

St. James' Yeovil



2025 Reports to the APCM April 2026



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1. St James' Church Room

The Church Room is available for hire by private individuals, not for profit organisations and commercial enterprises. The room is available for use between 9AM and 8PM on weekdays (excluding Sundays) including Bank Holidays. The hire rate includes toilet access, use of the room, kettle, and crockery. Kitchen use for cooking is an additional charge as is the use of Wi-Fi connectivity and Smart TV. Most regular users have keys and alarm fob for entry and locking up. Volunteer staff members open and lock up for users that do not have access keys. User groups are either regular user groups or ad hoc users. Room booking is done via the room booking administrator or church office. Before a booking is confirmed and accepted room users must accept and agree to our Terms and Conditions of Hire this also includes our safeguarding procedures. Revenue is collected via invoices presented pre or post church room use with a few user groups contributing by voluntary donations. One of our regular users is paying monthly in advance by standing order and another regular user has paid for the whole of 2026 in advance.

Total revenue for 2025 was £11K against a budget of £9K

Targeted revenue for 2026 is £11K made up of 4% increase (as of 1st April 2026) in our hire charges for 2026 and potential new users.

Revenue up to the end of March 2024 is totalling at £2.3K.

Ivor Jones

2. Events and Fundraising

A Spring Fair was held in May, raising £700 and a Christmas Fair in November raised £1300. There were three 'Coffee Plus' events with extra stalls during the year, each raising just over £300.

These events always draw in people from the local area as well as church members. There is a Flower Festival arranged for later this year.

In order to generate more events and funds, it would be good to encourage new ideas and more people to help with planning and organizing events.

Maureen Harris

3. Coffee Morning

We meet on the first Tuesday of the month for coffee (or tea) chats and biscuits.

There is no agenda just a time to be together over a coffee to perhaps put the world to rights. If you've never been please come along and try it, we'll be delighted to see you.

Graham Hardacre

4. Church Groups

St James' Scrabble Club

At the closure of Preston Road Methodist Church, the Methodist Scrabble Club was very kindly made welcome at St James'. We meet every Wednesday afternoon for a cuppa and biscuits and then at 2pm we start to play and the fun begins. The laughter and banter ring out. Of course, everyone likes to win sometimes, but it's the fellowship which is important. We would love to welcome new members, so please come and join us every Wednesday.

Margaret Clapperton

St James' Ladies Group

This group meets on the third Thursday of each month from 2.30-4pm in St. James' Church Room. It is a social group with a mixture of activities followed by refreshments.

Currently there are 32 members with an average of about 22 attending each month and we are always delighted to welcome new members.

There were 12 meetings during the year from April 2025 - March 2026.

These included a talk (on New Zealand), a charity tea, two Beetle Drives, a Christmas craft afternoon and a Christmas party, a musical quiz, a board games session and several 'informal' meetings when members shared their interests or memories with the group or just spent time in conversation.

The main fundraiser from the group last year was the charity tea to raise money for the repair of the Church Room Roof. This raised £290, to which the group added £310. A donation was also made to St. James' Church to cover the cost of hiring the room, plus heating and lighting.

Maureen Harris

5. St James@4

St James' @ 4 Sunday afternoon 4pm worship has continued throughout 2025 on most Sundays of the year.

The established pattern of Evening Worship, Evening Prayer, Holy Communion and Songs of Praise has continued to serve the need for a quiet time of worship followed by refreshment and fellowship.

Although the congregation has not grown significantly it has remained constant and for those who find mornings difficult it has become their primary time of worship.

This year we have also seen newcomers dropping in to the 4pm service becoming part of our worshipping community.

Songs of Praise continues to draw in visitors from other churches and we are particularly grateful for Graham Perryman's music at that service.

Our thanks to our LWAs, Readers and Clergy who lead those services and particularly for those who lead and prepare the informal Evening Worship and Songs of Praise, not forgetting our bellringers who ring on most Sundays.

Chris Harris

Songs of Praise

St Augustine is often quoted as saying 'the one who sings, prays twice' and theologian N.T. Wright has argued that singing is a form of 'richly embodied prayer' that unites worshippers with the divine drama of redemption.

In the monthly Songs of Praise (part of our weekly Sunday programme of services for 'St James@4') we continue to draw on the rich Christian tradition of hymns and songs as a wonderful way of engaging mind, body and breath in praising God. We are glad that Songs of Praise is attended by some members of other churches, as well as St James' regulars, and we always enjoy our social time together over a cup of tea or coffee after the service. We have been greatly assisted again this year by Revd Graham Perryman, who accompanies us as pianist, and offers lovely piano medleys to start and conclude our service. On Easter Day 2026 Graham also played a beautiful selection of excerpts from Handel's Messiah during our Songs of Praise service. The Songs of Praise services have been led for many years by Graham Hardacre, Linda Mason, Mark Felstead and Doug Beard. Doug, who left us for eternity in December 2025, was a founding member of the Songs of Praise Team and he led his last Songs of Praise in August 2025. Doug and Elaine are greatly missed by all of us and we are certain that they sing with us in that great cloud of witnesses (Hebrews 12:1).

Mark Felstead

6. Agusta Park

Wow! God has continued to go before us in the outreach in Agusta Park. So, a week in Agusta Park:

Take 5: Biscuits and coffee being served from 8:30 on Mondays to children and parents as they start the school week, followed by a coffee morning in Lufton Community Hall. During the holidays there have been Take 5 “specials”, where activities have been put on for primary aged children. Yeovil Baptist Church have been leading this initiative. With Dave the leader leaving last summer, the biscuits were dropped at Christmas and the group will close at the end of this summer term. The group was key in starting things going on the estate, building up relationships and putting a Christian footprint there. The estate and Yeovil Baptist Church are now in different seasons and it is right for it to draw to a close. Thank you to the Baptist church for all their support and work on the estate and we pray that their resources will continue to be used to build God's kingdom.

Lufton Little Lambs: This toddler group started in September 2025 on Tuesdays 10-11:30 after a request from mums on the estate for a group. The group has now joined with the breastfeeding baby cafe, which was meeting on the estate, and so a breastfeeding support counsellor visits once a fortnight. The toddler group has free play and finishes with singing, bible story and prayer. We have a varying number of parents, grandparents and childminders although a core group from the estate is starting to emerge. We pray that this group becomes an established worshipping community on the estate where carers feel comfortable and supported and friendships can grow.

Lufton Prayer Group: A group of faithful intercessors have been gathering monthly on Tuesdays to pray for the estate. It has been encouraging to see how our prayers are being answered. Pray for wisdom as to how to continue to pray for God's kingdom to come on the estate.

Pupil Chaplains: Rev John Hanson and I started pupil chaplaincy in January 2026 with 12 year 5 (aged 9-10) children at Kingfisher school. We meet fortnightly on Tuesday lunchtimes to teach them the Christian faith and encourage them in their support of Christian and school values in the school community. They have been really enthusiastic about reading their bibles (thank you to all those who contributed) praying and joining in the activities. We pray that these children know more of God and are able to share that with others in the school community.

Kingfisher School: I go into Kingfisher school on Tuesday lunchtimes with cake and conversation for the staff and chats with the children. I also have the privilege of standing on the school gate with Dan Glenworth (head) on a

Wednesday morning to welcome the children and parents into the school. These have both been great ways to build up relationships with the school community. As a result, I am often greeted by children, parents and teachers while out and about. We continue to pray that a second class will be added to each year group as a lot of children on the estate have to travel to other schools as there are not currently enough class spaces.

Pints of View: This is not technically on Agusta Park, but started out of a home group that was meeting on the estate! The home group no longer meets, but on the last Wednesday of the month we have gathered in the Arrow on Abbey Manor to drink pints and discuss points of view on different topics. This group is open to all and aimed at something Christians can invite their friends to and discuss interesting topics. As a result, we have had some interesting conversations ranging from our views on the U.S.A., can you have a just war, freedom of speech among others! We took a break over Lent for the Bible Course but hope to restart at the end of April. We pray this group enables those who are not in church or on the edge of church to start engaging with God through this.

Food and Faith: After being offered a cooking course by Somerset Food Foundation, Ruth and I started a group called Food and Faith in November. The young people (aged 12 and upwards) cook their dinner and then learn about the Christian faith as they eat their food. We started with the Alpha Course and then have moved onto "Energize" sessions. It has been great to help young people with their cooking skills and to enable them to engage with spiritual questions of life. We pray that the young people have a revelation of who God is and His love for them.

Lufton Youth Group: Having taken over the group in January 2025 this is an open access group where the young people (aged 11-15) come to meet friends. We have tuck, football, board games, pool, Xbox etc on offer as well as a number of specials - fencing, disco, karaoke, competitions, cooking, crafts etc. The group has continued to have 40-50 young people each week. Although it has been fun to engage with the young people, see their friendships (across age groups and schools) grow and watch them develop into young adults, it continues to be a challenge to build a team of volunteers to support this group. We pray for an established volunteer team, with fun, friendship, safety and a hunger for God for the young people.

Lufton Church: It was lovely to see Lufton Church flourish over the summer with a number of baptisms, a marriage blessing and larger congregations. The winter has proved harder with long term illnesses and cold, dark nights. This was interspersed with a large joyful number joining us for Christmas services. We are hoping the lighter and warmer weather brings people from the estate back down to the church. There have been a number of “hunts” around the church for the children to do during the longer holidays which have been enjoyed. We also had a very successful Easter Monday community day which, as well as raising money, raised huge awareness across the estate and beyond of where the church is and what we can offer. We pray that the church continues to flourish and that people will be drawn to God through their prayer and work.

As the estate nears completion we are still waiting for a shop, play areas, surfaced roads and a more regular bus service. However, it is a welcoming multicultural place to live, where children are able to play outside together, a community library has been started, and free things are often offered outside people's houses! We pray that it continues to grow into a place where people feel safe, loved and supported.

Rev Sarah Sanderson

7. Children and Families

Toddler Groups

Toddler groups have all been running well and families really appreciate the groups. Toddler groups are a great place to get to know families, and to offer support and encouragement.

A number of families have come to Messy Church and Lego church through our toddler groups.

Abbey Toddlers, at Abbey Manor Community Centre, meets on a Wednesday morning and has 15-20 families attending regularly. There are plenty of toys and activities for families to enjoy together, and we finish with a singing time. This is a busy group but I have a good team of mums running the group with me.

Tots and Toys, at St James, meets on a Thursday morning and has 6 -8 families attending regularly. This is good as a smaller group, suiting the size of the room, and offering a quieter group for children and families that prefer this. Jo runs the group with me, and it is a very friendly welcoming group, with everyone pitching in together to help. There are plenty of toys for the children, and opportunities for the adults to have some deeper conversations.

Tots and Toast, at St Peter's, meets on a Friday morning and has 5- 6 families attending regularly.

This group was busier when it first began, but has been in a quieter patch these last few months. Trish runs the group with me, and we have great support from Ivor and Lizzy in the centre. We've had a couple of new families come along recently, and we would love to see more families attending. We are planning to give flyers out again. We also had a film made about the group (made by Trish's daughter Hannah as part of her university course) to help with advertising! We provide breakfast at this group, and have a singing and story time at the end of the session, with a chance for families to explore simple Bible stories.

Junior Church

Junior church has been going well at both churches. Numbers vary each week, but Trish and I have been encouraged to have families coming along whenever they can.

We normally follow the sermon themes and adapt these for junior church. The children enjoy the crafts, games and prayer activities, and it's encouraging to see them taking steps in their journeys of faith.

Trish and I would both welcome more volunteers to help with junior church.

Bible Verses and Prayers WhatsApp Group

More mums have joined my "Bible Verses and Prayers" WhatsApp group. There are now 15 mums in the group who have links with either St James or St Peter's. I hope this group is an encouragement to them in their faith, as we share daily Bible verses and prayers together. This group works well as an online group, as it has been difficult to find times to meet face to face with each other, due to everyone's work and family commitments. Through this group we can stay in touch regularly with each other.

Messy Church

Messy Church has been going well with 30-40 coming each month. Recent themes include; Being a new creation, God's love for the world, Easter, and Prayer. Families enjoy exploring these themes through craft activities, games, stories, songs, drama and prayer activities. Then we all enjoy lunch together to finish.

For many of the families, Messy Church is their church, and it's a great opportunity to encourage these families in their faith.

We have a strong team, and good support from St Peter's, but always welcome more volunteers.

Lego Church

Lego church at St Peter's has moved from the 4th Sunday of the month, to running in the school holidays. Trish and I ran the first one in the February half term holiday and it was very successful. We had 25 children and 10 adults attending. The families came through the toddler groups, messy church, and junior church. Families enjoyed exploring the story of Noah's Ark, and appreciated having something free to go to in the holidays! We also ran one in the Easter holidays which was quieter, 10 children and 8 adults, but enjoyed by everyone who came along. It's great to be able to offer families another different way of doing "church".

Holiday Activity Mornings

I work with Marie, the centre manager at St Peter's Community Centre, and the team there, to run holiday activity sessions in the summer holidays. We are just beginning our planning for this summer.

Previous years these sessions have been really appreciated by the community, providing a fun, free, safe space, for families to bring their children, and play together.

We have had a range of themed activities, including crafts, games, Lego, and outside organisations including emergency services, reptile handling, circus skills, nature activities and more! The children also received a free packed lunch at the end of the session.

It's a great opportunity to serve the local community, to meet new families, and to stay in touch with families from our other groups over the summer.

I'm excited to continue building on all the different groups and services we have for children and their families. Thank you for your prayer and support.

Laura Broome
Children & Families Worker

Primary Schools

We continue to have a close and fruitful relationship with our church school, Preston CofE Primary. The Vicar joins the headteacher for prayers at the beginning of each school week, takes assemblies every half term, and we have school visits to the church throughout the year. In 2025 the school refined its vision and values, making them more overtly Christian, with 'let your light shine' (Matthew 5:16) as the new school motto. Each classroom has a Christian focal



point with prayers and Bibles on display, and the school has a 'prayer box' for children to submit prayer requests, which is well used.

David has also taken termly assemblies at Oaklands community primary school, as well as a Q&A session with year 6 children along with Ruth, our youth worker. There is a growing partnership between the school and St Peter's Community Centre in support of families in financial difficulties.

Rev David Keen, Vicar

(See also Agusta Park for Sarah's report on Kingfisher Primary)

8. Youth

The Hangout

The younger Hangout has changed a little over the last year. We ended up only having three or four regulars a week and when that dropped to one, we knew we had to do something. We originally started this group to meet the young people earlier and give them a space to hang out. This group was not meeting that objective, either due to people not knowing about it or people not wanting to attend. Each year we ask both Preston Primary and Oaklands to hand out our flyers with no avail so I thought it may be best to try something different. I reached out to Oaklands and asked if I could do an assembly with year 4 – year 6. This was a massive success and had 20 plus attend that same night. This has levelled out to 10-15 attending each week. This has highlighted a few issues in how we run the group, mainly that we definitely need more adults which is a problem we have not yet resolved.

The older Hangout has been going very well it is probably the best attended with not just our core group of teenagers attending. We have some extra young people attend some who are part of their core groups friends who can't attend other nights, then a few others who have just heard about the group elsewhere. The young people like the freedom to do what activities they like with the various equipment we have out. We find this group is where we bond most with the young people and have those important one-to-one or group chats with them about life. This year we were given some funding to take the young people on three trips, we took them bowling, to Kaspas and to laser tag. The young people really enjoyed being able to go and do activities that they either haven't done before or haven't done for a while. We hope to be able to do more little outings over the next year. The only issue we have doing these is the lack of transport, meaning we have to keep it local limiting what we can do.

Drop Into

Drop Into has changed a bit since last school year, before the summer holidays we were really into having different activities each week which the young people were really keen in joining in with. The young people especially enjoyed the baking that we were doing. Since the change of leaders, we have not done as much as it isn't one of our current leaders' strengths. After the summer we very much lost our rhythm with this group and are struggling to get set activities going. We have managed to do some but not as many as we like. However, this has given us more time to sit and chat with the young people and let them run off some the energy in the hall. We have also seen more creativity from the group with them asking to do certain things and take the lead in that. A couple of weeks ago we got asked to play a game called imposter, everyone took part including PCSO John when he popped in. It was a great time and enjoyed by all, we got to know each other a lot more. It has been great to see more organic moments come from this lack of rhythm. Another session the young people love to do is a music session where we provide instruments and let the young people have a go. Some of our young people are very talented, and can play a variety of instruments, some Graham Perryman has been good at teaching them various things.

Secondary Schools

We still have a team made up of YCC and myself going into both Preston and Westfield schools. Last school year we had 6 of us going into Preston two doing CU, two doing football and two being a presence in certain trouble areas. Unfortunately, this school year for many reasons we have only 4 of us going in to do football and CU. Preston CU is well attended with 10 or so attending every week. Only two of them attend groups at YCC, the rest attend different churches or are just interested in learning more. The guys who do the football have been making good connections with the lads who play football with them week in week out.

Westfield CU is also well attended with 15-20 attending each week, many of which attend groups at YCC. This group can be a little more chaotic just because of the amount of people attending. As it is the same team that do both CUs, each half term we decide on a topic that we will look at in both schools. The same person will then do the teaching at both sessions and the same person will do a game for the group. This year we have looked at the characteristics of God, Jesus' miracles and the spiritual gifts.

Spree

Last year we took 15 young people 13 of which are non-Christians. We ask the young people to give a few of the sessions a go, they go to the one aimed at people exploring faith, the young people really enjoyed the music and games, so much so they attended 3-4 sessions, which is a lot more sessions than the previous year.

Each year we ask our volunteers their favourite part of the weekend. One reported that she really enjoyed a spontaneous moment with the young people. Normally we ask the young people to wash up their own plates etc, however, one night one of our lads offered to wash everything up and recruited two others to help him. The volunteer said this was an amazing time for them as the young people started to really open up and take an interest in the volunteers and they had great conversation whilst doing the washing up.

We are currently in the process of booking and planning for this year. At the moment we have 19 young people booked on. Some of these young people have not attended Spree before and some are from St James' and from Lufton.



Holiday Activities

Over the summer, we put on various activities for the young people to attend which included our usual session of: arts and crafts (where the air-dry clay was a

big hit), Bake off, Movie Night and Sports. We also had a few different activities: one was fire warden training run by Stu Brand. Stu went through basic fire training, showing the young people what extinguisher to use and when, and even taught them how to use fire extinguishers by letting them use out-of-date extinguishers. The second different activity was when we joined the 999 Day where the young people could explore the police vans and cars. This summer was not as well attended as the previous one, but with the increased number to the younger Hangout we hope for an increase in attendance.

We have just held four activity sessions over the Easter holidays, we did an Easter egg hunt, crafts, sports and made Easter egg nests. These were very well attended, mainly by our usual group of young people, who enjoyed having something to do during the holidays.

Ruth Glendinning
Youth Worker

Tea and Toast

Tea and Toast is continuing to do well with approximately 10-18 children attending each week. Every week we provide fun interactive games, activities and quizzes, which they enjoy! We use our snack time to catch up on any current issues, news and gossip! We then move on to chatting and discussing bible related scripture/verses, such as 'Who is God?', Temptation, Advent, Christmas, New beginnings/New life, Baptism, Mother's Day and Jesus' relationship with his own mother, Shrove Tuesday, Lent and Easter.

This group allows the children to explore their faith in a fun safe environment, allowing time for discussion and questions respecting their thoughts, views and feelings.

Trish Quigly
Assistant Children & Families Worker

9. Tower and Ringing

It has been an interesting and successful year for the ringers and tower, our application for a faculty to Restore and Augment our current ring of (slightly out of tune) six bells to eight has been approved by the Diocese. This has enabled us to commence fundraising for the project. About £200K will be required now that the VAT reclamation scheme has ended so a lot of work to do there. We have been very fortunate to receive a donation of £10K from a local ringer and a Grant of £20K from the Diocese Bell fund which along with pledges from our

own ringers and informal fundraising already carried out gives us around £75K so far.

We continue to make progress with our least experienced ringers and have also recently been joined by a local lady who learned to ring as a child and now has time to resume her ringing activities, she is making remarkable progress and is very enthusiastic which is great to see. We have managed to ring for all the significant events of the last year and managed to ring a Full Peal to celebrate Margaret and My Golden Wedding Anniversary in January – this took just under 3 hours of continuous ringing – no coffee or toilet breaks and no substitutes, we rang it with a group of us who ring on Sundays which was very pleasing.

We are looking forward to the coming year with the challenges of fundraising and choosing our preferred contractor for the works on the bells and most importantly the continuing development of the skills of our ringers.

Lawrence Bignell
Tower Captain

10. Pastoral Ministry

West Abbey Care Home

The pastoral ministry at West Abbey Care Home continues to thrive, offering invaluable support and companionship to residents. Through the monthly Holy Communion service, regular visits, group gatherings, and one-to-one conversations, the ministry has helped foster a warm and inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and heard.

Residents have responded positively to the initiatives, such as the Christmas Carol Services, participating in the fortnightly chaplaincy visits, and individual times of prayer.

The pastoral team's dedication ensures that spiritual care remains at the heart of the home, enhancing overall well-being and strengthening the sense of community.

Looking ahead there are plans to continue the monthly Sunday afternoon services, and the new initiative of having a regular Bible Study Group.

Rev John Hanson

Malmesbury Court Residential Home

The Holy Communion services at Malmesbury Court Residential Home aspires to be a cornerstone of spiritual care, creating a sense of unity and reverence among residents. These monthly gatherings are thoughtfully organised, ensuring that all who wish to participate feel welcome and included.

The team collaborates with staff to accommodate and advertise widely the offering of Holy Communion.

The Home Group that facilitates these services is committed to maintaining the quality and accessibility of Holy Communion, which continues to support the emotional and spiritual well-being of all residents.

Rev John Hanson

Redleif House Residential Care Home

One of our Lay Worship Assistants has continued to lead services at Redleif House once a month on a Sunday afternoon, on behalf of St James'. When these services started four years ago there were members of St James' at Redleif House who were not able to get to St James'. Those members have since gone to be with the Lord, and the residents and management have welcomed the continuation of the Sunday service each month. This is a way in which St James' can provide the opportunity of worshipping together for those who cannot easily get to church. The short service includes hymns, prayers, a bible reading and a short reflection. Sometimes Holy Communion is offered, as at the 2026 service on Easter Day. It is always a privilege to be welcomed at Redleif House, and to know how important the monthly act of worship together is to those who attend.

Mark Felstead

General Pastoral Ministry

The pastoral ministry team has placed particular emphasis on visits to individuals and hospitalised residents, ensuring that personal spiritual care is accessible even during times of illness or isolation. These visits offer much-needed comfort, prayer, and companionship, helping individuals feel supported when facing health challenges or recovery.

The team engages with Individuals, family members, and carers to respect the individual's unique needs and to foster a sense of hope and reassurance.

One-to-one pastoral visits in the hospital and in the home have been warmly received.

The ministry's presence provides a familiar and caring connection, offering encouragement, and facilitating meaningful conversations that support emotional and spiritual well-being. These efforts underscore the commitment of the pastoral team to serve each individual, regardless of location, and to maintain the strong bonds of community that are central to the ethos of the pastoral ministry team.

Identifying the Need for More Pastoral Ministers

The current pastoral ministry team plays a vital role in enhancing the spiritual and emotional well-being of all whom they come into contact with. However, as the demand for personalised spiritual care grows, it has become increasingly evident that the existing team is stretched in their capacity to provide timely and comprehensive support to all who require it.

With monthly Holy Communion gatherings and a commitment to visiting residents during periods of illness or isolation, the workload for the current pastoral ministers is considerable.

Individuals benefit greatly from one-to-one visits, prayer, and companionship, but the ability to maintain these ambitious standards of care is challenged when the team is limited in numbers.

Expanding the team would allow for more frequent and flexible visits, ensuring that no individual feels overlooked and that spiritual support remains accessible to every person in need.

Additional pastoral ministers would enable the team to better collaborate with staff, family members, and carers, addressing each person's unique needs more effectively.

Increasing the number of pastoral ministers would help sustain the ethos of community and care that is central to pastoral ministry ultimately supporting the emotional and spiritual well-being of all everyone in a more robust and responsive manner.

We invite you to pause and reflect on the profound impact that pastoral ministry can have within our community. If you feel a gentle nudge towards offering comfort, companionship, and spiritual support to others, we encourage you to consider whether you might be called to join this rewarding and vital ministry.

By answering this call, you have the opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of individuals and families, bringing hope and reassurance where it is most needed. Your presence could help sustain the rich ethos of compassion and care that defines our pastoral work, ensuring that no one is left feeling isolated or unsupported.

Please take time to discern if this meaningful path is one you are inspired to pursue; your gifts could be the answer to someone's prayer for connection and community.

Rev John Hanson

Oasis Bereavement Café

Meeting on the afternoon of the last Saturday of every month of the year, including December, in the Church Room, the Oasis Bereavement Café was launched in August 2024. Since then, it has seen a continuing steady growth in the number of those attending, who value this opportunity to meet with others who are living with loss.

The café is widely advertised both online and by specially printed handout cards, on which it is described as 'offering a safe and welcoming place for: anyone affected by bereavement and living with loss; sharing tea and cake etc and conversation with others who share the pain of loss; enjoying the company of friends.

The Oasis Bereavement Café offers a time and space for rest and refreshment to gain strength for the journey through, what may seem, the desert of bereavement.'

As it says on the tin, this is a meeting place not a formal bereavement support group and we do not offer counselling but can signpost it if requested.

Thanks to Erica, from the café has grown the green shoot of an occasional shared table Sunday lunch, in the Church Room, for those who would otherwise be eating alone. The first one was enjoyed in March and we look forward to the next one planned for May.

Sincere thanks are offered to the Core Team, themselves bereaved, who welcome newcomers, listen to their stories and share in conversations; those who, month by month, set up the Church Room; set up the kitchen; bake the lovely cakes and those who come and wash up, clean the kitchen and set everything in order for use on Sunday.

Sandra Pickard

11. Home Groups

Over 80 people across both churches are members of a home group, which provide fellowship, learning, prayer and friendship as we follow Jesus together. As well as centrally produced materials (we began the year looking at Bible memorisation and ended with a series on Worship) the groups also choose their own resources and programme. One group closed down during the year with its hosts/leaders moving to pastures new - most of the members have joined other groups, and a new 'twilight' group has started. We are immensely grateful to

our home group leaders, for all the time, care and prayer which they put into this ministry.

During the year we have 'rebranded' from Cell Groups to Home Groups: 'cell' needed a lot of explaining, and our small groups never functioned as 'cell' groups are supposed to. Home group is easier to explain, and captures something of the care, welcome and acceptance which we hope marks our church community.

Rev David Keen

12. Prayer

Prayer at St James'

Prayer has been described as 'living at the junction where God's presence meets human reality'. In prayer ministry on Sunday mornings at St James', at intercessory prayer on Tuesday afternoons, at prayers for St James' and the community at 7.30pm on the 4th Tuesday of each month, and together in our home groups during the week, we have the privilege of 'standing in the gap' between human need and God's promises as we meet together in prayer. Jesus' words in Luke 11:11-13 give us good reason to persist in prayer: "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

The Thy Kingdom Come prayer season in May/June 2025 enabled a number of us to unite in prayer together between Ascension and Pentecost, and our Advent Reflections on 6th December 2025 provided some quiet space and time for prayerful meditation together before Christmas. Every week of the year our inter-church Virtual Prayer Room and bulletin enable many, via email or Facebook, to unite our prayers together for our common themes, not just in our parish, but throughout Yeovil and beyond:

- Thanks for what God has already done
- Unity (that we may work together for the glory of His name)
- That God would pour out His Spirit on our town/village and our nation
- That God would bring reconciliation, restoration and transformation to those lost, who still don't have a relationship with Him
- Time for reflection and hearing God's voice
- The blessing for the people, thinking of those in the prayer room. (Num. 6:24-26):

The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face towards you and give you peace.

If you have not yet connected with the Virtual Prayer Room and would like to do so, please contact Mark.

There are WhatsApp groups to pray for specific areas, such as Youth Prayer (Revd Sarah and youth leader Ruth) and Prayer for children and families (Laura). We also have a St James' Prayer Chain - a group of people who are committed to praying in response to any urgent and confidential prayer requests. Please contact Maureen Harris or any of the staff team with such requests for prayer.

Thy Kingdom Come 2025 (29 May - 3 June)

Thy Kingdom Come (TKC) is an ecumenical prayer movement that was launched in 2016 to invite Christians around the world to pray from Ascension to Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus. The vision of TKC aligns perfectly with our vision at St James' to be a Wholehearted Church - encountering God, gathering community, growing disciples and living the Gospel. Our prayer that people who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus Christ and His love for the world, will hear it for themselves and respond and follow Him underpins our mission as a church, and we are committed to joining with over a million Christians throughout the world during this season of prayer. Prayer Journals were available both at St James' and St Peter's for the 11 days of TKC and St James' was open for a special day of prayer on Saturday 31st May 2025. TKC encourages Christians to 'pray for five' as the principal focus of prayer, and we would love to invite everyone to do the same during TKC 2026 (14-24 May). The church will be open for a day of prayer 10am - 4pm on Saturday 23 May 2026.

Mark Felstead

13. Livestreaming

During 2025, a total of 44 Sunday services were streamed live to the parish YouTube channel plus two funeral/thanksgiving services, one baptism and one marriage. We also streamed the Carols by Candlelight service following a request, and despite the fact that there was insufficient light to provide good video, just being able to listen and take part was much appreciated.

In addition, ten pre-recorded Morning Prayer services were uploaded for those Sundays when All Age Worship prohibits live streaming and our clergy provided five videos on various topics.

The parish YouTube channel now has 269 subscribers and in an average month some 300 views are recorded as people log on to watch services or videos. On Sundays an average of twelve people are worshipping with us via the live stream and of those about half would be unable to attend church in any other form.

We are also aware that one of our local care homes provides access to the channel for residents and, as can be seen from the number of views recorded, many others are catching up later.

It is not possible to assess the true impact that streaming may be having, but we know that the services are watched by people from all over the country and from as far afield as Australia across the world.

Members of our two congregations have been able to worship from sick beds in homes and hospitals and during work trips and holidays.

Our thanks to the small technical team that run the streams and for the Readers and LWAs for the pre-recorded services.

The technical team struggles to cover all the occasions when streaming is required, so if you, or anyone you know, would like to be part of that team then please let us know. It is a unique way of serving God and furthering the mission of the church.

Chris Harris

14. Flower Team

First of all, enormous thanks to each and every lady who gives of their time expertise and finance to help make our church such a wonderful and pleasant place to be in.

We have a team of ladies who take turns to decorate our church on a two-week rota.

We are so lucky to have such a great team of talented ladies who give of their time so generously.

If anyone would like to join our team please contact Lynne Hardacre. It will be wonderful to welcome you on to the team.

Lynne Hardacre

15. Music and Worship

It's been a privilege to plan and lead music worship in St James' over the last year. There is nothing quite like playing and leading a great worship song or hymn with the congregation in full voice and in harmony with the band. It makes the significant effort and preparation that goes into each service worth

it. If you feel our music has touched or moved you in some way it would be great to hear your feedback after a service or on social media maybe. Over the last year our live music has been led the majority of the time by myself or Liz WC on the keyboard. We have been blessed to hear the lovely voices of new singers Sue B, Shirley B, Sue W and June B in the music group. The talents of Andrew B on guitar and Stephen on keyboard have also been much appreciated. Jo C has taken on the significant task of planning and issuing the 3 monthly music group rota which needs to align with the service rota. In advance of playing on Sunday, the music for each service is carefully selected in conjunction with the service leader. Selections are nominally based on the bible reading and theme for the service and is sometimes constrained by the musicians and singers on the rota. We have a large repertoire to select from and occasionally introduce a new song so if anyone has any suggestions for a new song/hymn or an old one we've not played for a while then please have a chat with us. Preparation for a service often involves a practice session for an hour or so prior to the Sunday so we can play confidently and worshipfully. During the year the church has continued to use CDs once per month normally on the fourth Sunday. This is mainly due to the limited number of musicians, singers and sound desk people and their availability for the rota. It would be great to have live music every Sunday but with the resources we have that is just not possible.

Recently Karen on flute and Claire on sax/singing have decided to focus their time on youthwork and services at St Peter's. Later this summer we will lose singer Becky who will leave St James' with Revd David. So, the pool of musicians/singers is growing ever smaller.

We therefore really need to strengthen our music group resources this coming year so if there are any singers or musicians old or young who think that God is calling you in this direction, please have a chat with me and I can give you more information. We ask for your prayers for God to raise up new musicians, singers and sound desk people. With blessings,

Mike Cox
St James' Music Worship Leader

16 St Peter's Community Centre

Over the past year, the centre has responded to increasing financial pressures on households, the cost-of-living crisis, rising food insecurity, and growing social isolation. Through a combination of targeted support and inclusive activities, St Peter's has remained a vital, trusted hub for the local community.

The community we serve continues to face significant challenges, including rising cost of living impacting household food security, increased demand for affordable food provision, social isolation, particularly among older adults and parents and limited access to low-cost wellbeing and physical activity opportunities.

Our provision has been designed to directly respond to these needs, ensuring accessible, dignified, and consistent support.

Community Pantry

The Community Pantry has remained a cornerstone of support for local families, providing access to affordable food in a dignified and community-focused environment. 35 households a week are currently using the Pantry.

Westfield Fresh

Westfield Fresh has expanded access to fresh produce, ensuring families can obtain nutritious food that may otherwise be unaffordable. Westfield fresh now has 2 sessions weekly, one daytime, one afterwork session to reach the working families of the local community. This is used by 50 households a week.

Food Hub – Donation based meals Monday to Wednesday

The Food Hub has continued to provide essential food support through a community meal-based approach rather than traditional food parcels with approximately 3,640 meals a year being served at the centre.

Flexercise Programme

Weekly Flexercise sessions have played a key role in improving physical health and reducing social isolation, particularly among adults who may not otherwise access fitness opportunities.

Community Outreach

In October 2025 we were approached by Somerset community foundation to launch an outreach project in our neighbouring parish in the area of Birchfield. Project was 6 months delivery of a warm hub lunch club designed to plant the seed of a successful food hub on the Birchfield estate.

There was a successful outcome with over 30 people attending each week. Seed planted and is now continuing under a new leadership in Birchfield.

This year has demonstrated the vital role St Peter's Church & Community Centre plays within the community. Through responsive, inclusive, and impactful provision, the centre continues to support those most in need while fostering a stronger, more connected community.

Collectively, our food-based services delivered over £66,000 in direct food value to the community this year, while supporting over 8,000 points of access across all programmes.

The ongoing demand for services highlights both the challenges faced by local families and the importance of sustaining and growing this work. St Peter's remains committed to developing accessible, dignified, and community-led provision that responds directly to local need.

Marie Rice
Community Centre Manager



