



St James

Hemingford Grey

Year in Review

2023 - 2024



CONTENTS	Page
Introduction	3
Churchwardens	3
Families, Children and Youth	5
Lay Ministers	10
Church Services	12
PCC Report	13
Night Prayer	13
Hope into Action	13
Music and Worship	14
Flowers	15
Safeguarding	15
Finances	16
Friday Prayer Group	16
Deanery Synod	17
World Mission	18
Tower	19
Parish Centre	19
Concluding remarks	19

Introduction

As a church, we have spent this year in inter-regnum, seeking a new incumbent for St James' and St Margaret's to take us forward. We can be thankful for God's grace and guidance throughout the year and as we enter 2025 for the provision of a new Vicar.

In looking back what can we learn? First, that as a church many people have stepped forward into servant leadership and supportive roles. This should not be taken for granted, and we thank God for one another, and for the part He has given us in the Body of Christ.

Second, the need to find an incumbent for St James' and St Margaret's has drawn us closer to our brothers and sisters in St Margaret's. Jesus desires that His followers "love one another" and this love is shown practically in working together for His Glory, despite the differences we may have.

Third, there is evidence that we are working more closely with the Community as demonstrated through activities in the Parish Centre including the "drop in café", work with Hemingford Hub, and "Family" Events in the

village organised by Ben and his team.

In the face of the many sufferings we see in the world, our country, our community and even in our homes, it is important that we see and are motivated by God's love in Jesus on the Cross, His victory in the Resurrection, and His enabling of us to follow Jesus as Lord in Pentecost.

As we look to this coming year let us build on what God has been doing amongst us, continuing to care for one another, accepting our differences in love, serving our community, and worshipping our Lord to His praise and Glory.

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

Churchwardens

Your churchwardens (CWs) this year have been Mike Pinnock and Ian Sinkinson.

1 Peter 4:10-11 - "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

We believe we have seen this instruction from the apostle Peter

worked out in our church life this year. It has been another year “in vacancy” but we have not only maintained our worship services (including funerals and weddings), sometimes with the help of visiting clergy, but also seen people use and develop their gifts. In doing so, you have supported us (the churchwardens) so well. Perhaps one of the greatest gifts has been your patience, as we went through rounds of advertising before being able to appoint our new vicar. One of the blessings of the vacancy for us has been the opportunity to work ever more closely with our fellow churchwardens in St Margaret’s and to see the two churches grow together in unity notwithstanding our differences.

The Reverend Timothy May will be “installed” as our new vicar on 23rd July. This formal induction service will be followed by a less formal joint service on Sunday the 28th July when we can welcome Tim and Beth in a much more personal way. We don’t doubt the welcome you will give to him and his wife Beth but do also pray for Tim as he takes up the challenge of being Vicar at St James’ and Rector to St Margaret’s. We are already in regular contact with Tim as he seeks to understand the two parishes. Rest assured that all

involved with leadership in our church will not be expecting Tim to take up everything on the 23rd, we will continue to serve and support him as things will evolve and change under his leadership.

The Churchwardens attend a variety of diocesan meetings at which we encounter other CWs. This is beneficial (we learn) but also makes us realise how blessed we are to have such a faithful church who love to worship God and show His love to others.

During the vacancy the Vicarage has been substantially refurbished (this work carried out by the diocese at no direct cost to us). The church fabric and Parish Centre are generally in good repair. Much of the work to achieve this goes unseen, with people working away quietly, serving us all and along the way saving us significant money. Repairs to the church parapet, on the tower, were carried out and a window fitted into the ringing room glass screen to improve ventilation. The PCC decided to consult with both a heating consultant (not a contractor) and the church architect before proceeding further with replacement of the church heating. Several specialist webinars on the

subject of church heating have also been attended. This has widened the range of options open to us and we will soon make a choice to go forward for detailed architectural design and application for a faculty order. Grants will be sought for this work but an appeal for funds will also be launched.

We've tried to avoid the long list of "thank you's" in this report but want to take the opportunity to highlight two aspects of our church family life. Firstly, our small groups (or house groups if you prefer), meeting during the week, support our teaching of God's word and often provide pastoral support to those who attend. We have twelve groups and their leaders serve us so well. The PCC has recently set up a working group to better liaise with the small groups; assist people who wish to join one, and establish a new group.

Secondly, we would like to express our thanks to Ben for the enormous contribution he has made to the life of St James' over the vacancy. Not only has he done sterling work with our young people and families, he has acted very much as an associate minister, leading and supporting our ministry in worship, preaching and teaching

and we owe him a sincere debt of gratitude.

We will both stand for re-election at this APCM but will stand down at the 2025 APCM. We would really welcome the opportunity, in this coming year, to mentor people in taking up the role in 2025. This church does require two CWs so that the work can be divided. Please prayerfully consider if God might be calling you to this challenging but rewarding role.

*Mike Pinnock and Ian Sinkinson
Churchwardens*

Families, Children & Youth

The Youth, Children's and Families Ministry at St James' strives to present the good news of Jesus, found throughout the whole of scripture. Our prayer is that children and young people of all ages hear about the life changing news of Jesus, his transforming love for them and commit to follow him.

From 1 Timothy 4:16, Paul tells a young Timothy to keep a close watch on his life and his doctrine.

"Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers."

Our children and young people face an ever-growing uncertain world, with the continuous pressure to compromise what they believe. As a church we must model the Christian life in a genuine and authentic way, supporting them by upholding the truth and not being ashamed of the gospel (Rom 1:16).

Our children's and youth work is only possible through the hard work and faithfulness of volunteers. A huge thank you (!) to everyone who gives up their time and energy as they serve our children and young people. This can range from being a regular leader at Jr church, talking to parents at First Steps, or making cups of tea or coffee at one of our outreach events.

Let me take this opportunity to encourage you to speak to the young people and children in our church. Tell them how they can pray for you, and ask them what you could ask God for them in prayer. Our children and young people are so important to our life at St James' and we all have a part to play to point them to Jesus. Please also hear that challenge from Paul and be prepared to share the hope of Christ with others, by inviting children, young

people and families to join us on a Sunday morning, knowing they will receive a warm welcome and hear the life changing news of Jesus.

Lastly please do pray for our 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.

If you would like to know more or come and see the work first hand, please get in touch:
ben@churchbytheriver.org.uk

*Ben Pearson, Minister for Youth,
Children's & Families*

Junior Church is for anyone age 18 months - 10 years old and are split into 3 groups: Adventurers (3-7 year olds) the Trail Blazers (8-10 year olds) and Scramblers for parents to bring their children who are aged 18 months - 3years old.

At Junior Church we discover who Jesus is, through reading God's word, making crafts, playing games and learning memory verses from the Bible.

Junior Church is committed to providing a safe, fun environment for the children to learn and grow in their understanding of Christ.

Junior Church also provides opportunities for young people willing to serve and to learn what it means to teach God's word to younger children. We have been so grateful to Milly Worsley for her enthusiasm and commitment to help leaders and the children. Recently we have aimed to increase our provision by providing extra sessions on the 3rd and the occasional first Sunday of the month to help give them the best opportunity to grow in their faith and knowledge of God.

Over the last year Junior Church has looked at the "Who I am" series from Faith in Kids, looking at our identity and who we are as the image of God, made in his likeness and becoming more like Christ. In the autumn term we looked at a section of Mark's gospel, focusing on the identity of Jesus and what it means for us to follow him. In the spring this year we looked at the books of Ruth and Esther using the "Mustard Seeds" resources, to see how amazing God is as he works for the salvation of his people. As we enter the summer term we are doing a mini overview starting in the Garden of Eden, then finishing in the new creation of heaven, following "The Garden, the Curtain, the Cross" material.

Please pray for more children to join us and pray also for the junior church leaders. Thank the Lord for them and 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, Dadirai Sinkinson, Vanessa Allen, Grace Pearson & Grace Matthews & Milly Worsley.

Ben Pearson, Minister for Youth, Children's & Families

Youth on Sunday is for anyone aged 10 (year 6) - 15 (year 10) and meets on the 2nd and 4th Sunday during term time.

Youth on a Sunday morning is the main opportunity to get together as a group, although it has been great to meet informally at our social events, such as the movie nights.

On a Sunday morning we play games and eat cakes 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 tried to bring together the teaching programme of Youth and Junior Church and therefore have studied the same topics as Junior Church but aimed at an older audience. This helps parents in their role to continue the conversations at home being able to ask their children in either Youth or Junior Church the same questions, using the “parent card”.

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.

Ben Pearson, Minister for Youth, Children’s & Families

The older **Lad’s Bible Study** is a chance to stop, pause and go deeper in to God’s word before the start of a new week. There is a mix of computer games, tea and cake, but our focus is for them to understand God’s word better for themselves, seeing just how wonderful and amazing God is, and then to love as disciples of Jesus.

This year we have focused on some basic apologetics, looking to help tackle some of the more tricky passages and how we can stand firm and be confident in God’s word.

Please give thanks for Simon Keen who has been able to commit to this group on a regular basis bringing structure and continuity. 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, Family and Outreach

Events This year we have provided a range of events and activities at engaging children and families in the local area. In the summer of 2023, the youth once again enjoyed the annual summer barbecue with inflatable sweeper. In the autumn we hosted a quiz night with guest speaker Graham Daniels of Christians in Sport and Cambridge United, which was very well attended, and with a powerful talk from Graham to challenge people to come to know Jesus. More recently we again hosted the ‘Easter Fair’ on Vicarage Fields. With an ‘egg hunt’, inflatables, a craft and refreshments, the aim of this event is to get out into the

community and provide a high quality event that is fun and a safe 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.

The aim is 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. Please pray that our young people and families would make the most of these opportunities and for us to be proactive in inviting people along, you never know, it might just change their lives...

None of these events could take place without helpers and volunteers. Thank you so much to everyone who has supported these events either through prayer or helping practically.

Dad's Camping In June 2023 we had 18 Adults and 34 Children join us for our annual 'Dad's Camping' weekend. The weather was perfect for a time of fun and getting to know other people from our community. A highlight for some was the 'Nerf' battle wide game

and the bonfire in the evening, for others it was food from the fantastic barbecue on the Saturday evening. We also enjoyed a short thought for the day on the Sunday morning, where as it was Father's Day, we were reminded of God being our heavenly father who knows us and loves us. We are looking forward to this year's camping weekend on the 22nd - 23rd June.

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 and craft to suit all ages. The Lantern Room is set-aside for babies.

Adults can relax with tea/coffee, while the children have squash and toast. We finish the session with group nursery rhymes, action songs and a Bible story in the main hall.

On average about 18/25 adults and 25/30 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 Juliet for an additional donation.

We have been encouraged to see that some of the First Steps families have joined in with St James' festival services and the Easter Fair on Vicarage Fields.

There is a great atmosphere in the Parish Centre every Tuesday morning! Our team has had appropriate DBS checks, in line with our Safeguarding 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, Juliet, Shirley, James and Ben.

Dads' Breakfast aims to get to know the dads in our village, whose wives/partners usually, but not always, 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 regular numbers has been a slow process and a challenge. However at Christmas we have had 13 new dads with 25 children!

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

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

Lay Ministers

Liz Pinnock, Gerald Barrett, Tim Wetherfield and Judith Hall have served in both St James' and St Margaret's this year.

We want to recognise right away the involvement of the wider Ministry Team - all those who have taken part in leading and preaching at Sunday and midweek services over the last year (and indeed, since we went into vacancy in September 2022). Our church is blessed to have so many talented leaders and preachers who have enabled us to focus on worship and in learning from God's Word. We have not just been 'treading water' since Peter & Rosie left, but have grown together and built up our

faith in God and our love towards one another. So alongside the ministry of the Revd. Judith (Bolton), we also recognise that of Allen, Alison, Ben, Clive, Ian S, Mark E and Ruth T (and others) too. Working together, we support and spur each other on and learn from one another. We work in partnership, too, with Alwyn and Ian C in preparing for Sunday services, our core commitment. Our particular thanks are due to Ian Sinkinson, who has been exceptional in his support as our acting line manager.

That there has been so much teamwork is also down to Ben's efforts in keeping us focused as a ministry team and in planning together so that we have had such a challenging and rewarding set of sermon series. This has included the series on 'Love Your Church' (based on Tony Merida's book), plus those on the Book of Ruth and Paul's Letter to the Ephesians. Since the beginning of 2024, through studies from John's Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, we have been looking at who Jesus is, what he has done for us and how his Spirit continues to guide us.

Because the teaching through our range of church services is so rich and varied, it can sometimes be easy to overlook the amount of

effort that goes on behind the scenes to pray, reflect and study and develop sermons. For every 15 or 20 minute sermon that members of the congregation see, there can be many hours of unseen preparation. We do it because it makes our hearts sing and it is a real privilege that we take very seriously. It also comes at a cost, both in terms of Bible commentaries bought to enrich our understanding and the time spent (those who still work sometimes take annual leave 'days off' and spend weekends writing sermons). We are grateful that this year the PCC has agreed to cover some of our expenses. Some members of our team have gone through really difficult situations in the last year - and the fact that they have kept on going in serving the church family is worthy of note.

Those of us who are licensed or authorised to lead worship or to preach feel a real sense of calling, which has involved years of study and on-going learning. It is great that Mark Enzer is currently undergoing his training as an Authorised Lay Minister in Preaching and Grace Matthews, hers, as an Authorised Lay Minister Pastoral Assistant.

A highlight for Liz was leading the

'Sing for the King' Community Coronation event at St Margaret's in which the gospel message sat very naturally within the occasion. She also has a diocesan role, continuing as a Selection Advisor for those offering for Licensed Lay Ministry. She says, 'This year we had 10 very diverse and exceptional candidates and we were delighted to recommend them all to go forward for training'.

There has been a significant number of funerals this year, most of this ministry undertaken by the Rev'd Judith B and Canon Brian Atling. Judith H leads a team taking a monthly service at Field Lodge care home and some residents come now and then to services in church. Responding to Bishop Stephen's challenge to work with St Margaret's when we could, with the blessing of both PCCs, Judith helped in the formation of the Hemingfords' Christmas Choir, which drew 52 singers from the two villages and beyond and provided the music for the two carol services. Similarly, on Maundy Thursday a small choir and players from both churches sang Taizé chants here for our evening communion service.

It is encouraging and humbling when members of the congregation show their

appreciation and share their reflections (say, over coffee afterwards) on how God has spoken to them through the way services had been led and through our preaching. Thank you. We recognise that some people will naturally find some leaders and preachers more their 'cup of tea' than others. But as a church family, we have such a variety of complimentary preaching styles and different perspectives, that most people find that there is something for them. The vacancy has highlighted the importance of loving one another, bearing with one another and staying united in Christ. We would particularly want to thank Mike and Ian (as church wardens) and Allen (as chair of PCC) for their part in providing the care and support for the ministry team that is needed to help make this happen. Praise God!

The Lay Ministers

[Church Services](#)

During 2023 all Services and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on May 14th 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. Mid-week Holy Communion services have usually been held twice a month.

PCC Report

The PCC is made up of Clergy / Ministers; and Church Wardens (2), Deanery Synod representatives (4) and PCC members (12) all elected at the APCM. The PCC has met on the first Wednesday of the month throughout the year (except August). The PCC has various working groups which look after: Personnel; Overseas Mission; Church Buildings and Fabric; Finances; Hope House; and the Parish Centre.

Some important issues that have been discussed during the year have included: recruitment of the new incumbent; Sunday service planning; the annual budget; Church of England's debate on prayers of love and faith for same sex couples; staff salaries; church heating; use of the Parish Centre; and the role of Small Groups in church life.

Allen Foster on behalf of PCC

Night Prayer

Night prayer, which was started during the COVID lockdown, 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 house owned by St James' in the parish, to provide a home for a family in need. We call this house "Hope House". We welcomed a family of five into Hope House in August 2021. Two years on, the eldest of the three children has moved into a council flat and manages independently, having secured a permanent job. The younger two children are doing well in education and sport. Hope into Action provide an Empowerment Worker who

works with the family as they find their way out of homelessness. Members of St James provide friendship and support to the family as they navigate the everyday challenges of life. Some give their time to have a coffee with Mum while the children are in school, or have a pint with Dad after work. Others give of their DIY skills to help with repairs and maintenance of the house. Still others meet monthly to pray for the family. The family have joined the prayer meeting in recent months, and the prayer group have been blessed to witness this after 2.5 years of prayer for the family. If you are interested to know more about Hope House or Hope into Action, please talk to Allen Foster, Penny Foster, Rachel Winton, Clive Sprawson, Cynthia Reed or Ranjini Mathew.

Ranjini Mathew

Music and Worship Group

A key part of our church life here at St James' is when we meet together in various ways, as the body of Christ, believers together, and reach out to those outside the church. A vital part of this is in our corporate praise and worship of the Lord, and we in the music team are privileged to be able to

lead and contribute to this, as musicians and in the sound and AV roles. Keeping this going as we await a new vicar and seek a fresh vision for our church has been essential.

There has been quite a variety in our styles of service, from informal café and family church to traditional. Also our special services deserve a mention—in particular our shared services with St Margaret's, which include the recent Taize service on Maundy Thursday and the two carol services, with a choir of about 50, the organ, a band, and both churches full. Special thanks go to Judith Hall, who worked with Joanne Rutter and Liz Booker to prepare them, and thanks to all who participated.

Our family and young people's work led by Ben includes All Together Services, the school Christmas services, and Christmas Eve service. It's so good to see the church full of young people and parents. Special thanks to Ben.

We are thankful for all who are part of our music team and are always pleased to welcome new members. It has been great to have the Keen family and also Eli Schroeder participating, and good

to welcome Jane Barker back to play with us again. Owing to people's family and work commitments it has proved difficult to cover all the services as we would like. In particular, we are short of people to lead, both the band and the sung worship with Alwyn and Ian now being the only ones who fill this role. As we await the Rev Tim's arrival let's continue to pray and see how we can make ourselves available to contribute to this important part of the corporate life we share together.

Ian Cooke and Alwyn Frost

Flowers

Once again it has been a joy and privilege to work with our small team of arrangers who dedicate so much time to helping make our church building a welcoming place for congregation and visitors. In the ongoing interests of becoming more sustainable and reducing costs we have a small cutting garden, that currently has daffodils tulips and summer annuals, and to which I have recently added a couple of peonies to bridge the gap. This is a resource that is available to our arrangers, but should also be an attractive and wildlife friendly addition to the churchyard.

Thank you to June, Rosemary, Aline, Ranjini and Zoe for all the time they contribute. It is much appreciated.

If there is anyone else who would be interested in joining us, please let me know. You would be very welcome.

Elaine Lee

Safeguarding

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

During the year 18 volunteers at St James' have undergone DBS checks and St James' people have taken a total of 38 various safeguarding training courses. Thank you to everyone for completing these courses and taking their role with safeguarding in mind so diligently. The Church of England continues to take safeguarding very seriously. The PCC has reviewed and re-issued its safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure full compliance with the latest requirements.

I am very grateful to Ian Sinkinson who held this role for 7 years and placed St James in such a strong position, developing in the congregation a full understanding of safeguarding requirements.

During the year I have had several opportunities to talk about safeguarding in church and my prayer is that we all continue to look out for, care for and pray for each other, especially those who are vulnerable, whether they are children or more mature in years.

*Heather Chambers
Parish Safeguarding Officer.*

Finances

Voluntary giving to the general fund in 2023 was £188,053 (2022: £185,008) and total income was £207,097 (2022: £205,607). Total current assets at year-end were £133,979 (2022: £129,351). We continue to donate 15% of our income to our mission partners. In 2023 we donated £29,050 to our mission partners (2022: £39,590).

In addition £16,743 was collected by way of appeals to support our mission partners (Anbesan Hoole, Seeta Gurung, Tearfund, and CBM).

Our budget for giving to our mission partners in 2024 is £27,750.

The Coffee Hub continued to operate throughout the year and £7,040 was raised in voluntary donations during the year.

Investments generated income of £8,928. We continue to invest £30,000 in Cambridge & Counties and the value of the investment in The CBF Church of England Investment Fund was £77,621 (2022: £70,946).

Finally, I am pleased to report that in 2023 we met our Cost of Ministry contribution to the Diocese of £61,569 in full and that all reports to HMRC, The Charity Commission and The Diocese were filed on time.

I would like to thank our church bookkeeper, Catherine Keen, for all her hard 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 using a booklet called 'The Church in Chains' as an aid. We also pray 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 Huntingdon Deanery is part of the Huntingdon and Wisbech archdeaconry in the Diocese of Ely and covers 34 parishes in 10 benefices stretching from Fen Drayton with Fenstanton in the east to West Leightonstone in the west.

The Deanery Synod, on which St James's church has 4 representatives (Ian Sinkinson, Alison Craven, Tim Drye and Stan Trencher), has met three times in the past year. The main topic of discussion at each of the meetings this year has been the Deanery Development Plan, (DDP) which seeks to identify how the varying needs of the parishes within the deanery, from town churches,

through thriving semi-rural/rural churches to struggling country churches, in a time of financial stringency and limited clergy numbers, can best be met. The DDP process was designed to inform the diocese of our view of the best way to take the gospel message into our communities, while being honest with ourselves about the viability of our parishes and benefices. The work on this is on-going, with synod members forming small working groups focussing on specific aspects of fruitful ministry.

Other topics discussed have included:

Safeguarding – this is on every Synod agenda, where it is stressed how important it is that everyone takes their safeguarding responsibilities seriously.

Finance – While not all parishes in the deanery were able to meet their Parish Share, by using some Deanery reserves the synod was able to pay last year's Deanery commitment to the diocese in full, and thus got a rebate from Ely! The Ministry Share shortfall for the deanery this year is forecast to be around £12,000. If the deficit were covered in full by the deanery, it would attract a £14,000 discount from the diocesan board of finance.

This will be debated by synod later in the year.

Living in Love and Faith – this potentially controversial topic has not been debated in the Deanery Synod, but an extremely helpful open evening was held at Brampton Parish Church on 28 September 2023 where the topic was explored and discussed. A further meeting is planned for later in 2024.

Alison Craven

World Mission

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

The seven overseas partnerships are with:

Anbu Hoole in Bach Christian Hospital in northern Pakistan, developing its work in respiratory medicine and encouraging the Christian Hospitals in the country to upgrade and become again an important component of the country's health services. He has an on-going role of encouragement and teaching in a local church and

during the year he became engaged to a Pakistan Christian woman.

Janet and Pascal Fresard working with Wycliffe Bible Translators in Senegal, from their base in Switzerland with frequent visits to Senegal. Their 4 children are all now married and they are now grandparents.

Jigsaw working with slum communities in the Philippines and Tim Lee supporting this work from the UK. Jigsaw works with 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. During the year they have been handing over the projects supported to various other appropriate Christian organisations so that they can retire and the work of MPUK can come to an end in the coming year.

Seeta Gurung in Nepal working with DAI in their training of young Christians in leadership and management, ensuring they know how to apply Christian standards and ethics in their work places.

CBM in its work in many countries through local partner organisations working with disabled people especially those with sight problems.

Tearfund, especially in its emergency relief works in many areas of the world.

The church budgets 15% of its budgeted income for World Mission and also makes special appeals as appropriate.

Alison Craven

Tower

Throughout this year 1 peal and 13 quarter peals have been rung alongside the usual ringing for Sunday services, weddings and sometimes funerals. In May we also rang to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III. There are currently 4 people learning (two adults and two children) but more would always be welcome! We hold a special learner practice every Wednesday evening before the main practice for the more experienced ringers. The simulator is used weekly with our learners and a local ringer has kindly made some clapper silencers from old motorcycle/cross ply car tyres that greatly ease the set up for these practices.

General maintenance has been completed on the bells, which remain in good working order. Some small items of work such as: extending the guide pipes for bells 3 and 4, correcting the clock

striking clapper and general adjustment to improve striking (moving the angle clapper shaft) has also taken place.

Sharon and Martin Williams

Parish Centre

The Parish Centre continues to be a meeting place for our local community, opening Wednesday and Thursday mornings as a drop in cafe and registered warm space, as well as on Tuesday mornings for First Steps. There are also several community groups that hire the hall for their meetings. It is used for a lot of different church activities, including the occasional Parish Lunch which are well attended and appreciated by the older members of our church family.

We all miss Joanne's lovely smile and warm welcome as we come into the Parish Centre, particularly our canine visitors, who knew exactly where to find the doggy treats.

Rachel Winton

In Conclusion

Let us give thanks individually and corporately for Our Father's continued blessings to us as a church.

Let us pray for our new Vicar.

Let us commit ourselves afresh to love and follow Jesus, our Saviour and Lord, and to work together in love, for His Glory.

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