school. 8 a.m. is a bit of an ask and not everyone makes it, but praying for the school communities we know is something we can do anytime.

Thank you, St James School, for the partnership we have with you. God bless you for 2025/26 academic year!

Jenny Wakefield

Quote from Pope Leo X1V

"Brothers, sisters...

I speak to you, especially to those who no longer believe, no longer hope, no longer pray, because they think God has left.

To those who are fed up with scandals, with misused power, with the silence of a Church that sometimes seems more like a palace than a home.

I, too, was angry with God.

I, too, saw good people die, children suffer, grandparents cry without medicine.

And yes... there were days when I prayed and only felt an echo.

But then I discovered something:

God doesn't shout. God whispers.

And sometimes He whispers from the mud, from pain, from a grandmother who feeds you without having anything.

I don't come to offer you perfect faith.

I come to tell you that faith is a walk with stones, puddles, and unexpected hugs.

I'm not asking you to believe in everything.

I'm asking you not to close the door. Give a chance to the God who waits for you without judgment.

I'm just a priest who saw God in the smile of a woman who lost her son... and yet she cooked for others.

That changed me.

So if you're broken, if you don't believe, if you're tired of the lies... come anyway. With your anger, your doubt, your dirty backpack.

No one here will ask you for a VIP card.

Because this Church, as long as I breathe, will be a home for the homeless,

and a rest for the weary.

God doesn't need soldiers.

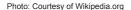
He needs brothers.

And you, yes, you...

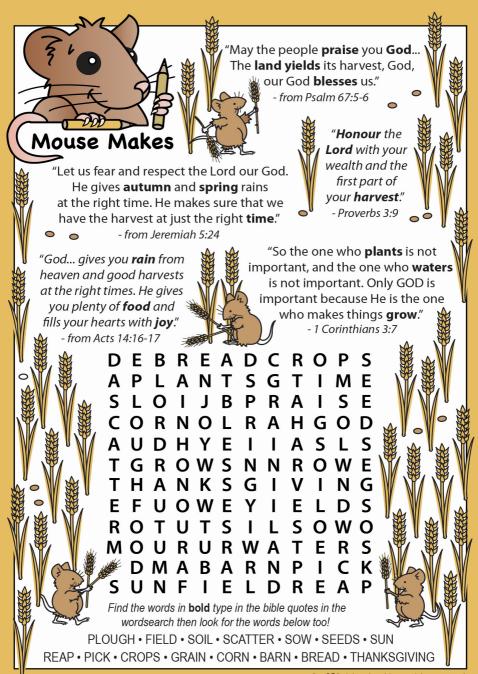
are one of them."

Robert Prevost (Leo XIV)

I'm grateful to Tessa Smith for sending this in - Ed.



Young People's Pages



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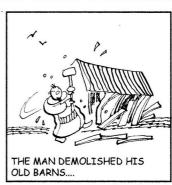












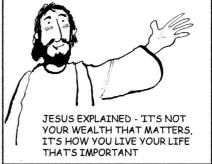












Crossword

Across

- 1 'A little later someone else saw Peter and said, "You are one of them" (Luke 22:58) (4)
- 3 Giving (1 Peter 2:5) (8)
- 9 They came to Jerusalem seeking an infant king (Matthew 2:7) (3,4)
- 10 'An athlete... does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the ' (2 Timothy 2:5) (5)
- 11 Pacifist, temperance advocate, open-air preacher, leading 20th- century Methodist, Donald (5)
- 12 'Come quickly to , O Lord my Saviour' (Psalm 38:22) (4,2)
- 14 'The God of Abraham, — , the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus' (Acts 3:13) (5,3,5)
- 17 Sear by intense heat (Revelation 16:8) (6)
- 19 'It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust — ' (Psalm 118:8) (2,3)
- 22 Goods (Nehemiah 13:15) (5)
- 23 i.e. train (anag.) (7)
- 24 Surrounding area (Luke 24:50) (8)
- 25 'Righteousness will be his and faithfulness the sash round his waist' (Isaiah 11:5) (4)

Down

- 1 Elegant and creative (Exodus 31:4) (8)
- 2 'Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all —, but we will all be changed' (1 Corinthians 15:51) (5)
- 4 'I... delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your — is' (Colossians 2:5) (5,2,6)
- 5 Enlist (2 Samuel 24:2) (5)
- 6 Of the Muslim faith (7)
- 7 Sharp intake of breath (Job 11:20) (4)
- 8 Woven cloth (Ezekiel 16:13) (6)
- 13 Plentiful (Romans 5:17) (8)
- 15 CIA char (anag.) (7)
- 16 Paul and Silas stopped him committing suicide after an earthquake in Philippi (Acts 16:27–28) (6)
- 18 One of the ingredients in the making of incense for the Lord (Exodus 30:34) (5)
- 20 Episcopal headwear (5)
- 21 Inhabitant of, say, Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia or Bulgaria (4)

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If lawyers are disbarred and clergymen defrocked, doesn't it follow that. . . electricians could be delighted, musicians denoted, cowboys deranged, models deposed, and dry cleaners depressed?

Likewise, bedmakers might be debunked, bulldozer operators degraded, organ donors delivered, software engineers detested, and underwear manufacturers debriefed? And won't all composers one day decompose? On a more positive note, perhaps we can hope politicians will someday be devoted...

DOWN: 1, Artistic. 2, Sleep. 4, Faith in Christ. 5, Enrol. 6, Islamic. 7, Gasp. 8, Fabric. 13, Abundant. 15, Archaic. 16, Jailer. 18, Resin. 20, Mitre. 21, Slav.

1, Also. 3, Offering. 9, The Magi. 10, Rules. 11, Soper. 12, Help me. 14, Isaac and Jacob. 17, Scorch. 19, In man. 22, Loads. 23, Inertia. 24, Vicinity. 25, Belt.

United Beach Missions

A Week at Looe

United Beach Missions, known as 'Beach Team' on the beach, run at different locations around the country; in the West Country they are held at Lyme Regis, Looe and St Ives. The base for Looe was Grace Community

Church in Morval. It was easy to find, park and sleep as it is three miles from the beach.

On a typical day, we got set up for games at 11.15 am followed by Bible story. After lunch on the beach we did an afternoon programme of an hour of songs, quizzes, stories and a competition.

It was a small team of eleven, mostly young with some 'first timers' but they went out on the beach and invited families; and the children came and had good conversations.

We did an evening event at 7 pm Tuesday and Thursday. After some rain in the afternoon, twelve families enjoyed games on Thursday evening and ten stayed until the end. The tide allowed us to do a tug of war on Friday afternoon.

I was able to go onto the prom and people enjoyed chatting. I was able to share my story of finding faith in adult life and the difference that Jesus' love makes to my life.

The advantage of a small team was being able to chat, encourage and inspire each other.

What was good? One lad brought lots of small toy ducks. When he told stories for the under-fives, they got lost or buried in the sand (the ducks not the children!). They also appeared in odd places at the base camp, including the shelf in the ladies' loo! It was like a symbol of fun and joy, and I was given one to take home.

Lilian

Rev John Wesley, an Anglican Priest is well known as the founder of the Methodist Church.

This list, based on his 18th century writings and on display at the Wesley museum attached to the New Room Methodist Chapel in Bristol, couldn't be more relevant for the 21st century...!

John Wesley's Manifesto

- Reduce the gap between rich people and poor people
- 2. Help everyone to have a job
- Help the poorest, including introducing a living wage
- 4. Offer the best possible education
- Help everyone to feel they can make a difference
- 6. Promote tolerance
- 7. Promote equal treatment for women
- Create a society based on values and not on profits and consumerism
- 9. End all forms of slavery
- 10. Avoid getting into wars
- 11. Share the love of God with everyone
- 12. Care for the environment

The PCC has been discussing...

Here's a summary of the main things the Parochial Church Council looked at in June and July (the PCC doesn't meet in August).

PCC Vacancies

Following the Annual Meeting, there are still three vacancies on the PCC. This is a continuation of the situation we had last year. It would be wonderful to have some fresh faces on the council, especially younger members. Some of us can remember being on the PCC in our 20's, and (gently) challenging some of the old ideas. Fifty years on, we need to reinvigorate the PCC again! How about it? Or is there someone you know who might be persuaded to give it a try?

Youth Worker Internship

The PCC has been 'feeling its way' regarding recruiting paid staff to lead our work with children and young people. In 2021 we were unsuccessful in finding a Children and Families Worker, but in 2024 we were pleased to appoint Rachel Haddell as Children's Church Pastor. Since then our focus has been on providing leadership for our growing number of older children. This led to considering an internship for a student from South West Youth Ministries (SWYM), and this has resulted in an initial one-year placement starting in September. At the time of writing, Safer Recruitment procedures are in hand, and we look forward to welcoming Matilda in due course. This is, of course, just the start, and we need to keep our 'eyes on the ball' in developing and embedding this ministry in the years ahead.

Children and Young People's Work

Rachel Haddell reported about Children's Church, acknowledging the commitment from the team of leaders. There are between 20 and 30 children attending each week. It is a structured time, which the children find helpful. The team provides a supportive and welcoming environment for families, some of whom stay with the children while others move back to the church. 50 people gathered for the annual Family Breakfast, and other events are being considered. WhatsApp is the main means of communicating with families, with Facebook being explored.

Steve and Karen Sancto reported on the growth of the new Youth Church group for older children who are making the transition to secondary school. This meets once a month as a break-out from Children's Church, and there have also been a number of social events, for which PCC funding has been much appreciated. Some older children have

joined in and the time is right to expand the number of times the group can meet each month. More children will become eligible to join the group, but it is not expected that the numbers will be as many as this year.

David Jordan reported on the one-to-one mentoring carried out by a team of five church members (soon to be six) at St James Church School. This operates with the framework provided by TLG (Transforming Lives for Good). While details of the individual contacts could not be given, the overall conclusion was that it had been a good and positive year.

Safeguarding

A diocesan system called the 'Parish Dashboard' keeps track of how well churches meet their safeguarding requirements. We are generally 'up to speed', but it is difficult to keep a clean sheet due to training needing to be refreshed periodically. It would take pressure off the Safeguarding Team if everyone could respond promptly to requests to book courses, as they spend a lot of time keeping track of this and having to issue reminders.

Miscellaneous Matters

- We continued to look at how to meet pastoral needs. A new Pastoral Visiting Team will be commissioned in the autumn, after which we need to review other gaps in our provision. Restarting the Prayer Diary is on the agenda.
- At the time of writing we are about to interview for a new caretaker. Watch this space!
- Finances continue as expected, but we are still in a deficit situation. We are hoping
 that after this year's work on the tower, annual survey and maintenance will slow the
 rate of deterioration.
- The Church of England's Parish Giving Scheme is being examined as an option for our stewardship giving, alongside the current Standing Orders method.
- A small group is looking at revising the rates we charge to hire our premises.
- The PCC continues to keep its policy documents under review. In this period, we looked at the PCC Standing Orders and the Data Protection Policy (available on the website – look for 'Your Data and How We Look After It').

Martin Wakefield

Current PCC Members

A reminder of the current members of the Parochial Church Council If you'd like to raise any issues with the PCC or find out more about what the Council does, do talk to any of these people



Rev Fabian Wuyts Vicar



Nigel Bright and Fiona Hope Church Wardens





Richard Carpenter



Roger Fenton



Mike Gillingham



Vacancy



Lyn Jones



Vacancy



David Jordan



Jane Osborne Price



Chris Rickard



Richard Sainsbury



Johan Smit



Vashti Smit



Vacancy



Jenny Wakefield



Martin Wakefield

photos: Richard Sainsbury

Obituaries

Kathryn Clarke

Kathryn's funeral was held at St James' on Friday 8th August, lead mainly by her two sons-in-law.

Roger and Kathryn Clarke became members of St James' in the 1970s through Don and Dawn Gilkes, who later left when Don was ordained. Roger became a lay reader and, with Kathryn, lead a lively youth group which attracted a large number of whom several attended the funeral. At this stage Kathryn mainly supported Roger's efforts.



When Roger was unfortunately killed by a reckless driver, Kathryn was left feeling stunned. On her own she summoned up the courage to visit her daughter, Nicola, and husband Gareth in China. Kathryn soon started her own ministry, leading a house group, becoming a Reader, and going overseas to a number of countries in Europe and Africa with evangelistic groups under the umbrella of Youth With A Mission.

Kathryn suffered a long illness and was supported by a number of friends from the church and her neighbours, first at home and then in a nursing home.

If you'd like to make a donation to Youth With A Mission in memory of Kathryn, contact E White & Son Funeral Directors, 138-139 East Reach, Taunton, TA1 3HN – 01823 272183

Kathryn Clarke 13th December 1944 - 4th July 2025

Anne Tuckley

Around the same time, we heard the sad news of the death of Anne Tuckley. Anne was a more recent member of St James. She attended school at Worthing Sixth Form College and studied for her MA in Health Studies and Education at the University of Brighton. She worked as a nurse tutor and continued to work part time from home, even through much of her illness.

Anne moved to Taunton in July 2019. For a while she sang with the Worship Team and over the last few years she supported the work of the Prayer Ministry team and ran the Prayer Chain ministry. She was a creative lady and enjoyed needlework and crafts and made banners for the church and helped with refurbishing the hall chairs.

Anne leaves two daughters, Ruth and Lisa, and three grandchildren. She was able to attend Lisa's wedding, despite being very ill, and to see the arrival of her grandson last year. She had a big 70th birthday celebration with family and friends in March this year, which she organised herself

For her birthday in 2021, Anne asked for donations to Cancer Research UK. Throughout her illness, bravely born, she never wavered in her strong faith.

Anne Tuckley 16th March 1955 - 10th August 2025

PARISH CONTACTS



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email: rogerifenton@gmail.com

Facilities (buildings & technical) Co-ordinator:
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email: martin@scoopscoop.co.uk

Pastoral Care Co-ordinator: currently vacant

Worship Co-ordinator: Richard Lucas 01823 412942 email: richardlucas.net@gmail.com

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Parish Safeguarding Officer: Jenny Wakefield 01823 277318 email: jenny@scoopscoop.co.uk

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