



St James

Hemingford Grey

Year in Review

2022 - 2023



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Introduction

In October this year we said “goodbye” to our vicar, Peter, and his wife Rosie, who have faithfully and lovingly served us for more than 20 years. They have gently and patiently led the family of St James teaching us to listen to, and to follow Jesus, day by day. We are truly grateful to them for their love, patience and example – we miss them, and we wish them and their family God’s richest blessings in their new home in Hampshire.

During the inter-regnum we have particularly become aware that the family of St James is made up of many different people who have a variety of skills and gifts, and this has been a real blessing during the inter-regnum. As we look to the future it is important that we continue to have this understanding and attitude of being a large family, who care for one another, who accept differences in love, and who worship God and serve our community as members of the one body of Jesus.

*Mike Pinnock, Ian Sinkinson
(Churchwardens) & Allen Foster
(on behalf of PCC)*

Churchwardens

Your churchwardens (CWs) this year have been Mike Pinnock and Ian Sinkinson. APCM reports can sometimes read like a long list of thank you notes. But this past year, with the departure of Peter and Rosie in October, the way in which you have supported us has been outstanding. Formally, during a vacancy in a parish, the churchwardens are responsible for ensuring that worship, pastoral care and mission continues in the parish. Frankly, given the extra work that we undertook preparing to recruit a new vicar, we would have struggled to fulfill our duties without the support we have received. In particular, the ministry team led by Ben Pearson, have organised our worship services. Allen Foster took on chairing the PCC. Rachel Winton has kept us in order and reminded us of the 101 things we might have overlooked. Volunteers in the Parish Centre and church have allowed us to continue to serve and worship God in this parish. Thank you all so much.

We were blessed to have Peter with us for twenty years, a length of tenure that is something of a rarity these days. He and Rosie worked assiduously to complete handovers, showing all the care and attention so characteristic of them. It was a joy to have your help in putting together the “jars of clay”, with your messages, that were presented at their departure. Special thanks to Jane Barker for producing such beautiful objects.

After Peter’s departure, the Bishop wished to place the two parishes of St James’ and St Margaret’s (SMHA) in “plurality”: the minister appointed would be vicar to both Parishes (Peter was “priest-in-charge” of SMHA, not their vicar). This seemed a reasonable step, given the much closer cooperation and shared resources that we have enjoyed with SMHA over recent years.

Accordingly, Ian and Mike worked with the SMHA churchwardens to produce a joint Parish Profile - a document describing the parishes to potential applicants. We found working with David Wordsworth and Daniela Spica (CWs at

SMHA) easy and constructive. However, the two churches have different backgrounds to worship and some aspects of theology: to produce a joint Profile required a lot of meetings and rewrites before both PCCs could approve it.

We conducted an interview of one candidate on 30th March but were unable to appoint. The advert will be placed again and we ask all to continue to pray that God will guide the right person to minister to us. The Terrells are organising another day of prayer in June.

The church building remains in generally good order, although people’s feet will be well aware of the failings of our heating! Significant work has been done on determining how to replace the church heating (our boiler is obsolete and becoming increasingly unreliable). This is a significant task: apart from the capital investment the diocese also requires us to identify a path to achieving significant reduction in our carbon emissions (i.e. does not have to be achieved in a single step). We have had some excellent ideas from contractors and anticipate putting a proposal to

our PCC and the diocese shortly, so that installation can be completed before next winter. ***This work has not been budgeted for, and the first step is likely to cost in the order of £10k.*** When details are finalised we will be launching an appeal, and seeking possible grant support.

Stephen Terrell and Don Wright will shortly be doing work to improve the ventilation in the tower ringing room, following successful application for a faculty order to do this work. Once again, we record with thanks the work that Steve Moller and Stephen Terrell do on maintenance of the Parish Centre, extending to window replacement this year - they save the church thousands of pounds with this work!

As always, we welcome receiving your criticisms and your praise. Some of you provided valuable comments on what you wanted to see included in the Parish Profile. We have also benefited from the discussions at PCC, which have always come from the heart and faithfulness to our God. Many of you have told us that you welcome the variety of

preaching and teaching delivered on a Sunday - thank you once again to the ministry team and all who have continued to bring God's word to us.

We are both prepared to stand for election as CWs for one more year, if elected we would both wish to stand down after that time. We ask all the congregation to prayerfully consider whether they could put themselves forward to be a churchwarden at the 2024 APCM. Ian and Mike would welcome talking to you about the role and we would continue to be available after the 2024 APCM to give practical help and guidance.

*Mike Pinnock and Ian Sinkinson
Churchwardens*

Families, Children & Youth

The youth, children's and family's ministry at St James has one aim; to proclaim the good news of Jesus so that all who hear the gospel, will come to put their hope in Christ.

Our recent memory verse at youth has been Romans 12:1-2.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

We have wonderful news to share and a great God who has shown great mercy to us. The challenge comes in verse 2. "Do not conform to the pattern of this world..." Our children and particularly young people face an ever-growing list of uncertainties and pressures. Our prayer is that whoever comes through our doors at any group will hear about the life changing news of Jesus and his transforming love for them.

A huge thank you (!) to everyone who gives up their time and energy to help serve at our groups. None of our groups could function without helpers, leaders and volunteers. Working with children and young people is more than just filling the rota, it is to get to know God's word better as you

look to communicate it clearly to children and young people. If you would like to know more or wish to come and see the work at first hand, please get in touch:
ben@churchbytheriver.org.uk.

Lastly please do pray for the leaders of our children's and youth groups. Pray for them as they look to share the life changing news of Jesus with children and young people.

Ben Pearson, Youth, Children's & Families Minister

Junior Church is for anyone age 18 months - 10 years old and it is split into 3 groups: Adventurers (3-7 year olds) the Trail Blazers (8-10 year olds) and the recently reformed group Scramblers for those children who are aged 18 months - 3years old.

At Junior Church we discover who Jesus is, making crafts, playing games, learning memory verses from the Bible and sustaining ourselves on the ever-popular Maoams. We remain committed to providing a safe, fun environment at the Parish Centre for the children to learn and grow in their understanding of Christ.

Over the last year Jr Church have looked at some Psalms, the book of Daniel, used the Epic Explorer material which uses the book of Mark to help the children understand the gospel of who Jesus is, what he has done and what it means to follow him. This term, along with the youth, Jr Church will look at the issues surrounding identity and how this can be shaped by God rather than the world. Please pray for the Junior Church leaders. Ask God that in his great mercy he will work in the hearts of the children and leaders, as they meet together, that they would know his love for them and in turn put their trust in Christ.

Junior Church team: Zoe Ryall, Annie Johnson, Thay Hoole, Amelie Austin, Dadirai Sinkinson, Vanessa Allen, Grace Pearson & Grace Matthews

Youth on Sunday is for anyone aged 10 (year 6) - 15 (year 10) and meets every Sunday morning during term time.

Youth on a Sunday morning is the main time when we meet as a youth group. We play games, eat cake or doughnuts but the main focus is

to look at the bible and apply it to our lives and the situations that surround us. Over the last year we have looked at the life of Joseph, a section of Mark's gospel, the book of Daniel and over the summer term we will look at the issues surrounding identity and how this can be shaped by God rather than the world.

Please continue to pray for our young people. Pray that they would know the love of God for themselves that they would turn to Christ and be bold to stand up for what they believe in him as they look to share the good news of Jesus with the people around them.

Youth leaders: Mark & Mandy Latimer, Paul Lilly. Ben Pearson, Youth, Children's & Families Minister

The Lads Bible Study Group has been meeting regularly on a Sunday afternoon for well over a year. Together we play some video games and go deeper in to God's word. It has been a privilege to watch young men wrestle with God's word as they look to understand it better for themselves and see just how wonderful and amazing God is.

We have covered a range of topics, including the Lord's Prayer, Apostles Creed and the book of Daniel.

Please continue to pray for us as a group and the young men who come that they would continue to put their trust in Jesus Christ.

Ben Pearson, Youth, Children's & Families Minister

Youth and Family Events This year we have continued to build on the events and activities from last year, aimed at engaging children and families in the local area, including the Autumn Trail and the Christmas Crafter-noon. More recently we hosted the 'Easter Fair'. The aim of this event was to get out into the community and provide a fun environment for us as a church to engage with people who live in our village. This was a huge success and we are so grateful for the hard work of a number of volunteers who gave up their Saturday in order to make it happen.

In the summer of 2022, the youth thoroughly enjoyed the annual summer barbecue with inflatable sweeper. We aim to provide events at key points in

the year with the aim to encourage the young people of St. James to bring their friends to a well-run event and act as an opportunity to reach out to young people around us.

Ben Pearson, Youth, Children's & Families Minister

First Steps is intended to be one of our first contacts with new mums (and dads) in the village. We meet every Tuesday in term time.

Our aim is to provide a safe and happy place, in the Parish Centre, for babies/children to play, learn and interact. It is an environment where the parents, carers, and child-minders can make friends, socialise, and feel supported. We provide a range of toys, activities, craft, to suit all ages. The Lantern Room is set-aside for babies.

Adults can relax with tea/coffee, while the children have juice and toast. We finish the session with group nursery rhymes, action songs and a Bible story. With the coffee shop not trading we have much more room, to spread out.

On average about 15/25 adults

and 20/30 children attend each week. We have been pleased to welcome many new mums with their babies. We are now making use of the coffee shop's facilities to offer "posh" coffee - made by Mandy and Genevieve for an extra donation.

We have been encouraged to see that many of the First Steps families have joined in with St James' seasonal events – Light & Nativity Trails, and Easter Fair on Vicarage Fields.

There is a great atmosphere in the Parish Centre every Tuesday morning! Our team has had appropriate CRB checks, in line with our Child Protection Policy. They have also completed the Diocesan Safeguarding Training. We would welcome anyone with expressions of interest to join us, as we seek to come closer to our community, and share our faith.

Steve and the Team: Alison, Mandy, Zoe, Shirley, James, Ben and Gi (Genevieve) and Grace P.

Dads' Breakfast aims to get to know the dads in our village,

whose wives/partners usually come to First Steps. We meet every 3rd Saturday. However, our children are not limited to pre- school age. Some are 7, 8 and 9 years old, so we also provide computer Wii games on a big screen to entertain them. We seek to build a relationship with the whole family.

Building up numbers after COVID, has been a slow process and a challenge, (average 7 dads/11 children). However recently we have had 9 new dads with their children!

Please pray for our team who are made up of 5 granddads, who make this event possible.

Team: Steve and Team: Ian C, Mike P, Ian S, Allen F.

Dads' & Kids' Camping aim is similar to Dads' Breakfast but engaging with slightly older children, as babies and toddlers don't often attend. We only meet once a year, and not all come to Dads' Breakfast.

We have fun and informal games, a great evening BBQ, and a big bonfire, which makes it very popular. In the morning bacon sandwiches and marshmallows are toasted in the

embers. Last year 19 dads and 38 children joined us up at Burleigh Hill Farm for the weekend. This year, Graham Worsley and Simon Keen have taken over organization and leadership; it will take place on 17th and 18th June.

Steve Moller

Lay Ministers

In reporting, the Lay Ministers would firstly like to record our thanks to Peter Cunliffe who, throughout his time with us, was an inspiring leader, a kind pastor and was courageous in his faithfulness to the Gospel. He encouraged each of us in our various gifts and ministries and so we have been well equipped to continue serving the congregations of both St James' and St Margaret's following his retirement.

In the Diocese of Ely, approximately 4,000 services are conducted by Licensed Lay Ministers each year, and approximately 2,000 sermons delivered. In addition, there are many services conducted by Authorised Lay Ministers. LLMs also provide Teaching, Chaplaincy, Marriage and Baptism Preparation, Children's

Work, Pastoral Care and so much more!

At St James' our LLMs are Tim Wetherfield, Gerald Barrett and Liz Pinnock. Judith Hall is our ALM Worship Leader.

In addition to Sunday, Wednesday and Festival services and sermons, some of us lead a weekly 'slot' of Night Prayer, conduct Worship at Field Lodge, conduct Funerals, serve in the Pastoral Team, the PCC and assist the Diocese as Selectors for those seeking to become LLMs amongst other things.

Tim Wetherfield reflects that, *'motivated by a love of God, and taking our responsibility to the congregation very seriously, we aim as individuals and as Church family, to understand the Bible more, get to know the heart of God better, try to apply faith to our everyday lives and communicate how being a Christian makes a difference.'*

To that, Liz would add that we aim to encourage everyone to grow deeper in their faith and acts of service at whatever stage they are on that journey. Furthermore, we seek to care for and protect the congregation and any who visit or join us. Consequently, we each

undertake rigorous Safeguarding training at Leadership Level, we study, we undertake continuous training offered by the Diocese as well as attending Seminars, Conferences etc. on diverse topics e.g. Dementia Awareness, Ministry among Seniors, Liturgy Old and New and Creative Retreats to mention but a few provided by other organisations. This brings us into contact with Ministers from around the region and beyond, all of which sharpens our minds and practice and inspires us.

Upon Peter's retirement, we are especially thankful to Ben who has restarted our weekly Team Meetings in which we dwell in God's word, pray together and liaise with the Musicians, Churchwardens, other Service Leaders and our Ministers Judith Bolton and Ben. We review what we have done in Church Services and plan for future ones. We are delighted to have been able to sustain regular worship at St James' and assist at St Margaret's. Special mention should be made of Judith Bolton who has stepped up despite having retired and with difficult family

circumstances and, similarly, Ruth Terrell.

We have provided the festival services at Christmas and Easter and for some special occasions such as All Souls and the Platinum Jubilee. We have enjoyed delivering services based on Lectionary Readings as well as some thematic series such as that delivered in February and March looking at the Pentateuch and the salvation promises found there that were fulfilled by Jesus.

In leading worship, we are particularly grateful to our Musicians, who diligently select songs and prepare for sung worship. They are backed by our amazing multi-tasking Churchwardens who, along with a few others, provide the technical support of sound, audio-visuals and live streaming week in, week out as well as for weddings and funerals!

We cannot fail to mention the many members of the congregation who read the scriptures and lead intercessions with such devotion, the Sides people who welcome and those who make coffee, the congregational pastors, occasional preachers and Rachel and JoAnne who

provide all the admin support with such cheerfulness. For all your kind encouragement to us we thank you all.

Judith Hall reflects that we miss Peter's kindly wisdom and guidance but look to the future and the new things that God is planning for us. She leaves us with this scripture;

"For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland." Isaiah 43:19

The Lay Ministers

Church Services

During 2022 all Services and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 21st April could be carried out in person together with the opportunity to join online for those who wished to attend from home.

At Easter and Christmas special services were held at St James for members of the congregation and the wider community. The Queens Platinum Jubilee was commemorated with a special service on 5th June, and in conjunction with Hemingford Grey Parish Council, St James

marked the passing of Her Majesty the Queen with a special service and a book of condolence in the church. Mid-week Holy Communion services have been held twice a month.

PCC Report

PCC has 15 members (13 elected by the APCM and 2 ministers). PCC has met the first Wednesday of the month throughout the year (except August). The PCC has various sub-committees and working groups which look after: Personnel; Overseas Mission; Church buildings and fabric; Finances; Hope House; and the Parish Centre.

The most significant news during this year was the retirement of our vicar. After serving 20 years at St James Rev Peter Cunliffe, who chaired the PCC, retired at the end of September. The church then entered a period of interregnum with the latter half of the year being taken up with the drafting of a Parish Profile, by our Church Warden's, in readiness for advertising the vacant post. Some important issues that have been discussed during the year have included: the annual budget; staff salaries; use of the

Parish Centre; our energy contract; and the parish profile for the new incumbent.

Allen Foster (on behalf of PCC)

Night Prayer

Night prayer, which was started during the COVID lock down, has continued on each Monday – Friday evenings at 9pm on zoom. The link can be found on the weekly church newsletter. Night Prayer lasts for 15-20 minutes and consists of an evening liturgy, readings and prayers being led by different people from the congregations of St Margaret's and St James'. Participants find it a quiet and reflective way to look back on the day. All are welcome to attend on whichever evenings they wish.

Hope into Action

St James has partnered with a Christian charity called Hope into Action, to use a church owned house in the village to provide a home for a family in need. We call this house "Hope House". A family of five have been living in the house for 18 months.

Hope into Action provide an Empowerment Worker who

works with the family as they find their way out of homelessness. The Friendship & Support Group, formed of members of the church, support the family with their everyday life. For example, Dave Barber and Jamie Austin give of their DIY skills to help the family with jobs around the house, which they appreciate greatly. Cynthia Reed and Clive Sprawson lead a group who meet every month to pray for the family. We have seen many answers to prayer over the last 18 months, and we give thanks to God for his faithfulness to this family, and his timely provisions to enable us to support them.

If you are interested to know more about Hope House or Hope into Action, please contact Ranjini at ranjinimathew@gmail.com

Ranjini Mathew

Music and Worship Group

Psalm 147 tells us "How good it is to sing praises to God, how pleasant and fitting to praise Him," and Psalm 150 encourages us to praise God with all types of instruments and with dancing. How much poorer

our worship would be without being able to praise God in this way. To this end we are grateful for all who contribute to this ministry, singers, instrumentalists, sound and vision operators, administrators, all help to facilitate our corporate worship.

It has been good to get back to a regular pattern of worship with our 10.00 a.m. services. It has also been pleasing to see some pre-covid activities returning, like the midweek communion, in-person services at Field Lodge and how great also, to see the school children return to church for their Christmas services, needing 3 services to accommodate them all. Our own Carol service saw a good-sized choir, with band, which was well supported and appreciated.

It's great to welcome David Chambers as a regular band member and to have Eli Schroeder able to play with us, and other youngsters like Millie Worsley, to sing occasionally. Our musicians work on a rota basis, to enable each person to do as much or as little as they are able, to fit with each individual's family/work/school commitments, but availability at

the moment can be very varied, almost 'feast or famine' with sometimes a big band and then other times, maybe only one person available. This gives limited opportunities for all the musicians to play and worship together. New volunteers to take turns on the music rota are needed, even if just once a month, and would be very much appreciated. If you are considering volunteering and have any questions about how we organise the team, please speak to any one of the three undersigned, who take turns to lead the band.

It is a responsibility, but also, a great privilege and blessing to serve the Lord and the church family in this way.

Ian Cooke, Alwyn Frost and Stephen Terrell

Flowers

We have continued this year to strive to reduce our environmental impact and have gone the entire year without using floral foam (Oasis). This has led to some experimentation with floral mechanics, and we have moved away from the traditional big pedestal arrangements of old,

with a more natural and relaxed style. There is also an attempt to reduce the use of imported flowers, which have a huge environmental and human cost, with the widespread use of pesticides and use of fuel to fly them across the world in refrigerated containers. Instead, we are using more seasonal flowers, if possible grown in our own gardens or foraged from the countryside. The latest venture is a small cutting patch on the north side of the church, which will have flowers specifically grown for picking and using in church. We already used some home-grown daffodils for the Easter arrangements, and there will be a lot to follow in summer, which I am going to grow from seed. All these measures will have a bonus value of saving money from our personal and church budget. We can't avoid bought flowers all together, but every little helps.

Many thanks as always for the time and commitment of our small team of arrangers: June, Rosemary, Ranjini, Zoe and Aline. Your efforts are much appreciated.

Elaine Lee

Safeguarding

Since the last APCM there have been no safeguarding issues, disclosures or concerns to report.

During the year 14 volunteers at St James's have undergone DBS checks and St James's people have taken a total of 26 various safeguarding training courses.

The Church of England continues to take safeguarding very seriously and in the last 12 months has issued a number of directives and guidance notes for implementation at parish level, including a major Guidance Note on Safer Recruitment and People Management. The PCC has reviewed and re-issued its safeguarding policies to ensure compliance with the latest requirements.

I have been Parish Safeguarding Officer for St James's Church for seven years now and have seen the role expand beyond all recognition as the Church of England has taken its safeguarding responsibilities to heart following some serious failings in the past. Greater requirements have been placed on staff, PCCs and volunteers with more paperwork, more frequent

checks and increased training requirements. I am hugely grateful for the support of the PCC as I have sought to keep the church compliant with all the new regulations and guidance, and to all our great cohort of volunteers who, with little or no grumbling, have accepted these increased requirements for the sake of being able to serve our Lord in all that they do for and in St James's church.

I am most grateful, too, to Heather Chambers who has agreed, with PCC approval, to take over from me in the role of Parish Safeguarding Officer with effect from the next PCC meeting. I wish her every success and ask that you pray for her!

Ian Sinkinson
Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Finances

Voluntary giving to the general fund in 2022 was £185,008 (2021: £185,238) and total income was £205,607 (2021: £203,699). Total current assets at year end were £129,351 (2021: £136,872).

We continue to donate 15% of our income to our mission

partners. In 2022 we donated £38,264 to our mission partners (2021: £30,649). This included a one-off donation of £10,000 to support the work of Mission Possible in Ukraine. Our budget for giving to our mission partners in 2023 is £29,020. In addition, in 2022, £10,745 was collected in donations for the support of Anbesan Hoole.

The Coffee Hub continued to operate throughout the year and £5,222 was raised in voluntary donations during the year.

During the year we moved our accountancy package from Paxton Accounts to Liberty Accounts and brought our payroll in-house rather than using an external payroll company. In addition to streamlining our accounts this saves £700/year in fees.

During the year we decided to invest £30,000 in Cambridge and Counties Bank and £70,000 in The CBF Church of England Investment Fund. Cambridge and Counties Bank is currently paying 3.5% and the investment in the Church of England Investment Fund has a current yield of 2.86%. As you will be aware 2022 was a turbulent

year for investments and at year end our investment in the CBF Church of England Investment Fund had lost £2,895, however at the time of writing the loss has been recovered and the investment is now showing a gain of £601 pounds.

As you will be aware, costs have risen sharply during the year, particularly costs of gas and electricity. As a result, the budget for 2023 is showing a deficit of £9,236 (Income: £198,000, Expenditure: £207,236). As our primary source of income is voluntary donations we would ask you to prayerfully consider whether you can increase your donations in line with inflation. A 5% increase in donations would cancel the deficit and result in a balanced budget.

Finally, we are pleased to report that in 2022 we met our Cost of Ministry contribution to the Diocese of £63,213 in full and that all reports to HMRC, The Charity Commission and The Diocese were filed on time. We would like to thank our church bookkeeper, Catherine Keen, for all her work during the year.

Edward Nevill Hon. Treasurer

Friday Prayer Group

The Friday evening prayer group meets to pray together every week. Usually, we get together for an hour to share and pray about the things that God has put on our hearts. We pray for the local church, the services and activities and also the wider church family, with particular emphasis on the persecuted church; for personal concerns and issues in the world that come to our attention and so on. After initial sharing we spend the rest of the hour in prayer.

We meet weekly on Friday evening at 7pm for one hour in the Parish Centre, and anyone who would like to join us is very welcome. The group comprises presently about 5 people, and it would be wonderful if more people came to pray with us.

Ute Mokros

Deanery Synod

The church had 2 lay representatives on Deanery Synod (Ian Sinkinson and Alison Craven) in 2022 with 2 vacancies. It is not a difficult task, requiring 2-3 evenings in the year, and providing opportunity to meet others and

to vote for members of the Diocesan Synod, who then elect the lay representatives on General Synod, and therefore have a say in the direction of the Church of England.

Two Deanery Synod meetings were held during the year, in May and November. Both were conducted online. Deanery Development Planning meetings, to help churches with their outreach into the parish, have been held in the deanery and diocese. These were important to some parishes though less so to us, as we are already involved in the areas covered, such as work with families and children, schools and outreach as we do through the Parish Centre.

At the start of the year there was no appointed Archdeacon or Rural Dean, Hugh McCurdy and Mike Booker covered the 2 roles until new appointments were made. In midyear Ven. Richard Harlow was appointed Archdeacon and at the end of the year Rev. Duncan Goldthorpe, vicar of East Leightonstone, was appointed Rural Dean and commissioned by the Archdeacon at a meeting in early 2023.

Alison Craven

World Mission

The church has continued to support 7 mission partners in their work in various countries, both financially and in prayer. It also encourages the mission outreach of CPAS, the church patrons and organisers of the Broads Easter cruises, and Hope into Action (reported separately).

The seven partnerships are with:

Anbu Hoole in Bach Christian Hospital in northern Pakistan, developing its work in respiratory medicine and working with a growing church of young people.

Jigsaw in the Philippines and the Lee family supporting this work. Jigsaw works with slum children and families to share the love of God through groups, in education, health and other needs.

Mission Possible UK, run by Richard and Ruth Wallis working through partner organisations in Eastern Europe and East Africa. In this year there was a special emphasis on the needs in southern Ukraine.

Seeta Gurung in Nepal working with DAI in their training of young Christians in leadership and management.

Janet and Pascal Fresard working with Wycliffe Bible Translators in Senegal, from their base in Switzerland, in management and translation support.

CBM in its work in many countries through local partner organisations working with disabled people.

Tear Fund, especially in its emergency relief work in many areas of the world.

The highlights of the year were: Anbu being able to return to Pakistan after a year of training in the UK and, being able to send £10,000 through MP UK, over and above normal mission giving, to local churches in southern Ukraine to support people remaining there and struggling with basic living supplies and loneliness.

Alison Craven

Tower

Throughout this year 2 peals and 13 quarter peals have been rung alongside the usual ringing for Sunday services, weddings and sometimes funerals. In June a quarter peal was rung to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty The Queen. Then in September following her death all 8 bells were rung fully

muffled in memorial. Bells are only rung fully-muffled with the backstroke of the tenor bell, the heaviest bell, (ours is over 11 cwt), left open for the death of the Sovereign, the incumbent Vicar, or the Bishop of the diocese. Later on the 19th of September, along with churches across the country, the tenor bell was tolled half muffled for one hour prior to the funeral service of Her Majesty at Westminster Abbey. Other notable ringing included a quarter peal in November in memory of local resident Dr John Walshe who passed away at the age of 102 years. He was the founder of the treatment for Wilson's Disease.

General maintenance has been completed on the bells which remain in good working order and a simulator has now been installed. The simulator will help with training new ringers. For example we don't need a room full of ringers to ring the other bells and the simulated bells on the computer also ring in perfect time, so the trainee only has to worry about his/her own mistakes. We currently have 2 very recent learners from St Margaret's but more would always be welcome! We

practice every Wednesday evening.

Sharon and Martin Williams

Parish Centre

During the last year we have had the privilege of welcoming people to our popular coffee mornings on Wednesday and Thursday. Both our regulars, and lots of new comers, have enjoyed coffee, tea and cakes served by our loyal and cherished volunteers. Both church family and villagers have come to value this friendly and welcoming space, it is great to see it as a hub of the community again – we could not do it without our dedicated volunteers so thank you! We are also a Huntingdon District Council registered Warm Space and received very positive feedback when Harriet paid us a visit, especially for our facilities and friendly atmosphere. During these two mornings we have also got to know some of the young men from the Dolphin Hotel. They have practiced their language skills, helped us maintain our lovely garden area and even had their hair cut by Kev the Hairdresser.

The Parish Centre continues to be the home for First Steps, Dad's Breakfast, Friday Prayer Group and Small Groups as well as our regular singers, dancers, fitness classes and crafters, it is great to see the building being well used. We now have dedicated parking bays on our forecourt, as parking was becoming a real issue with recent renovations on the High Street creating more properties and the potential for more parked cars. We feel it is important our staff and visitors can park easily and safely outside the building.

We have continued with our provision of administration for both churches. Saying farewell to Peter as our faithful leader has meant a higher workload for us, and challenges of getting to grips with Planning Centre, Mail Chimp and Church Suite. We are relying on others for guidance and support as we navigate our way through the inter-regnum whilst trying to maintain high levels of admin support for our ministry teams. The Parish Office is now producing the Hemingford Abbots monthly magazine, the Church At Home publication and the Church Bulletin on a

monthly basis. Joanne has risen to the challenge and enjoyed using her creative skills, I am very grateful for her creativity and willingness to learn in this area, as it certainly is not my forte. We are confident that we are maintaining a high level of admin support for our ministry teams.

As usual we would like to thank our faithful volunteers who allow us to provide a warm welcome every Sunday, read, pray, clean, keep the church open for others to enjoy and serve coffee after services – we have added some new volunteers to our rotas this year so thank you for your faithful service.

Please prayerfully consider how you can get involved in the life of St James’.

Finally, it is a privilege and a blessing to work at the Parish Centre where we are able to show Jesus’ unconditional love and acceptance to whoever comes through our door – just as they are.

Rachel Winton and Joanne Drye

In Conclusion

Let us count our blessings individually and corporately. Let us be thankful to God for Peter and Rosie and their ministry to us.

Let us be thankful to God for what He is doing through the church family today.

Let us be thankful to God for what He will do in the future.

Let us commit ourselves afresh to love and follow Jesus.

*Mike Pinnock, Ian Sinkinson
(Churchwardens) & Allen Foster
(on behalf of PCC)*