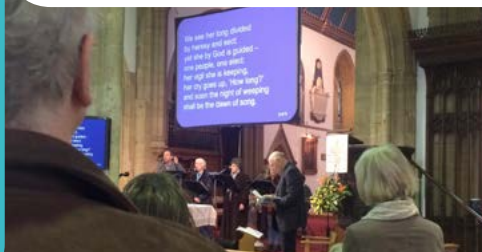
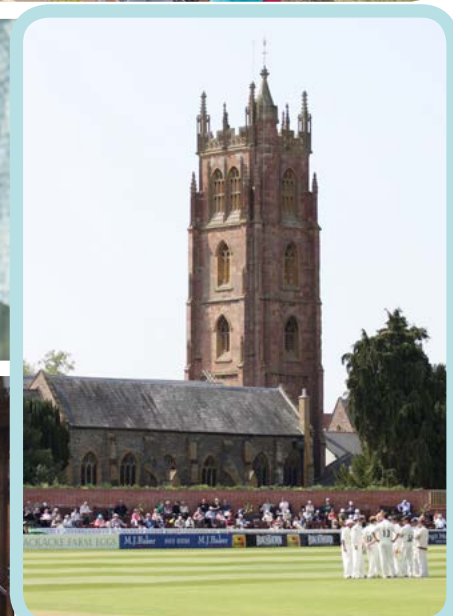


Parish Profile



We seek to know Christ
better & to make Him
better known



St James Church Taunton

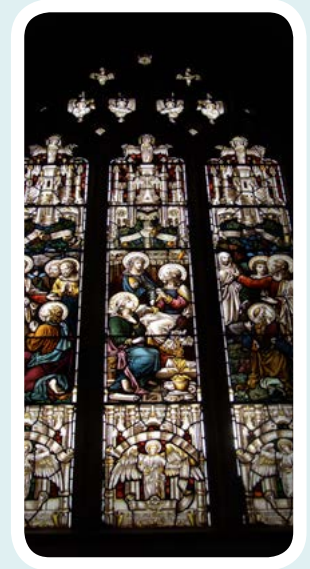
Parish Profile

SUMMARY AND WELCOME

St James is a lively, growing, town centre church with a tradition of every member ministry and collaborative leadership, biblical belief, a commitment to prayer and a desire to serve God. We are a single parish benefice in the centre of Taunton, the county town of Somerset, with a well maintained historic building, good on-site facilities, sound finances and a spacious modern vicarage.

We are looking for a person of deep personal faith, a strategic thinker who can work collaboratively, enabling and empowering others, and maintaining the church's growth, both in numbers and in faith.

We invite you to read our profile, to reflect, pray and discern whether St James and Taunton are where God is calling you to serve.



Diocese & Deanery



Living the story. Telling the story.

St James forms part of the Diocese of Bath & Wells and lies within the Taunton Deanery, itself part of the Taunton Archdeaconry.

The Diocese has discerned three priorities for action with the intention of having them at the centre of diocesan life so that each and every one of us 'live and tell the story of Jesus'.

- To place mission and evangelism at the heart of everything that we do
- To realign our ministry resources towards mission
- To identify, develop and use the gifts of all our people

These aim to reflect the way in which the vision can be put into practice and to address the challenges faced across the diocese. A summary - Shaping our Future can be found here.

The diocese has recently gained funding for the appointment of a number of pioneer ministers and an application for one to work within the Taunton Deanery (attached to the South Quantock benefice) has recently been successful.

The Deanery itself includes all the town parishes together with, in most directions, a ring of the local villages. Having completed an initial Mission Action Plan in 2015, it is now part way through a process of revision and update.

In response to God's immense love for us, we seek to be God's people living and telling the story of Jesus

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ST JAMES CHURCH VACANCY PRAYER

Heavenly Father,
Thank you for blessing our church and town
through the ministry of our previous vicars,
thank you that we have grown as a church in so many ways,
help us to stay close and true to your calling
during this time of vacancy.

Lord Jesus,
We know that you have plans for us
and that these plans are good.
We ask now that you will help us to share responsibility,
grow in faith, love one another, care for those in need,
reach out to others, and welcome newcomers.

Holy Spirit,
Please guide those who are seeking the right person for us,
and those who are seeking the right place for their ministry,
that together we may discover your way for the future
and see your kingdom grow.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

What makes St James, St James?

Knowing Jesus & making Him better known

WELCOMING

St James is known as an alive and welcoming church – this stems from our relationship with Jesus and our focus on him as the centre of all we are and do. We are a family of the followers of Jesus, who are seeking to know him more through the promptings of his Spirit and by his Word. We are evangelical with members from a variety of Christian traditions; building on what unites us and respecting our differences.

BIBLICAL BELIEF

Firm in our beliefs, we teach the Bible and allow God's word to challenge our beliefs and behaviours. As one member described it, "Our preference is to be more challenged than stroked". Home groups give us space and time for further reflection on what this means for us personally.

“ Church is what happens when people encounter the risen Jesus and commit themselves to sustaining and deepening that encounter in their encounter with each other ”

Rowan Williams

EVERY-MEMBER MINISTRY

Lay participation and leadership across all areas of church life is a key element of St James. We firmly believe that every Christian has a calling and a sending, each as valuable as any other. There is little sense of hierarchy though much of responsibility, both to others and to each other; leadership is very service-centred and servant-oriented.

We serve others beyond the church because that is what Jesus did and called his followers to do. To show authentic Christianity encourages others to want to know more of the transforming love of Jesus. We recognise that we have a God of mission, who is already active and who wants us to go into the world around and join in with what he is already doing. We all spend some time on our own missionary front-line.

“ Church gathered exists to equip us for church scattered ”

Graham Cray

CHARACTER

We have a focus on being – mission and prayer are both part of what we are; not just things we do. We are a church prepared to take risks with change; we are relaxed; we have a sense of humour; we do pantomime.

“ To grow the church, to seek the common good, to reimagine ministry ”

Justin Welby

Vision - Where we believe God is leading us

As the strategic body in the church, the PCC has been reviewing priorities and where it believes God is leading us. Our church is blessed by many ministries which comprise the whole and a sense of common purpose to follow God's leading. This section summarises some of the main areas of that vision, and we look forward to developing it further with the fresh insights and leadership that a new vicar would bring.

RECOGNISING WHAT IS GOOD

We all have to start somewhere, and pursuing a vision for the future does not mean losing sight of what we already value:

- Our focus is on Jesus as the centre of all we are and not on any form of words to which people must agree or conform. Our aim is to know Christ better and make Him better known.
- We look for the words of scripture to speak through the Spirit's leading to our everyday lives.
- A high level of lay involvement including active roles and leadership in our services
- We will continue and grow our service to those in need around us.
- We continue to support the work of inter-church organisations across the town, acting as a bridge between different denominations.
- We are family, relationship centred, who understand that Christianity is knowing God personally through Jesus Christ, while encompassing and valuing each other's views.

CALLING & MISSION

We are looking to build stepping-stones out into the community and recognise that God is at work there before we even start to look. We see that the church today must exist in a world where it cannot expect privilege nor claim a right to moralise and where many we encounter will simply not accept that we can point them to 'the truth'.

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,
1 Peter 3:15

Looking to the future, we hope to develop our potential to bring together churches and other initiatives across the town, ensuring that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

We aim to work within the vision set out in the General Synod Report *Setting God's People Free* and recognise that every person and their calling from God is of equal intrinsic worth and should be valued and supported.

We particularly affirm the value of women's ministry in all roles and every level of the church.

Vision - Where we believe God is leading us

INTENTIONAL ABOUT GROWTH

At the heart of the vision for us in the coming years is the idea of growth. We are intentional about St James becoming bigger, and are open to different ways to enable this. We are at an important stage in the development of the church, having experienced a period of growth and development of structures to better coordinate our work, and are keen to keep growing and developing. This could lead us to develop our worship, building and facilities to meet the changing needs of both the congregation and wider community. There is also a desire to ensure that diversity in worship services can help a wide cross-section of people to become part of the community at St James. This could include developing Fresh Expressions to reach out to specific communities. In order to grow we need to develop our programme to offer different routes in for those who are seeking, and we need to be challenged about the ways we currently do things so we can accommodate a broader range of people.

We are good at what we already do, but are less certain about adapting to accommodate the needs of those who might need a different route into faith.

GROWING IN FAITH

Growth within the church should not just focus on numbers, but also on the depth and quality of faith. We want to be a church where people are supported in growing closer to God, through prayer, worship, Bible study, challenging teaching,

supportive fellowship and the movement of the Spirit. As an active church we can tend to focus on doing things and being busy. It is a blessing that church members want to be active, but sometimes we need to encourage each other spiritually and deepen our relationship with Jesus, to pause in the presence of God before diving into the work we feel called to do. There is also a need to strengthen how we help new Christians to mature in faith, to support our young people to develop an identity rooted in Christ, and to ensure all in the church community feel cared for and valued.

STRUCTURES

As our size grows we continually reflect on our structures, especially those for communication, to ensure that all feel included. Home groups have been a great support to many in the church, and will continue to hold a central role.


We need to improve our use of social media and other electronic communication, particularly in reaching out to digitally savvy, younger generations. Leadership is delegated and devolved to provide effective delivery with accountability.

We recognise that our church could provide good opportunities as a training parish, and would be open to exploring that if the future incumbent felt it was appropriate.

RELATIONSHIP

All of this is based on what we would describe as intentional relationship: with Jesus, with each other, with those around us and as both a community and as individuals with our Father as prayer underpins all we do.

Who we are looking for

1. A priest of deep personal faith, open to the work of the Holy Spirit, rooted in scripture and prayer, who can help us as followers of Jesus to grow in faith: a Christian who can model the disciple's life.
 2. A leader who is an enabler, encourager and strategic thinker. We want every member to be active and involved and we need a minister who can identify and use our gifts, helping us to recognise God's calling for each of us.
 3. We are looking for a person who takes joy in sharing leadership and responsibility. With a deep-seated tradition here of every member ministry, you will be comfortable delegating to others and unlocking their potential.
 4. You will be able to use the delegated structures to give yourself the space and time to see the big picture and act as a vision keeper, keeping everything moving in the right direction.
 5. You will work with the PCC and co-ordinators to continuously explore God's vision for the church's mission and ministry, prayerfully leading and steering the church to best serve; helping us to discern needs and priorities.
 6. Our church has been steadily growing in recent years, and we need a person who is intentional about church growth, applying appropriate strategies and structures to support this.
 7. As God brings new people to faith, we will need a minister who can inspire both new and established Christians to mature in their discipleship and ensure support can be given to our young people as they transition from childhood to teen to adult.
- 
8. We also need someone who can think through the demands of supporting the growing children's and families work and develop the relationship with the church school while also being mindful of the needs of the older members of the congregation.
 9. We are looking for a leader who can relate to a diverse range of people, and who will see the theological breadth in the congregation as a reflection of the richness of God's Kingdom and a strength to be embraced.
 10. You will need to be comfortable working with other church leaders and different denominations, appreciating the role St James plays as a link between different Christian traditions and organisations in the town.
 11. As a church we take safeguarding seriously, and will need our next vicar to be fully supportive of safeguarding in all aspects of church life.
 12. You will bring a creative, collaborative and structured approach to planning and leading worship; sensitive to different needs and traditions within the congregation while also accessible to those for whom mainstream church is unfamiliar.

What we can offer you

Ministry is a two-way process, and we want to support our incumbent as we work together as a team to fulfil our part of God's mission and ministry in Taunton. We recognise that being Vicar of St James is a substantial role, with plenty of exciting opportunities but don't want you to become so immersed in the work of the Lord that you lose sight of the Lord of the work.

As an active church with a strong commitment to every member ministry you will have church members keen to work in many different ways. While you will develop the strategic vision with the PCC, you will liaise with volunteer co-ordinators to let you delegate significant areas of work. The PCC works well together and is used to taking a strategic view, and all major roles in the parish (churchwarden, PCC, etc.) are currently filled.

St James is a single parish benefice with one church, one main Sunday service, one PCC and one building. Our finances are solid, we pay the Parish Share in full, and our building and facilities are in a good state of repair with a rolling programme of maintenance.

The licenced ministry team includes three Readers in active ministry and a retired priest with PTO, and several others who help where they can. We do not see ministry as something reserved just for those holding a licence, but a calling laid on every member of God's church, and there are many lay members who give sacrificially of their own time.

If you don't know Taunton or Somerset, we hope you will discover what a special place it is to live and work in. Taunton is small enough to be

friendly but big enough for you to pursue different interests outside of church life. Somerset has an easy-going feel to it and is blessed with rolling hills, open moorland, coast and much more.

With a structure of co-ordinators and a church office to field queries we will ensure that your day off and time away is respected. We recognise that the demands of a clerical post need time and space for prayer, study and reflection, and having down time to recharge your batteries.

Finally, we can also offer a modern, spacious vicarage in an excellent state of repair in a quiet location and close to good local schools.

There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his.

Hebrews 4:9-10

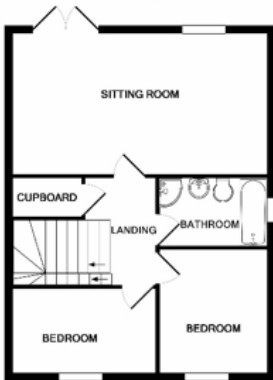


The Vicarage

The vicarage is a modern and spacious five bedroom townhouse in a quiet residential location about a mile from the church building. The house is in a good state of repair and is equipped with gas central heating and integrated appliances. There is an enclosed rear garden as well as off road parking and a double garage. There are good meeting facilities at the church which would assist in keeping the house a family home only if preferred. The house is close to good schools and French Weir Park and Longrun Meadow are nearby



GROUND FLOOR
APPROX. FLOOR
AREA 585 SQ. FT.
(54.8 SQ. M.)



1ST FLOOR
APPROX. FLOOR
AREA 590 SQ. FT.
(54.8 SQ. M.)

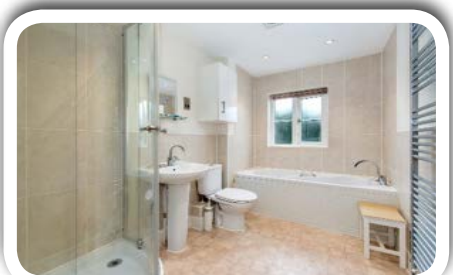


2ND FLOOR
APPROX. FLOOR
AREA 592 SQ. FT.
(55.0 SQ. M.)

TOTAL APPROX. FLOOR AREA 1772 SQ. FT. (164.7 SQ. M.)
Measurements are approximate. Not to scale. Intended for purposes only.
Made with Metreplan ©2017



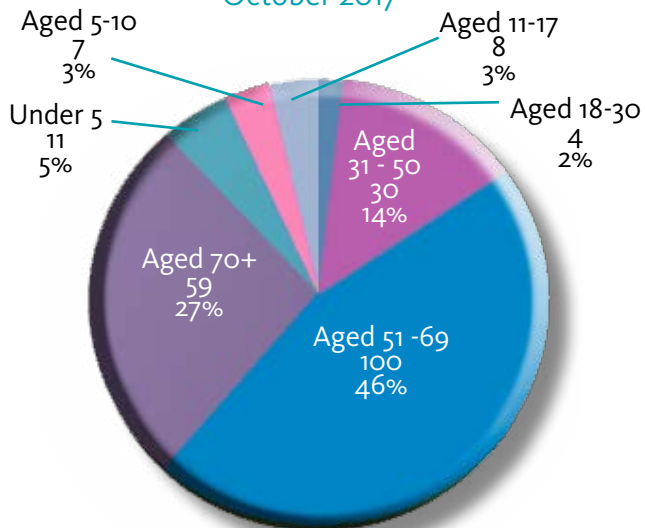
The ground floor comprises a study, a dining room and a large kitchen/breakfast room with a utility room. There is side access to the property via an external door into the utility room. The first floor contains a sitting room, two bedrooms and a bathroom with the remaining bedrooms on the second floor. The master bedroom is located on the second floor and has en-suite shower and dressing rooms attached.



Who We Are

St James Age Profile

October 2017



group and House of St Martin.

While this growth has been an affirmation of our direction, we have not been as strong in following up on those members who have stopped coming for whatever reason, either to reconnect them with St James or to make sure that their spiritual needs are being met elsewhere.

While the mainstay of the congregation is among those in their late 50's and older, we are seeing growth among families, particularly those with young children. This gives us a diverse congregation, and members appreciate the intergenerational mix. We could do more to reach those in their 20's-30's.

The growth in the number of young families in our congregation has been encouraging. Around ten years ago we had very few young families, and this has been an area of prayer and concerted activity. We also have a number of children and adults with special needs, and their presence and contribution to the church enriches the life of the community.

We have many people involved in volunteer roles in the church, and we would like to support each other to not only use our gifts in the church but also out in the community. We have been following courses such as the *LICC Frontline* material in our home groups, and are at a point where this groundwork can be turned into action within the local community. We recognise that we do not have an explicit process for helping church members discern their calling, whether in the church setting or in roles outside the church.

DATA ON ATTENDANCE STATISTICS

In 2017, there were two weddings, two adult baptisms, two child baptisms and five funerals. Further statistical information about St James can be found on the diocesan website [here](#)."

The Congregation

As a well-positioned town centre church, St James draws its members from across the town and outlying areas.

The Sunday morning attendance is between 120-150 and the Electoral Roll stands at just under 200 members. This figure is reflected in the 2017 October count, with a similar number of congregation members classing themselves as regulars. One of the challenges we have is in encouraging weekly attendance across all members.

Over recent years, growth has been steady, with an increase of around five or ten new members a year. They have been drawn from different sources; invited along by existing members, moving into the area, transfer from other local churches and from contacts in the community such as toddler

Taunton And The Parish

Taunton is the county town of Somerset, with a population of around 65,000. Further development over the next decade could increase the population to 85,000. It houses the main offices of both the county council and Taunton Deane Borough Council.

There are excellent transport links giving easy access to Bristol and Exeter by road or rail. London is only 1h40m away by train, while Cornwall can be reached in 75m. Bristol and Exeter airports are in easy reach.

The town is major shopping centre for the area with good leisure provision including theatre, cinema and a range of sports clubs. It is home to Somerset County Cricket Club whose ground is next to the church site. With the expansion of the town there are also plans for development of parts of the Town Centre, including on a car park area close to the church.

The surrounding area has a range of stunning landscapes, including both north and south coasts, the latter including the rich Jurassic Coast around Lyme Regis. The nearby Quantocks and Blackdown Hills provide good walking with Exmoor a little further to the west. Some of the country's best bird-watching is on the levels north-east of the town.

Taunton has many good primary and secondary schools (both state and private) and a sixth form college consistently ranking in the top ten in the country for A-level performance together with a large tertiary college incorporating the University Centre Somerset.

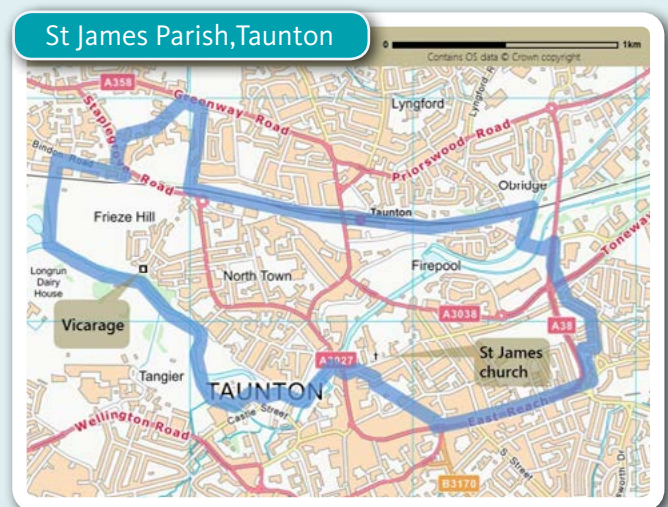
Of those in work in the town, just 7% are involved in manufacturing. The two largest employment categories being Wholesale & Retail trades and Health & Social work each with around 18% (2011 census). Aside from the councils and the NHS, major employers include the administrative centre for Debenhams and the UK Hydrographic Office.

The parish has a population of some 6,700. Though poverty levels are low, the overall deprivation index of the parish is in the fourth most deprived decile (CUF), indicating pockets of poverty which can often be overlooked.

Largely residential and occupying a broad band immediately north of the town-centre, much is late-Victorian terraces though pockets of larger houses exist and there are several areas of modern development.

There are two other churches in the parish - Canon Street Christian Centre (AOG) and Taunton Family Church (New Frontiers) - and three schools – St James and North Town primaries and the independent Taunton School.

For further mapping –see link to [Openstreetmap](#)



What We Do



Worship

The priority of our worship is to seek God together, to hear from and respond to the Holy Spirit, to receive from God and be sent out to introduce people to Jesus.

We use songs both old and new which praise God and say what we believe. Biblical teaching is at the core of the service and the music, prayers and other content is used creatively as we worship.

We aim to make worship accessible and relevant to nourish our broad congregation and bring in newcomers.

We are committed to living out what we sing on Sunday in everyday life, worship provides a common language for living what we believe, equipping us all for service.

In the main service at 10.30am we aim for a consistent style which is modern, relaxed and accessible.

We use Common Worship in the contemporary language version as a framework, using liturgy flexibly and with a light touch. The congregation is appreciative of a creative approach to worship, welcoming drama, dance, testimony, video and more. There is a freedom for the congregation to be as expressive or not as they wish and we value each other as individuals without judgement.



“ *The way we praise God helps visitors to understand that God is real.* ”

OUR MAIN SUNDAY SERVICE PATTERN

Sunday	10.30am Morning Service		7pm Evening
	Main Service	Children & Young People	
1st	Morning Worship	Messy Church	Soul Space (Youth Group)
2nd	Holy Communion	Sunday Club Groups	Praise
3rd	All Age Worship		Praise & Holy Communion
4th	Holy Communion	Sunday Club Groups	Praise & Teaching
5th	Holy Communion	Sunday Club Groups	Alternative

Many volunteers are involved in each service, including those preparing, supporting and leading. The ministry team for the main Sunday morning service currently consists of several readers, a retired priest and experienced lay people, giving a range of style and content. Robes are occasionally worn. We use a projector and screens in services and have a high quality sound system with hearing loop. Refreshments are served before and after the service to enable the congregation to get to know each other. Individual prayer ministry is available after each morning service.

The music team has a range of instrumentalists and singers under the direction of the Music Director (Ray Crooks) and new worship songs are introduced on a regular basis in collaboration with the Worship Coordinator (Richard Lucas).

O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together

Psalm 34:3

Evening services have an informal, contemporary praise and reflection format, to provide an alternative to the morning service within a smaller more intimate setting.



There are several midweek services held weekly or monthly, such as a "Praise and Play" service for young families led by the Children's and Young People's co-ordinator, a monthly midweek Communion service and a monthly Communion service for an Alzheimer's group. Regular services are also held off-site at several residential and retirement homes.



Parish Weekend Away at Lee Abbey 2017

Groups and Activities

HOME GROUPS

Between half and three-quarters of our congregation meet regularly in home groups for fellowship, mutual support, Bible study and prayer. Groups meet in people's homes and often follow the Sunday morning service themes to consolidate teaching and to give members the chance to share their thoughts. Home group leaders are supported by the Discipleship coordinator (Roger Fenton) and meet quarterly. Home Groups also provide general pastoral support to members, and more widely pastoral care in the church is overseen by the Pastoral coordinator (Annie Reid) and a small team of volunteers.



THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP

A well established group involving many older members of the church, meeting monthly for a varied program of events.

ART GROUP

A weekly meeting of keen amateur artists from both the church and wider community.

BELLRINGERS

meet twice monthly to practice and on two Sunday mornings a month to greet worshippers to church.

ALPHA

Alpha groups are run for those wanting to explore faith, ask questions and are held in the church with each home group providing a meal for those attending. Alpha has been a positive experience for those taking part, although we recognise the church could do more in supporting those new in faith and helping them integrate into the church.

PARISH AWAY WEEKENDS

A biennial Parish Away weekend for those who want to spend time together in worship and fellowship.

ST JAMES PLAYERS

A group of enthusiastic church members who enjoy all aspects of amateur dramatics, everything from a Passion Play to Pantomime.



Children, Young People & Families Work Within The Church

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth **3 John 1:4**

With a broad and lively programme of children's and youth work, we have been attracting families to become part of the congregation at St James. Parents appreciate the work put in for the children, and many volunteer to help in the different groups and services. There is a Facebook prayer space for the parents to support one another which has been useful for those on the fringe of church life.

We have a group of younger secondary-school age children, a mix of primary-aged children, and a growing number of pre-school children. They are drawn from across the different schools in the area, and being able to gather with friends in church is something they value.

To support these children, young people and their families we have a range of activities and groups. Children's work at St James is well resourced in

“ We like that the church includes us in its planning & activities which are fun with relevant stories and stuff! ”

“ The new Vicar will encourage and teach us to grow as Christians ”

terms of volunteers and the materials available.

All volunteers are recruited safely and given safeguarding training, and safeguarding is taken seriously at all levels of the church, whether working with children or vulnerable adults.

Our main Sunday services have a creche area in church so families with very little ones can participate in the main worship.

Baptisms are held in the main Sunday morning service. We ask families seeking a baptism to meet with the Vicar or a church representative first, and to come to church regularly so they understand the commitment they are making. Young people are encouraged to think about confirmation when the time is right for them, and St James has had several young people and adults going forward for confirmation in recent years.



“The new Vicar will have a sense of humour, we like to laugh and not be stern”

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE - ACTIVITIES IN THE WEEK		
1st Sunday	Messy Church	Running at the same time as the main Sunday service, providing a free flowing creative engagement with a biblical theme
1st Sunday (evening)	Soul Space	Monthly youth service with a target age group of 10-16, run jointly with Wellsprings Chapel and attracting 20-25 young people
2nd & 4th Sunday	Sunday Club	Groups aimed at ages 3-5 (“Pebbles”), 6-10 (“Gems”) and 10 upwards (“Boulders”)
3rd Sunday	All age worship	Bringing the whole church together for a service with something for everyone
Monday	Baby and Toddler	Supporting and making connections with families in the local community and with significant church volunteer support
Wednesday	Praise and Play	Activity based service for pre-school children and families which is significant for outreach.
Friday	Voice	Youth discussion group run jointly with St Mary Magdalene's

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Much of this work has been facilitated by Kate Taylor, the Children and Young People’s Co-ordinator, and the consolidation and growth of work with families and how it is staffed in the long term will need careful planning. We have had a part-time paid Children and Families Worker in the past, and have recently been looking at this option again. We believe that with the right approach and personnel there is scope for more growth in this area, and what growth there has already been needs support to grow in faith and discipleship.

There is also a need to think through longer term provision for the teenagers and upper primary age children, to ensure that the right support for spiritual development in their formative years



“We come to God's house to learn about Jesus, how He died for us so we are saved.”



Who We Work With



St James School visiting our Pentecost Experience

The school children feel that the new vicar should be someone who;

- is creative, brings collective worship to life and involves the children
- helps with Xplore Club
- is confident, kind and supportive
- is serious about the job but fun at the same time!
- will join us for Christmas dinner and say prayers to start

The school and the church enjoy the partnership that has developed over many years, and the school is looking forward to welcoming the new vicar.



Also in the parish is North Town Primary School, which uses the church for services, and Taunton School, a large independent school catering for children aged 3 to 18, which has its own chaplain.

Schools

Our link church school is St James Church School, part of the Bath and Wells Multi Academy Trust.

St James Church School describes its link with church as "wonderful". The Outreach Coordinator (Jenny Wakefield) chairs the school's ethos committee and organises an annual multi sensory interactive week in church, and the school holds services in the church throughout the year.

Church members organise Xplore, an after school club which shares the Christian faith in fun and creative ways. Weekly collective worship is led by the vicar or church members and joint church/school prayer meetings happen throughout the year.



Ecumenical, Inter-church, & Mission Links

St James strives to be an outward looking church, with good connections with local churches, our community and mission further afield.

ECUMENICAL LINKS

St James is well placed in the ecumenical life of the town, relating to both the Anglican and traditional churches, and also the free and network churches. There are around 30 different churches in the town, and Taunton has a high level of inter-church co-operation with a growing sense of “One Church in Taunton”. We enjoy a good relationship with St Mary Magdalene’s, a nearby town centre Anglican church, and as one of many town centre Anglican churches there is an understanding that parish boundaries are largely irrelevant. St James has also given support to St Peter’s Lyngford, located on an estate in the north of town, with one of our Readers, Mike Gillingham, exercising much of his ministry there.

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope.

Ephesians 4: 3-4

The Vicar of St James has been a part of the B1 group, a weekly meeting of church leaders started by several independent and network churches and include a range of other denominations (Baptist, Congregational, Anglican, Pentecostal, Vineyard, etc.) The B1 group operates as a relational network for church leaders to support each other and for joint initiatives to come about. With its connection to both the traditional churches and the B1 group, the Vicar of St James has played an important role in the web of Taunton’s ecumenical relationships.

INTER CHURCH GROUPS

Taunton is noted for a high degree of ecumenical co-operation, and this is reflected in the wide range of outreach and inter-church organisations in the town, many of which have St James church members involved as volunteers, co-ordinators or trustees.

These groups include:

TAUNTON TEAM CHAPLAINCY

Located in the town centre and employing a Town Centre Chaplain.

BESOM

Volunteer work parties for home improvements or gardening projects for those in need; providing furniture and emergency food parcels.

TAUNTON FOODBANK

Providing emergency food parcels to those in need.

TAUNTON STREET PASTORS

Patrolling the town centre on Friday and Saturday nights, helping to safeguard people out on the town.

OPEN DOOR

Working with rough sleepers and those in emergency accommodation.

HOUSE OF ST MARTIN

Part of the Langley House Trust, works with ex-offenders released on licence from the prison system. Close work with the organisation has helped several clients find faith, some staying on and becoming part of our congregation.

TAUNTON AREA DEBT ADVICE

A charity founded by St James church member Graham Reid and supported by the church, offering free and confidential debt advice for those struggling financially.

TAUNTON YOUTH FOR CHRIST

Employs a full time youth worker and seeks to build relationships and bring the good news of Jesus to young people in the town.

While there is a lot of activity going on, much of this is delivered through inter-church agencies. We recognise that we are more limited in how we reach out explicitly as St James, that we need to find ways to be more outward looking, getting on and doing it and keeping it going so that we can better serve our community and draw people into faith in Christ.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MISSION LINKS

St James gives regular financial support to:

- Tear Fund
- Samaritan's Purse
- WEC International - with whom we have a personal link through David and Margie Whitehorn
- The Barnabas Fund.

St James supports Traidcraft and is also linked with adoption charity Home For Good.

What does the Lord require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy and
to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8



How We Work



Structures & Growth

In 2011 we looked at the leadership structures needed to enable growth in our numbers

We recognised that in the past we had developed to a certain point but not always moved onto the next level. Published research showed us that:

- Larger churches are not just bigger versions of small ones;
- A group-centred organisation would become vital to enable a larger congregation;
- As the congregation's size moved beyond 150, different structures would be needed to ensure each member felt connected.

In short, we had to be intentional about growth and develop ourselves to support it.

We established a number of coordination roles where oversight of areas of our ministry is delegated to individuals in line with the strategic

aims and vision set by the incumbent and PCC. We chose the term 'coordinator' carefully to emphasise the nature of the role. Meeting regularly with the incumbent and reporting to PCC they each exercise an individual ministry; there is no corporate body of coordinators. They are all volunteers.

The diagram above illustrates the structures within the church leadership, showing how some of the (currently) seven coordinators look after core strands of church life; others focus on areas that encompass all those strands for a particular group and others give a foundation on which our activities are built. The image emphasises the non-hierarchical nature of this structure.

More recently, the PCC has used the study series on qualities found in growing churches coming out of the Church Growth Research Programme and published as part of *From Evidence to Action*. Our work shows that St James possesses many of those characteristics for growth identified in the research but also where further development is needed.

Finance & Paid Staff

The earth is the Lord's,
and everything in it
Psalm 24:1

Finance

St James Church Taunton is financially solvent and we pay our annual parish share in full. As we have an income of over £100,000 per annum we are a registered charity.

Most of our income is from direct giving with over 75% of the church membership giving regularly and income from stewardship and collections was up in 2016 as compared with 2015.

There is a full stewardship programme and a Gift Aid Scheme in place. A smaller proportion of the church income is derived from the hire of premises. The church finances are overseen by the Treasurer (Richard Sainsbury) and a small team.

The General Fund ended the year (2016) with a balance of £93,611 an increase of £9,695 on 2015. Unaudited figures for 2017 show a further increase in our year-end balance.

We donate a minimum of 10% of stewardship giving (including cash collections and income tax recovered) to other Christian organisations.

It is the practice of the PCC not to apply for grants from bodies which are funded by the National Lottery.

Paid Staff

St James has three part time paid members of staff.

Alex Dickinson (16 hours per week) is our Parish Administrator who runs the church office, manages church admin, responds to enquiries and runs hall hire and room bookings.

Ian White (16 hours per week) acts as Caretaker, with maintenance and cleaning responsibilities around the premises, setting up rooms and the main church building for activities, and working with and supporting those who have booked the hall and church rooms.

Beccy Fox (3 hours per week) helps with IT support, including managing the church database system. We aim to keep our different systems and facilities up to date, and we currently have a number of programmes to develop our office databases, website, and both the video distribution system and sound system in the church.



Premises & Facilities

The church is located just off the town centre, close to the Brewhouse Theatre and Somerset County Cricket Club's ground.

The church and halls form one building complex. There is level access throughout, except for the chancel, and there is a disabled toilet.

The church seats 200 people with reasonable sight-lines though can hold just over 300.

The Side Chapel can seat about 25 people. The chancel is used by the musicians and singers leading worship, and for back-projecting onto a screen hanging in the chancel arch; it is occasionally used for small informal services.

There is a well-equipped sound system in the church and we are in the process of upgrading our video facilities.

A Facilities Coordinator, Martin Wakefield, has overall responsibility for the buildings, equipment and technology, and is assisted by a Premises Manager, Stan Wojcik.

The Large Hall can seat around 100 people and is equipped with a data projector and sound system. The adjacent Small Hall can seat around 40 and the Lounge around 15. All rooms have been refurbished in the last six years and the kitchen is fitted out to commercial standards.

The halls are well-used by church activities and community groups, and the church is a popular venue for concerts. To the west of the buildings is a car park which can accommodate around 20 vehicles, and to the east and north is the churchyard. The churchyard was closed in 1865, but is still used for interring ashes. We are open to the possibility of further developing our site as we grow in numbers.

The church itself is a grade II* listed building, with the main items of interest being the tower, the font, the pulpit and the 1925 carved open screen around the Side Chapel.

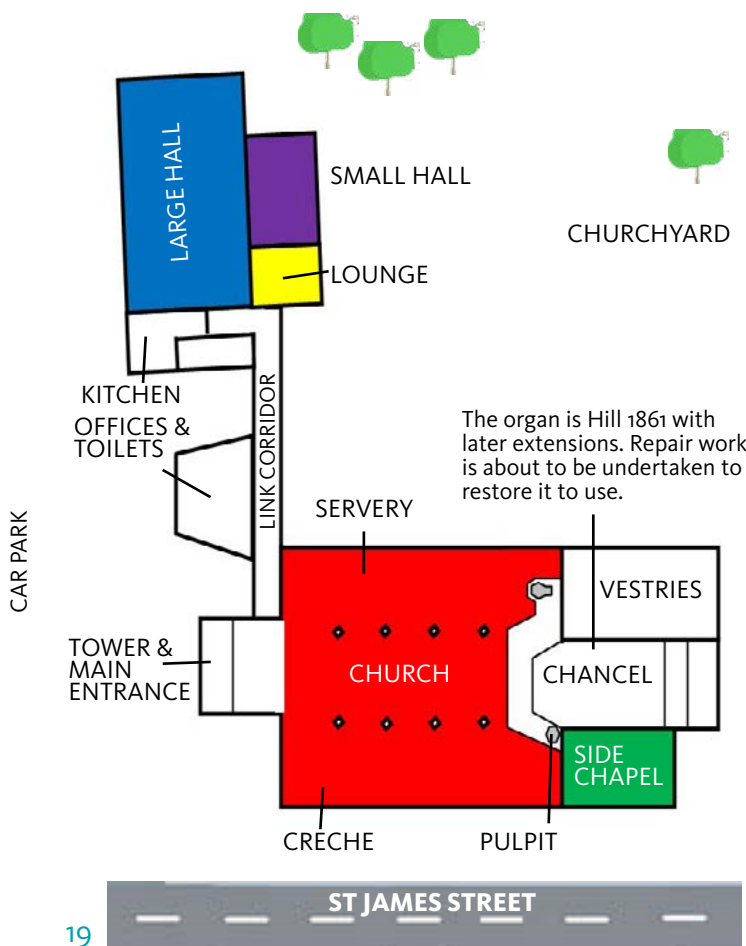
The pillar arcades and the north aisle date from the 15th century, while the rest of the building is Victorian extension, and rebuilding of the tower.

The chancel was cleared in 1980 and extended into the nave as a two-level dais. The communion table is brought onto the dais when needed.

The pews were removed in 2001 and the servery was replaced in 2015.

The outer vestry is the last area that requires refurbishment, and converting to a secure equipment store.

The building is in good condition and we have a programme of regular maintenance.



James Church TAUNTON

Profit goes to R.A.F.T (Refugee Aid From Taunton)

Murder is Served

A Murder Mystery Evening
Written by Jo West
2 Course Dinner
Can you guess who dunnit?

James Church TAUNTON

Prayer Breakfast

NEXT PRAYER BREAKFAST SUN 21ST JAN

Join us every 3rd Sunday morning to pray together and share breakfast with one another

Prayer at 8.30am followed by Breakfast at 9.00am

"They arose and worshipped before the Lord". Samuel 10

St James' Players Present

A pantomime by Graham Barraclough

BABES in the WOOD

Tickets are £5 Adults £2.50 Children Available from our Church Office on 01823 272931 or 07796 248369

THURS 26TH JANUARY 2017 7.30pm
FRI 27TH JANUARY 2017 7.30pm
SAT 28TH JANUARY 2017 10.30am

An Evening with...

Archbishop George Carey
Former Archbishop of Canterbury

HOPE FOR PRESENT & FUTURE?

Thurs 10th

Find us near the Somerset County Cricket Ground

St James Church

Fun Day

FREE ENTRY

Find out about the things that happen in your local church

Come and climb our Church Tower (120 ft above ground level - over 8's only)

Bellingring Demonstration
Hands On Art
Refreshments
Children's Craft Activities
Bouncy Castle Under 10's only
Display of Bible Art e.g Illumination, printing
Charity & Local Organisations Displays
And much more...

Sat 29th July 10.30am - 3.30pm
Lunch Service with lights starting at 6pm

Proud to be part of Taunton Live

BABY & TODDLER

James Church TAUNTON

WORLD WAR I CENTENARY CONCERT

SATURDAY 30TH MAY 2017 AT 3.00PM

An afternoon of music and reading featuring the children's choir from St. James School followed by tea, cake and exhibition

James Church TAUNTON

Prayer Meeting

Join us every 4th Tuesday evening for a short time to pray together from 7.00pm - 8.00pm

or three gather in my name, there am I with them. - Matthew 18:20

Evening Service

Worship & Praise

Join us every 2nd Sunday evening at 7.00pm
An informal hour of praise & prayer

St James Church - Everyone is welcome
St James Street, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 1JS

James Church TAUNTON

THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP

Meets Thursday month in Church

A friendly group of men and women who enjoy speakers, outings & company. For more information, please contact Vicky Dykes on 01823 282501

FIRST SUN OF THE MONTH

SOUL SPACE

A FUN EVENING OF GAMES, WORSHIP, FOOD, FRIENDS & REFLECTION
A safe and relaxing space for those aged 10-16 to explore and deepen their faith.

1ST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH
6.45pm TO 8.15pm

AGES 10-16 YEARS

James Church TAUNTON

PRAISE & PLAY

Meets Wednesdays 10.30am - 11.00am in the Church

For pre-school children and their Parents/Carers

A term time free activity which offers a short time of worship, stories and prayer followed by crafts, play and refreshments. Please contact Kate Taylor on 01823 619739

FRIDAY 21ST

BAIT & DAN

& PLOUGHMAN'S SUPPER
If you dont think you can do it - you'll be surprised.

With Celia & Friends

7.30pm - 10.30pm

Children's Ploughman's
Bring your...

St James Church, St James Street
Tel: 01823 272931 Email: info@stja

Our Motto for 2018

"Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus." Colossians 3:17a

As part of the Church in Taunton