

The background of the cover is a photograph of a weathered wooden post standing on a rocky beach. The post is dark and textured, with a green, moss-like growth at its base. The rocks are light-colored and out of focus. A white silhouette of a church building is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.

**St James' Church Magazine**  
*June - August 2026*

# Letter from the Churchwarden

Fiona Hope



## Come, Holy Spirit, Come

As I write, I am just beginning my third year as a Churchwarden at St James. I recall one of the questions I asked Fabian, when he first approached me about considering the role, it was, 'Are you due a Sabbatical in the next few years?', to which he replied, with a slight smile on his face, 'Well...'

His answer has become a reality and Fabian is currently on Sabbatical, a time to rest from the busyness of his calling as Vicar of St James. He has begun by setting off to walk on the Camino de Santiago, ostensibly by himself but open to all that God would bless him with each day by way of solitude, company, hospitality and His voice.

Throughout our lives and our spiritual journey, there can be nothing more affirming than to hear quite clearly the voice of God telling us we are on the right path and going the right way. We may have doubts along the way but when we open our hearts to God's presence, He will bless us more than we can imagine.

Over my three score years and 10, I have trodden many a path – as a teenager the Lyke Wake Walk in North Yorkshire (48 miles in under 24hrs), as an adult the Cotswold Way (110 miles in 16 stages over 4 years), the Pilgrims Causeway which leads to the Holy Island of Lindisfarne (3 miles each way, one summer's afternoon in 2015), a themed Prayer Walk around the Abbey Fields in Kenilworth (one summer's evening, but I can't remember when) – each time in the company of others, each time rejoicing in the varying scenery around us, delighting in meeting other travellers along the way, on more than one occasion grateful for the 'good Samaritans' sent to help in times of need.

I can relate each of my walks to one of the following statements I recently found in a book of Celtic related writings.

- The calm of a summer night embodies the peace of God – my prayer walk
- The beauty of a sunset embodies the truth of God – my time on Lindisfarne
- The glory of the dawn embodies the faithfulness of God – walking through the night on the Lyke Wake Walk
- Everything in all creation shouts the reality of God – all along the Cotswold Way



*the Spirit came...  
for all people, for  
all generations  
and for all time*

By the time this issue of the magazine is published we will have celebrated both the Ascension of Christ and the joyous gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, when we are told that the Spirit came, not just for specific men and specific tasks, but for all people, for all generations and for all time.

The Holy Spirit is the breath of God, breathing in us. Are we aware of our own in-breaths and out-breaths which are necessary for us to live, or do we only really notice when something seems wrong? Similarly, are we aware of the Holy Spirit, the breath of God, working in and through us, necessary for us to live the life that death does not destroy?

For the entirety of Fabian's Sabbatical, let us continue to hold him and his family in our prayers and also pray for the Holy Spirit to be at work in us and through us all, sharing the gifts bestowed on us and bringing the love and message of Jesus to all we meet in our daily lives both inside and outside the walls of St James Church, whether on familiar or unfamiliar paths.

Let us also remember that we are never alone as The Holy Spirit was sent from the Father - for all generations and for all time – **it will always be Pentecost.**

Fiona Hope  
Churchwarden

### *Invitation from the Paraclete*

Will you walk & take my hand?  
By the river, stop & stand?  
Will you spend some time to see  
all the best that you can be?

Will you let me wait with you  
under clouds or sunlit blue?  
I will listen to your words,  
& heed your cries that go unheard.

Will you share your days with me?  
Share your thoughts & fears with me?  
I will advocate for you,  
plead your cause, encourage you.

I'm the Comforter He sends  
to journey with you round life's bends;  
I'm the constant Love divine,  
the breath of Eden, glory's shine!

See, I offer roses, ferns,  
beauty as this planet turns;  
oceans, deserts, mountains, streams,  
grass to lie on, hopes & dreams,

children, old folk, daisies, trees,  
dolphins, peacocks, bumblebees,  
sparrows, eagles, lilies fair –  
all this world is in your care.

Through the seasons, sun & rain,  
right alongside I'll remain,  
like bluebells by the riverside,  
or waves that dance on turning tide,

like birch's silver, beech of bronze,  
like blackbird's trill & robin's songs,  
like dawn & dusk, like white-winged dove  
I'll stay with you: my name is Love.

Philippa Johnson

## What's in the Magazine...?

Page 2 Churchwarden's Letter	Page 20 Focus on Mission
Page 3 Invitation from the Paraclete	Page 21 Flamingo Eggs!
Page 5 Bishop's Letter	Page 22 School News
Page 6 Returning to Luwero	Page 24 Bridges
Page 8 Wilder Churches	Page 26 Young People's pages
Page 10 People's Emergency Briefing	Page 28 Crossword
Page 12 New Banners	Page 30 Church Finances 2025
Page 13 Simply Pray	Page 32 PCC and AGM Roundup
Page 14 Ezekiel (part 1...!)	Page 34 Who's Who on the PCC?
Page 16 At least one happy reader!	Page 35 Concerts at St James'
Page 17 An Ordinary Story	Page 36 Contacts
Page 18 Reflections: Prodigal Son	

*Many thanks to all the contributors to the Magazine. If you have something to share for the September-November 2026 edition, do contact the Editor - details on page 36.*

***Deadline for copy is Monday 17 August 2026***



In this edition of the Magazine we have two Fionas! The new Bishop of Taunton writes her letter and Fiona Hope, one of our churchwardens, steps in for Fabian while he is away on Sabbatical. A beautiful poem backs up Fiona's message. On an administrative note, Richard Sainsbury updates us on the Church Finances, Martin Wakefield reports on PCC activity and the AGM, and retirees/new faces have been removed/added to the line up of PCC members.

The new banners are about ready to be displayed and the Simply Pray timetable for the rest of the year is listed. Steve Smith tells us of an inspirational book he's read recently, while Mike Gillingham and David Smith reflect on the book of Ezekiel and the story of the Prodigal Son respectively.

Jenny Wakefield tells us about a review of our Mission Giving and reports on the School News as Year 6 youngsters prepare to move onto their next school, and Sue Carpenter tells us why hover flies are so important!

An appreciative reader wrote to me with a glowing review of the previous edition of the Magazine. It was too long to print as it was so I have selected some of the points she made, tell you a bit about how I choose what to put into the Magazine and invite your comments on articles you have read. It's also a 'thank you' to all those who contribute to the Magazine - without them, there would be no Mag!

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](http://www.stjamestaunton.org)*

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



DIOCESE OF  
**Bath & Wells**

Living the story. Telling the story.

**Letter from Fiona Gibson  
Bishop of Taunton**

## **Transforming our communities through the love of Christ**

In the early days of the Ukraine war, the Diocese of Hereford, where I was then serving, was approached by Herefordshire Council. They had been so impressed by the work of church members during the pandemic, who stepped up to support their communities in practical ways, that they asked if the diocese could take on organising homes for Ukrainians fleeing the war. Yes, of course, we said. And so began an ongoing partnership, where hundreds of Ukrainian guests have found homes in the Welsh Marches, and hundreds of tonnes of aid has gone across to Ukraine.

That's just what we do as the church, isn't it? We see a need in our communities and, motivated by Christ's love and teaching, we try to meet it. And we do it out of love, not seeking any reward. We are volunteers.

The word 'volunteer' comes from words meaning, 'of a person's free will.' Volunteers serve willingly. Freely. Out of love. So many across our diocese serve our communities willingly, freely, out of love. We are deeply grateful. There are Foodbanks, lunch clubs, debt counselling services, mental health first aiders, bereavement cafes, after-school clubs, and youth drop-ins. That barely scratches the surface. All of this is done in the name of Jesus Christ, the one who came and gave himself for us willingly, freely, out of love. And it's transformational.

One of the areas of our common diocesan life which I'll be involved with is our work around Transforming Communities. There will be a lot more to be said in the coming months, but for now, I simply want to thank all our volunteers who serve willingly, freely, and out of love and say how much I'm looking forward to celebrating what we have, and building on it together, transforming our communities through the love of Christ.

Fiona Gibson  
Bishop of Taunton

# **Returning to Luwero, Uganda:**

*Honest reflections, shared calling,  
and the strength of a church family*

Sometimes I feel overwhelmed by the enormity of being involved with the charity ACTS. When we last visited Uganda, ACTS wasn't even a UK registered charity. In the three years since, we've worked incredibly hard to establish it but there are expectations from the Charity Commission, responsibilities as trustees, and the ongoing pressure of fundraising to ensure cash flow remains steady so we can meet our commitments to the children in Uganda. At times, it can feel a lot.

I want to share with you the excitement of returning to Luwero at the beginning of July. This time, we are taking three new travellers – all with experience in children's work or women's health – valuable skills we hope to share with our colleagues in Uganda. The team meets monthly on Zoom for prayer, and Emmanuel, the director of Alleviate, is helping bring the trip together.

As an occupational therapist I've worked with adults here in the UK who had been institutionalised at a very young age because of disability, learning difficulties, or mental health needs. Our society has improved in accepting and valuing people who are different. As a parent, I'm aware of how challenging it can be to support a child even with minor everyday difficulties let alone with identified special needs.

But in places like Uganda, many mothers of children with physical disabilities still face stigma, judgement, and even beliefs that their child's condition is caused by bad spirits or is somehow their fault. As a mother, I find that deeply moving – and compelling. It is one of the reasons I feel called to support this charity, because we are in a position to show acceptance, dignity, and the love of God to all His children.

I ask the church community to hold us in prayer. It is a significant financial commitment for me, and it impacts my family, for whose support I am so grateful.

Recently, I read something in a Joyce Meyer book reflecting on 1 Corinthians 12:18–19:

*'But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.'*

It reminded me that I don't need to do everything. God asks me to use the gifts He has given me – my skills, my experience – and to trust Him to bring others alongside. I pray for more people to come forward and help, and I trust that God will continue to build the body as He sees fit.

As a church, you support this work through prayer, friendship, and financial grants via ACTS. At PCC we talked recently about missionary giving, and the charity is so grateful for the financial gifts the church sends. But they also treasure the quiz night, the coffee morning and plant sale, the conversations, the encouragement, and the prayers. My service to the Lord is simply to share the needs of this community – and the way you respond is incredible.

The recent coffee morning/plant sale was a perfect example. People quietly used their gifts – growing plants, promoting the event, working behind the scenes – and it brought that verse to life; many parts of the body, each offering what we can.

As we prepare for July, I hold onto the words:

*'Here am I; send me'*  
(Isaiah 6:8)

*'Whatever you do...do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus'*  
(Colossians 3:17)

*'Let us not become weary in doing good...'*  
(Galatians 6:9)

*'Use whatever gift you have received to serve others'*  
(1 Peter 4:10)

Thank you for your love, your support, and your faithfulness. Please continue to pray for safety, unity, and wisdom as we reconnect with the community in Luwero.

With love,  
Ruth Preater-Gillard

# Wilder Churches

## Managing Land for Pollinators



I recently attended a Somerset Wildlife Trust event looking at managing land for pollinators. This was to support the 'Wilder Churches' initiative as well as other communities and groups. We learnt that 70% of native plants are pollinated by insects.



In the UK, there are 275 species of bees, 270 species of hoverflies; 59 species of butterflies, 800 species of 'macro' moths and 100's of other flies, beetles, wasps and micro moths!

These all need varying habitats in which to thrive; nectar, pollen, water and shelter are their requirements.

Honey bees pollinate 5-15% of the UK's insect-pollinated crops leaving 85-95% to wild pollinators. Hoverflies and other flies are the heroes! They fly in all weathers and are very effective pollinators.



Sadly, most of these insects are in decline for a variety of reasons including the loss of habitats, the use of pesticides, pollution, climate change, agricultural intensification, development, fossil fuel use, intensive gardening and land management.

What are we doing to support pollinators at St James?  
Well, we:

- have a varied grass-cutting regime across the site including scything our meadow in late summer and keeping other areas mown monthly in spring and summer.
- have a variety of habitats providing shelter and food.
- have many trees and a hedge.
- don't use chemicals.
- have more formal garden areas at the front of the church, providing some plants rich in nectar and pollen, as well as places of shelter.



I have replaced a container of water on top of our bug hotel in order to offer our pollinators a drink; large stones will allow them to access the water.

In May, I was invited to speak to Children’s Church about how we care for our land and nature at St James. We looked at changes we have made to make life better for wildlife here as well as to make our grounds more welcoming for everyone. We had a look around the meadow, walking the newly mown paths. We visited the different habitats available and looked out for any pollinators we could see.



Somerset Wildlife Trust has some ideas about what you might do at home to help wildlife; these cards were available for families to take away, along with some pollinator-friendly seeds to sow right away.

## How to build hidey holes



**For amphibians**

In a damp, cool area of the garden, dig a shallow bowl in the ground and line with sand. Cover with a slab, leaving enough room for an upward sloping tunnel.

Labels: sand, paving slab, trowel

gently lift in mild weather to check for occupants

**For hedgehogs**

Rake a pile of dry leaves in a quiet, unused corner of the garden (under a bush is best). Build a mesh of twigs and branches around the pile, and leave an entrance space at the bottom.

Labels: dry leaves, twigs and branches, rake

**For minibeasts**

Stack up a log pile as the bottom layer and cover with rubble or bricks (air bricks have ready made hidey holes!) Cover the pile with branches and garden cuttings.

Labels: logs, air bricks or rubble, branches and garden trimmings

Illustration: Corinne Welch © Copyright Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts 2015

More good ideas:

- <https://www.somersetwildlife.org/get-involved/at-home/build-home-wildlife>
- <https://www.buglife.org.uk/get-involved/gardening-for-bugs/>

And don’t forget to join in with some citizen science this summer!

<https://bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org/about>

Sue Carpenter



# People's Emergency Briefing

*On the climate and nature crisis*

## Taunton



Film screening and discussion hosted by  
St James Church and Taunton Minster

St James Church, Taunton, TA1 1JS  
23<sup>rd</sup> June 2026, at 6pm (over by  
8:15pm)

[www.nebriefing.org](http://www.nebriefing.org)

## ***National Emergency Briefing***

In November 2025, the National Emergency Briefing assembled leading experts to present the latest evidence on the climate and nature crisis to politicians and other influential people in Westminster.

Now this vital message is being shown across the UK as a short film, bringing together people from across local communities to hear the evidence and discuss how to respond.

The People's Emergency Briefing film highlights the threats to British life from ongoing damage to nature and to our climate. It presents a calm, evidence-based overview of how the climate and nature crisis is affecting everyday life in Britain - and what the science says about risks and responses.

The film has input from leading UK experts in climate science, food security, health, economics, national security and nature. It has already been shown at hundreds of locations in the UK including churches and cathedrals.

Screenings are intended to be followed by a facilitated discussion. To maximise public access, community screenings are free.

We will be hosting a showing of the film and follow-up discussion in St James on Tuesday 23rd June 2026 starting at 6.00pm and finishing around 8.00pm. This is being organised in conjunction with the Eco team from The Minster. We are hoping to welcome church members from as many places of worship in the Taunton area as possible.

The initiative is explicitly non-partisan and supported by a wide range of organisations including the Church of England (and our local diocese), National Trust, WWF, the Royal Meteorological Society and many others.

Faith communities have long traditions of stewardship, care for the vulnerable, and intergenerational responsibility. We believe this is an important moment for thoughtful, compassionate local dialogue.

Further information about the overall initiative can be found at:  
<https://www.nebriefing.org/>

It would be really useful for us to have an idea of the numbers coming so do please book a ticket though it's not essential.

To book, use the QR code here.



St James Eco-church/Richard Carpenter/Susie Peeler

## ***New Banners for St James'***



If you saw this picture in the most recent edition of the Magazine, you'll know the banner group raised the first of a series of banners of the 'Fruits of the Spirit' in January – it's on display on one of the pillars. The remaining banners are now complete, and by the time you read this we hope they will be on display.

We wanted to have them ready for Pentecost Sunday as they name each of the fruits of the Spirit, as referenced in Galatians 5:22-23.

The banner group worked from Pat's sketches for the bookmarks she painted, inspired by her Bible reading, transforming these bookmarks into long banners to adorn the pillars.



We sewed together on a Thursday afternoon, sharing our joys and concerns as we worked, encouraging one another and sharing prayer. We also carried out some of the work at home, embellishing the letters with beads and sequins. All credit to Pat who busily sewed in the interim, planning, preparing and finishing.



The pictures here show 'work in progress' in Pat's large and homely kitchen.

Do now visit the church and view the finished banners.

Sue Carpenter

*(It is wonderful to see such creative gifts being used to produce these works of art. They are not only a decoration, they can be used for contemplation, reflection and inspiration. Thank you to Pat and all the team for their dedication to the task. There are many within St James who use their diverse range of creative gifts to the glory of God. Thanks to all of you – Ed.)*



*We would like to invite you to join us at Simply Pray.*

*Over the last couple of years, we have been on a journey seeking a quieter and more thoughtful time of prayer. We have looked at Pilgrimage and the story of the Prodigal Son in our Lent series.*

*We meet on the first Thursday of each month alternating mornings and evenings. Each session has a different theme and everyone is welcome to share their thoughts and experiences. We try to bring this to a reflective time of prayer and ask ourselves:*

*I wonder what I might say to God in my quietness?*

*I wonder what God might say to me in the stillness?*

*For more information contact either:  
Lyn - 07772 881463 or Felicity - 075082 87808*

### **Simply Pray Gatherings**

*June - Fri 5th 7-8:30pm - Side Chapel*

*July - Tues 7th Prayer Walk Awayday at Bishop's Palace - leave 8:45am*

*August - Thurs 6th 10:30-midday - Side Chapel*

*September - Thurs 3rd 7-8:30pm - Side Chapel*

*October - Thurs 1st 10:30-midday - Side Chapel*

*November - Sat 28th Simply Pray for Advent - Church - time tbc*

# Ezekiel (part 1...!)

You might think that seeing a vision of the glory of God would be a wonderful experience, but try saying that to Ezekiel!

First a little background. When Solomon dies, the kingdom of Israel splits in two: the southern part, including Jerusalem and the Temple, called Judah and the Northern part confusingly called Israel. Many in Israel refuse to worship at the temple and they drift away from true worship. At the time of Ezekiel, Israel has been conquered and many have been taken into exile. The people of Judah look to the temple and have the mistaken belief that its presence will save them. No-one in Israel or Judah connects turning away from true worship with Babylon's conquest. Solomon has started a trend towards worshipping idols with many of their immoral practices that had risen and fallen, but now Israel is no more, its people in slavery.

Ezekiel is one of a group of slaves. Since he is a priest, no doubt his fellow prisoners look to him for guidance. He is 30, significant age for a Jewish priest, it is when he can start his ministry. But he is in a hopeless situation, he will never be able to sacrifice in the Temple.

To this hopeless man in a hopeless situation comes an amazing vision. Do try reading Ezekiel chapter one. He is clearly trying to make sense of an utterly amazing experience. He sees strange creatures and, strangest of all, a vision of God's glory, yet a man, in Hebrew 'Adam', on a wonderful throne. This is to prepare him for his mission.

'He said: "Son of man, I am sending you to the Israelites, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have been in revolt against me to this very day. The people to whom I am sending you are obstinate and stubborn. Say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says.' And whether they listen or fail to listen – for they are a rebellious people – they will know that a prophet has been among them." A straightforward, if daunting mission, you might think, but Ezekiel says, "I came to the exiles who lived at Tel Aviv near the Kebar River. And there, where they were living, I sat among them for seven days – deeply distressed." He is overwhelmed with the judgement of God on His rebellious people.

And there is one more thing, he becomes unable to speak. He is burning with a message from God and he has no words to tell anybody anything.

So, what can he do? Well he can act, and what a performance! He lies on his left side for 390 days, one for each year that Israel had sinned, and then 40 days on his right side, the number of years for the sin of Judah. He then makes a model of Jerusalem with clay. Jerusalem, but with battering rams and a siege wall against it. Finally he smashes Jerusalem to pieces, telling his fellow slaves that finally Jerusalem has fallen.

After this he shaves his head and beard. He hides a few hairs in his cloak but he destroys the rest, allowing the wind to blow away a third, cutting a third with a sword and burning the rest. He now speaks and tells the people of the way Israel and Judah have deserted God and so must be judged to bring them to their senses. But a small number are hidden safe in the cloak. Then a dramatic incident.

‘Now as I was prophesying, Pelatiah son of Benaiah died. Then I fell face down and cried out in a loud voice, “Alas, Sovereign LORD! Will you completely destroy the remnant of Israel?”’

So what can this mean for us? Perhaps first the old adage that ‘God does not send the equipped, but equips the sent’. This may not be as easy as it sounds. Imagine lying bound on one side for over a year. His important task is to tell the people that God is still their God and in control. Even when the worst thing imaginable happens and Jerusalem with the Temple is destroyed as a judgement on rebellious people, God is still in control. More than that, God is concerned for a small group of slaves. He needs them to know that God is not dependant on a few rituals carried out in one place, but about whoever will listen to him.

I trust we will never be in the situation of those slaves even in our worst moments. Here is a reminder that God still cares for us when the worst happens. I sometimes think about the well known Psalm 137 when the singers ask, “How can we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?” Ezekiel tells us about how they learnt to sing that song where they were.

Mike Gillingham

## *At least one happy reader!*

Over the years I have received kind comments about the content, layout and design of this Magazine under my editorship. 'Thank you' to all of you. It shows the Magazine is being read (!) and that it seems to be doing a useful and helpful job.

One reader emailed me recently (dancingdoyle@sky.com) saying that, waking very early one morning, she had read the March-May Mag from cover to cover. She was struck by the cover picture – a window in Coventry Cathedral. The Mag timetable tends to coincide with major festivals – Easter, harvest, advent/Christmas – so I choose images relevant to the time of year or church calendar. But I also like something perhaps a little unusual to get you thinking.

Our reader noted each of the articles, finding something either helpful, useful or encouraging in them. Each one 'struck a chord' or stirred a memory or shed new light on a topic. But, as well as the content, she also wanted to thank the contributors of the articles.

She found the articles such as those on Christmas and Easter easy to read, often providing facts and Bible verses to aid understanding. She liked the 'regular' items such as School News, Focus on Mission, Eco Church, as well as the 'one off' reports on events such as the pictures and report of the St James' Players' pantomime.

I receive some lovely poems – from 'in house' at St James and from a member of Taunton Minster. I try to illustrate these appropriately. I include the Bishop's letter for those who can't access Manna, the Bath and Wells diocesan bulletin, and it is good and right that the Vicar addresses us each month too. Our reader was pleased with all these elements.

So, thank you to our appreciative reader and to all the contributors, without whom there would be no Magazine, and also those who support in other ways.

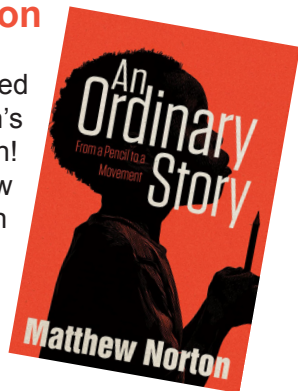
I'm not fishing for compliments, but if you have any comments about the content – you may not like some things, wish to contest some of the assertions made, or supplement information given – do feel free to email me as Editor at dancingdoyle@sky.com. Similarly, get in touch if you have a contribution to make – it might be a poem or prayer you've found helpful, a review of a book or a past event, information about a forthcoming event, or a story or a personal view on a topic. Please send articles in Word and any pictures as separate files (jpeg, pdf, tiff, png). A page is around 300-320 words – fewer if there are pix to include. All submissions will be considered for inclusion, but the Editor has the final word!

Thanks – Ed.

## An Ordinary Story and Memusi Foundation

I would like to recommend this book that I have just finished reading. It was sent to me for Christmas by my cousin's daughter up in Yorkshire; she said she couldn't put it down! The title is '*An Ordinary Story*' and the author, Matthew Norton, was her neighbour in the past who came from an ordinary upbringing in a pit village.

It's taken a while for me to get round to opening it, but now I have I've found it to be one of the most inspiring books I have read of human endeavour.



At 24 years old, Matthew Norton had no background in international development, but what he did have was a simple instinct: that a child without access to education deserves someone to show up for them. '*An Ordinary Story*' is Matthew's account of how a single pencil, carried into a Maasai community in 2003, grew into a movement that has changed thousands of lives in Kenya.

Out of his early visits Matthew founded the Memusi Foundation (a UK-registered charity: number 1133371) that works alongside communities in rural Kenya and urban Nairobi building schools, training teachers, supporting families, and reaching children that most of the world walks past. Told with honesty, warmth and humility, '*An Ordinary Story*' – part memoir, part mission, and completely impossible to put down – is a journey through hope and heartbreak, laughter and loss, and the power of ordinary people to make an extraordinary difference.

Matthew's story proves that you don't need fame, wealth or a grand plan to change the world. You just need to start and believe in yourself. This is not openly a Christian book, but when you read it you realise the human interactions are largely Christian based in my view and I believe there are 'God coincidences' in this book.

This is not a plea for another charity for St James Church to support – we already support wonderful ones – but a plea for people to be inspired for themselves.

Steve Smith

If you want to find out more about the Memusi Foundation and the work it does, go to [www.memusifoundation.org.uk](http://www.memusifoundation.org.uk)

*'An Ordinary Story: From a Pencil to a Movement'* is by Matthew Norton (Independently published - ISBN 9798270410964). It is available in paperback from Amazon at £10.99.

# Reflections on the parable of the Prodigal Son.

Luke 15:11-32

As I reflect on this passage in Luke's Gospel, I often wonder where the story began. Was Jesus recalling a recent incident involving someone known locally – someone I have called Silas? Perhaps it is a quasi-biographical account, used to show how easily we can lose the relationships and practices that keep us physically and spiritually grounded, and how hard it can be to restore them. Jesus would have understood the demands of sonship in Jewish society, particularly the pressures carried by the elder son.



The drama unfolds in three acts. The first focuses upon the desires of the younger son. He was entitled to one portion of his father's wealth while the older brother, the father's heir, received a double portion. Was his plan to go and make his fortune by learning a trade or perhaps use the money for a bride price and marry well? Many Jewish people moved to other parts of the Roman Empire to pursue trading or commercial enterprise. Perhaps he wished to better himself through education – the biblical equivalent of attending university or going travelling?

The second act is laden with pathos as the protagonist's good intentions are thwarted by temptation and poor judgment. He quickly discovers, to his cost, the validity of the ancient saw about a fool and his money soon parted. He experiences the full consequence of his actions and the hopeless despair that comes with separation from a loving father. He resolves to ask his father's forgiveness and to beg for a menial position in his household.

In the final act, the father's overwhelming love is clear: he watches for his younger son's return and runs to greet him. He provides clean

clothes and a generous meal to meet his immediate needs, initiating a celebration for his son's return. The older brother, however, is upset and lists his grievances. The father gently corrects him and offers reassurance that his inheritance is not affected by his sibling's return.

Luke 15 offers three parables in response to criticism from the religious authorities that Jesus associated with 'sinners'. Each centres on a precious loss – a sheep, a coin, and a son – and each portrays a different degree of agency in being found: the sheep has little, the coin has none, and the son returns by choice. The shepherd searches for the sheep that has wandered; the woman seeks the coin that will remain lost until it is found, and the father waits for his son's free decision to repent and ask forgiveness. These stories show that different situations call for different kinds of intervention. They also reflect people among us: the confused, the hopelessly lost, and those who choose to be lost. Jesus reminds us that our Father in heaven is attentive to our need, but that faith still calls for a small response from us, in keeping with the agency we have.

And what of the elder son? His resentment may stem from the burdens of being the firstborn person responsible for managing the family estate. There are no journeys to distant places or new experiences for him; his life is shaped by duty and service. These attitudes echo those often associated with the Pharisees and teachers of the law. Jesus' point, handed down to us, is that turning away from God is not beyond repair, and that those entrusted with caring for God's people should be more welcoming of those who seek to return to the Father.

And as Silas said to his older son: "Be glad because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

David Smith

*(I asked David about his thinking on this and his other reflections. He said, "I was aware of the Lent study on the Prodigal son and have often meditated on its origins and impact. I believe Jesus used real events when recounting his pithy stories. Imagine there really was a 'Good Samaritan' and a 'Rich Fool' with various other recognised personalities involved in the accounts. His opponents could hardly criticise the teaching if the accounts were true!" Thanks for your thoughts, David - Ed.)*



# ...MISSION

## Reviewing our Mission Giving

It is one of the PCC's responsibilities to review our Mission Giving every year. As a church we have long had a firm resolve to dedicate a minimum of 10% of our stewardship income (including Gift Aid) to Mission beyond our church, through partners local and international, as part of Jesus's exhortation that we should be sharing his love and salvation to the ends of the earth.

It is important to ensure that our mission giving aligns with God's purposes. Over the years our focus has changed from time to time. At one point virtually all our giving was directed internationally but in recent years the emphasis has shifted to include local mission as there are things we can only really do as churches together in Taunton. Currently our giving is approximately 30% to foreign and national missions and 70% to local connections which, in the main, are also ones where we have members of the congregation actively involved. We seek to distribute funds proportionately according to need.

But what are the criteria? Recently the PCC decided to look at how the mission support shaped up to the Anglican Church's 5 Marks of Mission – the call to share our faith in words and action.

- **Tell:** To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom.
- **Teach:** To teach, baptize, and nurture new believers.
- **Tend:** To respond to human need by loving service.
- **Transform:** To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind, and to pursue peace and reconciliation.
- **Treasure:** To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the earth.

In reviewing our mission connections, it appeared that our support emphasised the 'tending' element and therefore some of the other four aspects of the Marks of Mission were perhaps under-represented. As a result of this review, the PCC is considering what steps we could take to readjust the balance without significantly disadvantaging our existing partners.

If you have views you would like to express, please talk to Jenny Wakefield, Mike Gillingham or Richard Carpenter.

**In the meantime** our Mission Focus for the next three months will be on three organisations which are Christian love in action, seeking to share God's love in a practical way in an unjust and unfair world. They each reach out to different sectors of society.

In June we focus on **Taunton Area Debt Advice** – a local organisation that seeks to help families that are struggling with debt. Debt is easy to get into but difficult to get out of. TADA's trained volunteers can help their clients to navigate their way clear and begin to hope again.



In July we look at **Barnabas Aid**, an organisation that provides practical help and support for people in countries where Christians are not only in a minority but where they suffer discrimination, persecution and even death. This includes large swathes of Africa, the Near and Far East, Asia and central America and even include areas where some of us may take our holidays.



In September we highlight **Samaritan's Purse** and **Operation Christmas Child**. Many of us are familiar with the Shoebox Appeal which aims to send gifts and Christian material to children. But Samaritan's Purse is also an organisation which, among other things, has large resources ready to go into action fast when humanitarian disasters occur.



Jenny Wakefield

### ***Dad's surprise for the summer holidays***

In the early fifties, the wartime rationing scheme was wound down. Consumer goods began arriving in shops in enough quantity for the New Year and summer sales. My mother went to the sales with her mother, arriving just after 8:00am. So, we 'stayed sandwiches' at school that day and my father prepared them.

One time he sent us off with a new sandwich filling, we had pink filled sandwiches. When lunchtime arrived, my brother and I would sometimes swap sandwiches with the regular lunch boys if their filling was appealing. The pink sandwiches were a hit. But it was only last autumn that I made one for myself for the first time.

What was in the sandwiches? Just tomato sauce mixed with the egg.

So, in the summer holidays when the children are fractious, bored, etc., why not promise them pink sandwiches? Just tell them it's Flamingo egg!

Andrew Wright



# School News

St James' Church School

## Easter Service Church

In March it was a busy, bustling Easter service; the church bursting at the seams with children, parents and staff celebrating the Easter story.



## Church School Prayer Meeting

We have a prayer meeting in the Hive on the 2nd Tuesday of each half term to pray for the school.

## Collective Worship

Mike and Fabian lead KS1 and KS2 assemblies on Wednesdays. During his sabbatical, Fabian has sent video footage of his walk to Santiago de Compostella.



## TLG Members

Our team of coaches are working with six young people in the school. We are hoping two more volunteers will be approved for the autumn term.

## Readers

It's a real joy to sit with a child and accompany them on their reading journey as they travel from sounding out their first words to devouring whole books.



*Please*  *for our schools*

As you read this in June, schools across the area will be entering into the final half term before the end of the school year and many children, teachers and school staff will be looking forward to the holidays. At St James' Church we will be planning for the Leavers' Service in July; an opportunity to spend time with the year 6 pupils as they celebrate their time at St James Church School and remember their highlights and school journey.

For them SATs examinations are now out of the way and the oldest group of children can start to look forward, perhaps with some trepidation, to their next challenge – Senior School. Please pray for them as they enter this in-between time when they will no longer be the big fish in the primary 'pond' but the little fish in a much bigger secondary 'lake'. Pray too for the teachers and staff as they prepare the children and themselves for the changes that inevitably happen between one year and another.

At the other end of the scale there will be children in nurseries all over the town who are getting ready to say, "Goodbye," to the safety of their preschools and preparing for going to Big School – uniforms to buy, school bags to choose, friends to wave goodbye to. Parents and carers (and grandparents too) will be worrying about whether the children are ready and how to help them with the transitions; whether that 'dog-eared' little rabbit, teddy or piece of rag will be allowed to go with them and not get lost.

And don't forget those at the upper end of senior schools waiting nervously for the outcome of GCSEs, A levels or other courses that will pave the way for next step towards their future.

Jenny Wakefield



## Bridges...

Bridges come in many forms, clapper bridges are probably the oldest – Tarr Steps is probably our best example locally.

The Firth of Forth is famous for its cantilever railway bridge.

This was joined by the road suspension bridge in 1964 when Cynthia was present at the opening. Her cousin's husband was a local press photographer and claimed to have lain over the cable bed at the top of one of the towers when acting as a Police photographer! In early 2000, the third bridge – a cable stayed bridge – was built. The next bridge near Kincardine was a swing bridge but is now 'fixed' since the Port of Alloa closed. That has allowed a fifth bridge (concrete deck on many concrete piers) to be built that bypasses the small town of Kincardine. That's six types over one estuary.

There is another British invented bridge which is novel, but none is currently part of the UK road system. The one at Warrington has been closed since 1964 but is still standing, and a second is undergoing refurbishment and should reopen at the end of the year (in Newport, S Wales). A third, in Middlesbrough, is currently closed awaiting safety work. These are transporter bridges. They consist of uprights on each bank and a high-level horizontal connecting gantry (think of the top gantry on the Tower Bridge in London). From this is suspended a gondola which hangs from a bogie that is on rails inside the top gantry. When the gondola is loaded with vehicles, the bogie slowly moves across the top gantry and the gondola moves with it. This arrangement leaves the river navigable by high-masted ships but allows ground level vehicle crossings.



*Middlesbrough transporter bridge - image by Jon Oakley from Eaglescliffe, England - originally posted to Flickr as one of a kind, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=13280722>*

There used to be some more in the UK. The large transporter bridge at Runcorn was closed in 1961 when a replacement steel arch bridge similar to the Sydney harbour bridge was built. Close to the Warrington example, there used to be a second one linking two parts of Crossfield's Chemical and Soap works. That one has been demolished too, but apparently for many years the gantry structure was used to route pipes across the river to move liquids from one part of the works to the other.

So book a date in the diary for a trip over the Newport Transporter Bridge when it reopens!



Wakefield Chantry Bridge - image by Tim Green from Bradford, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=52126685>

There is another type of rare bridge; three exist in the UK. This is a Chantry bridge – a bridge with a chapel built into it and for periods of time were used for shops, storage and prisons. Because rivers are often 20-40 ft below the banks the chapel was at the top of a pier of the bridge with several floors below. There is one in Wakefield, one in St Ives, Huntingdon, and the third in Rotherham.

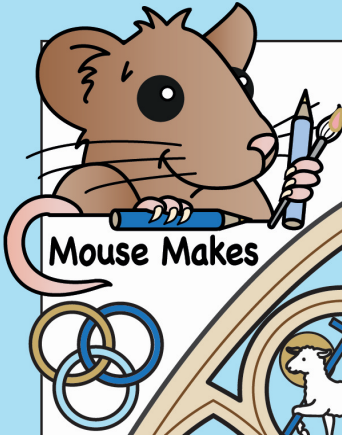
The Rotherham bridge carried the west bound road leading to Chapeltown which continued over the Pennines by the Woodhead Pass. The road climbs rapidly and the area near the town was farmed but further out it was forest – uncultivated land with heath and wood; only in summer would the route be dry underfoot. There was plenty of scope for robbery. Similarly, Wakefield was on the east end of a Pennine crossing. St Ives bridge led east to the fens which were wet most of the year and drowning by falling off the road was a real risk. So, a chapel on the bridge as you left town would offer a place to pray for a safe journey. There are also six chapels next to river bridges in England, that were not built into the bridge. At Colyton, Devon there was a chantry bridge but no evidence of the chapel remains. It possibly lasted until 1882 when the current bridge was built.

Andrew Wright



Tarr Steps - image by Stefan Kühn - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1285535>

# Young People's Pages





Mouse Makes

"May the grace of the Lord  
**JESUS CHRIST** and the  
love of **GOD** and the  
fellowship of the  
**HOLY SPIRIT** be  
with you all."

2 Corinthians  
13:14



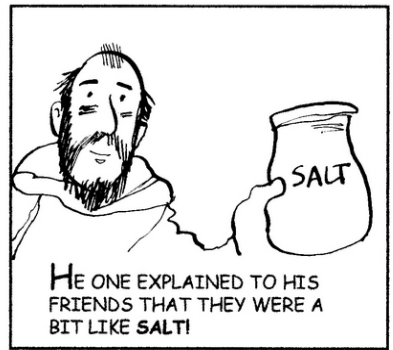
		
V	O	V
HIW	ISD	UDE
VENLR	JYIAM	TRUTH
SLAEP LG	ACGODJM	THAHSRI
HALDOOR	LROCKUA	OSPOWER
EMEWORD	MELORDJ	ULFLIFE
PBREADW	IABBAGE	POWYNDR
HLALPHA	GTDEBES	AWISDOM
EEMCGJY	HOYRFET	DBEPBVC
RMEHOEK	TRAHATY	VWTIREO
DMIRSST	YGHOIEF	OIEREFM
SAVIOUR	VSWLARA	CTRIAIF
PNESNSU	OHEYENT	ANNTTRO
OUNTLOT	JEHOVAH	TEACHER
MESSIAH	IKINGLE	ESLGIFT
RLGBFIS	SHIELDR	DSGUIDE
KEOMEGA	SAVIOUR	THELPER
<b>JESUS • CHRIST</b> SON • SAVIOUR • LORD EMMANUEL • MESSIAH SHEPHERD • LAMB • WAY TRUTH • LIFE • DOOR BREAD • WORD • HEALER VINE • ALPHA • OMEGA	<b>GOD • FATHER</b> ABBA • LORD • JEHOVAH YAHWEH • ALMIGHTY HOLY ONE • SAVIOUR ETERNAL • CREATOR KING • MAJESTY • JUDGE SHIELD • ROCK • I AM	<b>HOLY SPIRIT</b> GIFT • HELPER • WITNESS COMFORTER • GUIDE ADVOCATE • WISDOM POWER • TRUTH • BREATH LIFE • ETERNAL • DOVE WIND • FIRE • TEACHER



# The tale of the Salt and Light

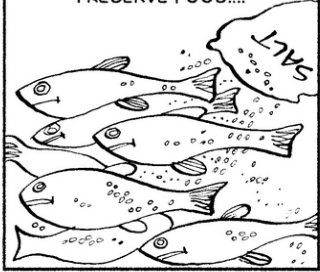


JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS

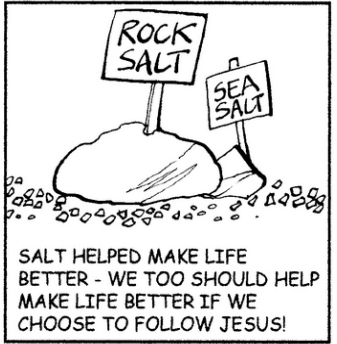


HE ONE EXPLAINED TO HIS FRIENDS THAT THEY WERE A BIT LIKE SALT!

IN JESUS' DAY, SALT WAS VERY PRECIOUS. IT HELPED PRESERVE FOOD....

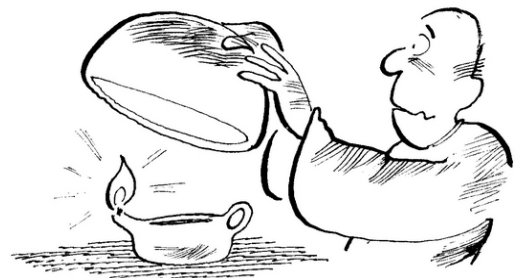
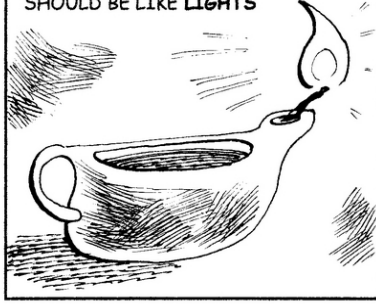


....AND SALT GAVE FLAVOUR. IT WAS VERY USEFUL INDEED



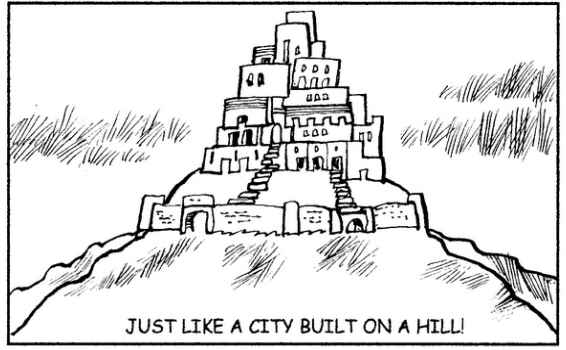
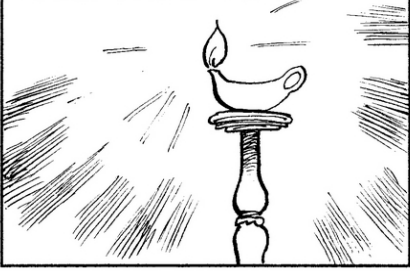
SALT HELPED MAKE LIFE BETTER - WE TOO SHOULD HELP MAKE LIFE BETTER IF WE CHOOSE TO FOLLOW JESUS!

JESUS ALSO SAID HIS FOLLOWERS SHOULD BE LIKE LIGHTS



'NOBODY LIGHTS A LAMP - THEN PUTS IT UNDER A BOWL', SAID JESUS

THE WAY WE LIVE OUR LIVES AS CHRISTIANS SHOULD BE AN EXAMPLE TO THE REST OF THE WORLD.



JUST LIKE A CITY BUILT ON A HILL!

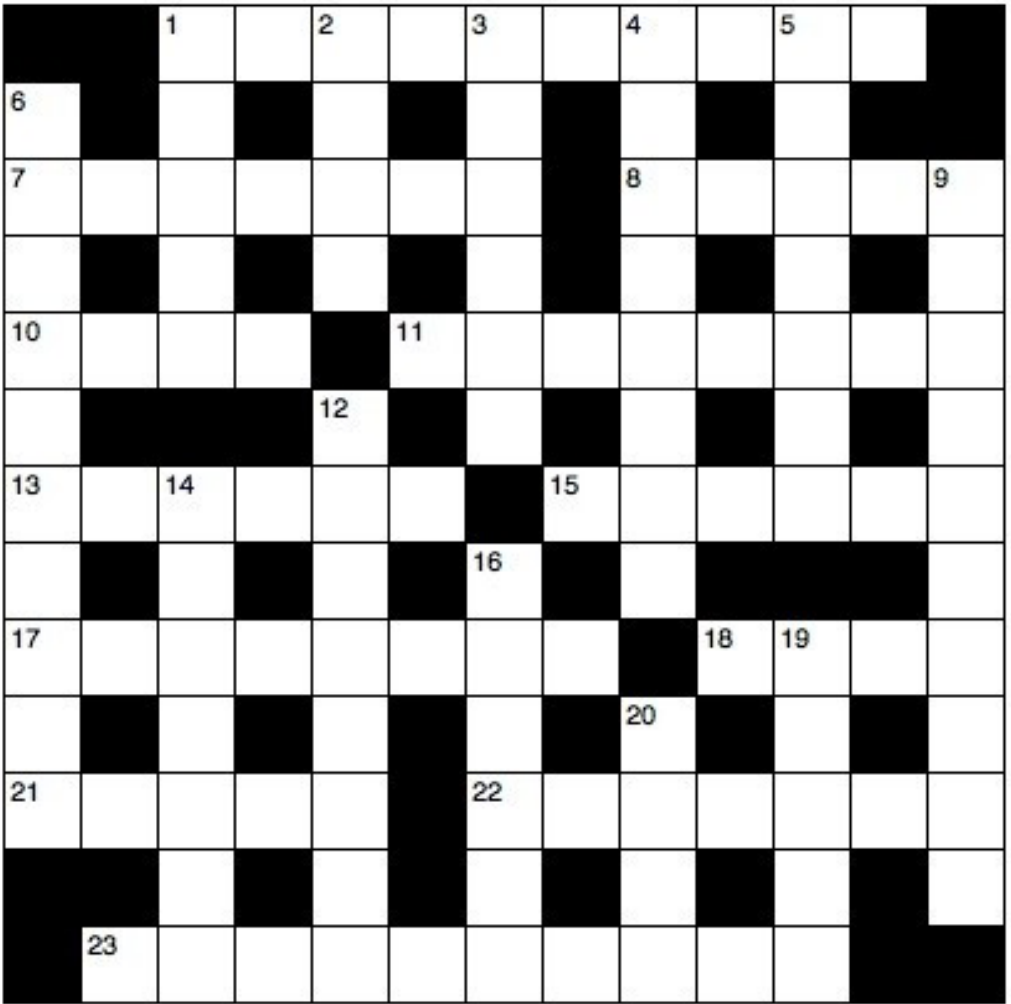
# Crossword

## Across

- 1 Evil (Genesis 6:5) (10)
- 7 Musician called for by Elisha when he met the kings of Israel, Judah and Edom (2 Kings 3:15) (7)
- 8 The request that led to the institution of the Lord's Prayer: 'Lord, — us to pray' (Luke 11:1) (5)
- 10 'We are hard pressed on every—'(2Corinthians4:8)(4)
- 11 Fraud (2Corinthians6:8)(8)
- 13 'His troops advance in force;they build a siege ramp against me and — around my tent' (Job 19:12) (6)
- 15 Where Rachel hid Laban's household gods when he searched his daughter's tent (Genesis 31:34) (6)
- 17 'Now about spiritual gifts,brothers,I do not want you to be—' (1 Corinthians 12:1) (8)
- 18 Nomadic dwelling(Genesis26:25)(4)
- 21 'As for man,his days are like—,he flourishes like a flower of the field' (Psalm 103:15) (5)
- 22 Or I live (anag.)(7)
- 23 Those guilty of 1 Across(Romans13:4)(10)

## Down

- 1 'God so loved the — that he gave his one and only Son' (John 3:16) (5)
- 2 'Away in a manger, no — for a bed' (4)
- 3 Mob ten (anag.) (6)
- 4 'Each — group made its own gods in several towns where they settled' (2 Kings 17:29) (8)
- 5 Began (Luke 9:46) (7)
- 6 Speaking very softly (John 7:32) (10)
- 9 Workers Ruth joined when she arrived in Bethlehem with her mother-in-law Naomi (Ruth 2:3) (10)
- 12 Put in jail(Acts22:19)(8)
- 14 Aceturn(anag.)(7)
- 16 Discharge(Acts21:3)(6)
- 19 'All these—come from inside and make a man "unclean"' (Mark 7:23) (5)
- 20 'Let us rejoice and be glad and — him glory!'(Revelation19:7)(4)



Golfer: "I'd move heaven and earth to break 100 on this course."

Caddie: "Try heaven, you've already moved most of the earth."

Image courtesy of Cecile Graat - rgbstock.com

**ACROSS:** 1, Wickedness, 7, Harpist, 8, Teach, 10, Side, 11, Impostor, 13, Encamp, 15, Saddle, 17, Ignorant, 18, Tent, 21, Grass, 22, Olivier, 23, Wrongdoers.

**DOWN:** 1, World, 2, Crib, 3, Entomb, 4, National, 5, Started, 6, Whispering, 9, Harvesters, 12, Imprison, 14, Centaur, 16, Unload, 19, Evils, 20, Give.

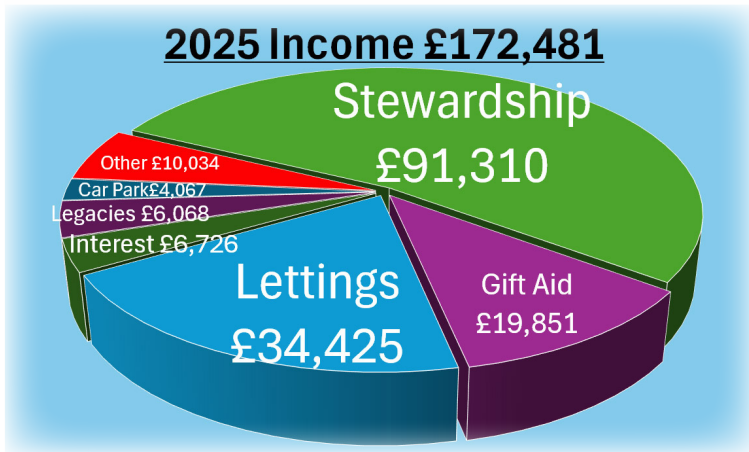
# Church Finances 2025

Oh no!!! A boring article about money. (Note to self, skip these pages and move on to something more comfortable.) Well, hopefully you won't and may even find the following useful and informative.

Currently, our finances are relatively healthy, although this would not be the case if we had not received two very generous legacies in the past few years that have kept our balance in the plus column!

“Where does our income come from and what do we spend it on?” I hear you ask. A question I am hardly ever asked, as finance is often something we prefer to leave to other people. A popular misconception is that churches are funded by external bodies, the government, local councils, etc. This is NOT the case, and all our finances are raised by ourselves.

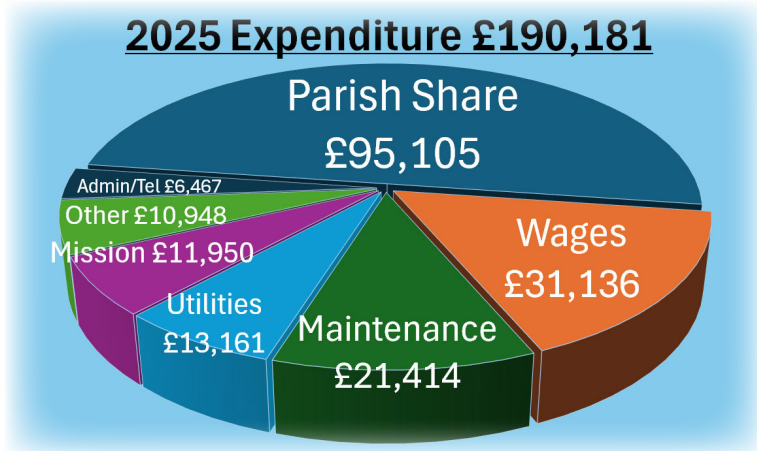
At least half our income is from direct giving from you, the members of St James, and includes Gift Aid which we can claim in addition if you are a UK taxpayer. (*Please speak to Chris Rickard, our Gift Aid Officer, if you are unsure.*) The remainder is made up from church and hall lettings, car park fees, interest, donations from various groups and occasional legacies.



Our main expenditure, about 50%, is always our Common Fund contribution (formerly Parish Share) which goes towards:

1. Vicar's salary, housing and pension
2. Diocesan wide costs
3. A Mutuality and Generosity fund to support churches that cannot cover their own costs

We support several local and overseas missions and give a minimum of 10% of our stewardship giving (including Gift Aid) to assist their mission work. Running costs for the church, including heating, lighting, wages, maintaining the building, when added together are in excess of £5,000/month!



In 2025, our expenditure exceeded our income by over £17,000. This is the 5th year running that our expenditure has exceeded income and, over that period, our income has fallen short by nearly £80,000. In the long term this is not sustainable and, as previously mentioned, past legacies are responsible for our current financial position.

Moving forward, we are joining The Parish Giving Scheme. More details will be announced soon, but one of the main advantages is a reminder to increase giving annually by the rate of inflation. It has been pointed out to me that if our giving kept pace with inflation, our shortfall would be negligible.

If you've made it this far, I hope you have found it informative. I will finish by saying a huge 'THANK YOU' to all who give regularly to support the ministry at St James. If you are 'prompted' to join the stewardship scheme, please have a word with Chris or me. There is no minimum amount required and you can join or stop whenever you like.

*Richard Sainsbury (Treasurer)*



## ***The PCC has been discussing...***

Here's a summary of the main things the Parochial Church Council looked at in March and May, and notes of the Annual Meeting in April.

### **Annual Meeting**

Nigel Bright and Fiona Hope were re-elected as churchwardens, and Richard Carpenter, Chris Rickard and Martin Wakefield were re-elected to Deanery Synod. David Jordan and Johan Smit were re-elected as ordinary members of the PCC, and Ruth Preater-Gillard, David Smith and Celia Wojcik were elected as new members. Thanks were expressed for the contribution of outgoing PCC members Jane Price and Vashti Smit.

Since the annual meeting, the PCC has co-opted Mike Newberry to the council, and it is planned that he will take one of the two one-year vacancies later in the year when his qualifying period of being on the Electoral Roll expires. There is one further one-year vacancy.

The income for 2025 was £172,481 and the expenditure £190,181, resulting in a deficit of £17,700. Stewardship income had fallen to £91,310, a decrease of £14,090 from 2024. Had stewardship income increased in line with inflation, the budget would have balanced. (See also Richard Sainsbury's report - page 30 - Ed.)

The PCC has subsequently decided that a Stewardship Sunday should be held soon after Harvest. Meanwhile, a new 'Giving' display will be created and a leaflet produced.

### **Mission Support**

The PCC is carrying out a review of our 'portfolio' of mission partners, which has not been done for some time. The first step has been to see how well the range of partners covers the CofE's Five Marks of Mission, with the result being that the 5th mark, striving to safeguard the integrity of creation, was only partially covered by one partner. The review continues.

### **Youthwork**

The new steering group has met and is considering the matter of finding someone to lead the group for older children. The options are being kept open: while a student placement or a trained person would be the obvious avenues, it may be that God has already identified someone else for this role. The group is currently looking at a similar arrangement as we have for children's work, i.e. around 10 hours per week.

## **Safeguarding**

In March, Jenny Wakefield submitted the six-monthly safeguarding report, together with the Level 3 Safeguarding Action Plan, the Safeguarding Standards progress chart, and the Hub Overview Report. Yes, it is getting more complicated, especially with the Action Plan listing 131 separate status levels covering policies, procedures, training, information display, reviews and reports. Fortunately, most of these are marked as 'green', a testament to the hard work of Jenny and Jacqui.

A Serving Sunday is being considered where young people help with a range of Sunday duties. Criteria are needed for oversight of placements, especially if any are to help with Children's Church.

## **Miscellaneous Matters**

- Richard Lucas will be stepping down as Worship Coordinator in the autumn. The main need at present is to establish a worship group that is not dependent on any one individual being present every week. The current plan is to start by seeing if the Youth Band can be used for one service every month. The shape of the worship leadership team will emerge as new arrangements are developed.
- Pastoral support is still very much on the PCC agenda, with a review meeting due to be held at the end of May.
- The arrangements for admitting children (who are baptised) to communion will be progressed when Fabian returns from sabbatical.
- Arrangements are being made in conjunction with Taunton Heritage Trust (who manage the almshouses) to further improve the parking area in the churchyard.
- The Communications Team is working on improvements to the various displays at the back of the church.
- Planning has started on replacing the gas heaters in the Large Hall with an air-conditioning system. This is the first stage in a much larger programme to move the church away from fossil fuel heating.
- The PCC continues to keep its policy documents under review. In this period, we looked at the Complaints and Allegations Policy, the Supporting Volunteers Policy, and the PCC Standing Orders.

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*



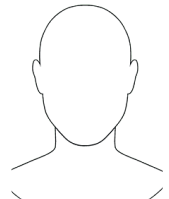
*Richard Carpenter*



*Roger Fenton*



*Mike Gillingham*



*Vacancy*



*Lyn Jones*



*David Jordan*



*Ruth Preater-Gillard*



*Mike Newberry*



*Chris Rickard*



*Richard Sainsbury*



*Johan Smit*



*David Smith*



*Jenny Wakefield*



*Martin Wakefield*



*Celia Wojcik*

photos: Richard Sainsbury

## Concerts at St James

Many choirs and orchestras use St James' Church to stage their performances. The church is a wonderful concert venue with flexible seating, a good acoustic and facilities. Each concert has a steward from the church and quite often a member of the 'tech' team to provide p/a. And some members of the church sing with Taunton Choral Society and Voce, so you would know some of the faces in the choirs

Meeting the audience at some of these concerts is a really good way of connecting with people who may not ordinarily attend church - a chance to talk to them about the building and about what we, as Christians, stand for. Here are some of the concerts coming up soon. Why not get your tickets and show the face of St James' to a wider audience!



The poster features a central image of a bottle of Stolpman beer on a table with roses. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene. In the bottom left, a man in a white polo shirt and cap points towards the right. In the bottom right, a woman in a black and white outfit sits on a director's chair with a megaphone. The text is in various colors and fonts, including red, white, and black. There are two logos in the top corners: a red square with a white 'T' and 'C' and the text 'Taunton Concert Band'.

**Taunton Concert Band**  
**Summer Concert 2026**  
St James Church, Taunton  
**Saturday 6 June 2026 at 7:30 pm**  
Doors Open 7:10 pm

**Tickets £12. Under 12's FREE**

*This summer we present a wonderful selection of great music from  
Stage and Screen*

Registered Charity Number 1055567

[www.tauntonconcertband.co.uk](http://www.tauntonconcertband.co.uk)  
[tauntonconcertband@btinternet.com](mailto:tauntonconcertband@btinternet.com)



The poster has a background image of a sunset over a body of water with a large rock formation in the foreground. The text is in white and black. The conductor and leader names are in a smaller font. The program titles are in a larger font. The date and time are in a bold font. The location is in a smaller font. There is a QR code in the bottom left corner.

**Somerset County Orchestra**  
Conductor David Hedges  
Leader Alex Chivers

Kashperova  
Symphony in  
B minor

Tchaikovsky  
Symphony  
No. 5

Borodin  
Polovtsian Dances  
No. 17

**Saturday  
13th June 2026  
at 7:30 p.m.**  
St James Church, Taunton

*Tickets £15 Students and Under 18 Free  
available from the Taunton Visitor Centre,  
our website and on the door*

Registered Charity No. 288482



The poster has a teal and orange background with a large white treble clef and the word 'Voce' in a white script font. Below the title, there are two columns of names in white capital letters. The word 'FAVOURITES' is in a large white font. Below it, there is text in white capital letters. The date and time are in a bold white font. The location is in a smaller white font. The ticket prices are in a smaller white font. The website is in a smaller white font.

**Voce**

WHITAKER  
BILLY JOEL  
ARNESEN  
VOCES 8  
OLA GJEILO  
CLEAN BANDIT

RHEINBERGER  
STING  
KATE RUSBY  
BEN FOLDS  
LOTTERY WINNERS  
ARLEN & HARBURG

**FAVOURITES**

HIGHLIGHTS CELEBRATING 5 YEARS OF  
TAUNTON'S ECLECTIC CHAMBER CHOIR

**19:00 SATURDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2026**

ST JAMES CHURCH, TAUNTON

TICKETS: £10 ADULTS - £5 UNDER 18  
[WWW.TICKETSOURCE.CO.UK/VOCE-CHAMBER-CHOIR](http://WWW.TICKETSOURCE.CO.UK/VOCE-CHAMBER-CHOIR)

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