

St. James's Church, Piccadilly Annual Report 2006/2007

(covering the period 1 April 2006 to 30 March 2007)

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Section A Introduction: our mission statement

1 Our mission statement

St. James's Church is part of the Anglican Communion within the world-wide Christian Church.

We understand ourselves to be called:

- to gather as a body which welcomes and celebrates human diversity - including spirituality, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation
- to create a space where people of any faith or none can question and discover the sacred in life through openness, struggle and laughter and prayer
- to a common commitment to be in solidarity with poor and marginalized people and to cherish Creation.

We don't manage it all the time, so we try again.



Section B Clergy reports

2 Annual report from the Rector - Revd Dr Charles Hedley

The challenge of writing a Rector's annual report is twofold. Firstly, that all the activities of the church - including those that have occupied my energies during this past year - are already set out elsewhere in this report by others. The second challenge is that, for all kinds of good reasons, annual reports customarily report what has happened - what we do. They say very little about who we are.

During the course of last year, one report described St James's as 'the most congruent' of a number of churches that the writer had researched. What the writer meant by this, is that what we do and what we profess to value, relate very closely to each other. St James's 'congruency' could be seen as a small pat on our collective back, but it is certainly not a cause for any complacency. One good thing about our annual report is that it gives us an opportunity to test the truth of the claim.

Being a living Christian church community in Piccadilly is about our 'being' as much as it is about our 'doing'. The way that we understand the meaning for us of our being part of the Church of England *should* inform what we do. It lies at the root of our mission statement, and this statement should be able to stand alongside each and every report found in this booklet. So, read the Mission Statement, then read the reports, and then try to decide for yourself on how congruent we are - or are not - as a church community.

The second challenge of this report, however, is that although it may tell us much about our activities, it tells little about the day-to-day conversations and the chance encounters, through which the spirit of the gospel is lived. It tells nothing about the content of our daily prayer, or how we relate prayer to action. This is because these things are not so much a matter of report as of life.

St James's remains an 'incarnational' church; and by this I mean that we profess a gospel that is only experienced through its being lived out in human lives. Human life is, of its very nature, uncertain and prone to accidents and surprises. We aim to be a place where, in the light of the Christian story, *everyone*, whatever their background and history or whatever human make-up, can discover the power of the spirit of God and develop the potential of their own human spirit. We aim, above all, to provide a space for personal growth and change - a space where this can be lived out in encounter with the rest of the world on Piccadilly and beyond. It is inevitable that our annual report can only hint at all this.

During the past year, there have been several staff changes that are all recorded elsewhere. I am extremely grateful for the continuing work offered by the paid staff, as well as the many volunteers. As I write this report, our Parish Secretary, Polly Haste, is still off work some months after suffering a stroke. She has my prayers and good wishes for her recovery.

Once more, I particularly thank my fellow clergy and our two churchwardens, Cornell Jackson and Jane Preest who have worked tirelessly alongside many others. Without their dedicated service, this would be a far lesser place.

The Revd Charles Hedley

3 Annual report from Revd Lindsay Meader

“Sight development”

At a staff-training day, we came to the conclusion that, largely due to the demands of the site development project, Charles seems to have more meetings than conversations. I, on the other hand, being here with a primarily pastoral purpose, have more conversations than meetings . . .

Reflecting back over the last year (and my first full year at SJP), I am aware of a gradual shift in focus. Most of my first year here has been spent getting to grips with the unusual nature of the parish of St. James's - a community gathered from far and wide, a wonderfully inclusive, liberal and welcoming ethos, our location in the heart of the nation's capital, the many and myriad events to which the church plays host, the wealth and diversity of folk who come through our doors for so many different reasons - and discerning and confirming my role within it. That role is chiefly pastoral - being available not only for the community but also for the staff, and those who come along asking to speak to a priest, offering conversations, spiritual direction or simply a listening ear.

The focus of that has been very much the church, which I see as a “community of communities”. Of course, the Sunday Community is at the heart of who we are, but then there's the office staff, the market traders, the concerts team, our friends in Alternatives, the caravan folk, those who attend our midweek services, our fundraising committee, our team of volunteers, the Blake Society . . . and a fair bit of crossover between the aforementioned, a particular highlight of which was the May Day fête!

It's only on those rare occasions when I have found myself attending other services in other churches that I realise I am in danger of taking for granted how fortunate we are in our liturgy. Contributing to and leading worship at SJP is a constant delight, definitely much more joy than duty! In addition to baptisms, weddings and marriage blessings, liturgical highlights have included the

- Easter vigil and dawn service (thanks to Simon and David)
- St. James's Patronal festival
- creative liturgy
- Harvest Creation liturgy
- Confirmation service
- carols for shoppers and
- midnight mass

It's been a pleasure to welcome various groups to the church - young adults with learning difficulties from the Leighton Project, A-Level religion and philosophy students from Jersey Girls' College, and German Lutheran pastors - and occasionally to leave the site behind to go and visit various folk at home or in hospital.

However, over the last few months I have become aware of, perhaps not so much a shift as an expansion in focus, in beginning to engage with the wider community and considering what needs we can help to address and meet.

I've started taking regular assemblies in Soho Parish School (as part of a team of four clergy), and in November took on the role of clerical secretary on the Deanery Synod, which provides an interesting perspective on the wider church! I am also in the processing of becoming a theatre chaplain.

Working with Laura Hamilton to bring to fruition her idea for a drop-in centre for restaurant and hotel workers is hopefully just the first project in addressing some of the needs of the business community and especially in seeking out "the hidden poor". Certainly the research stage of the project alone has led to some interesting conversations.

I started out on the subject of conversations rather than meetings. However my timetable is not entirely meeting-free! Perhaps the most significant meetings I've been involved in over the last year are those of the PCC, who meet monthly. A considerable amount of focus this year has been on site development. The site development has the potential to bring significant focus to SJP from the wider community and will bring an exciting wealth of opportunities and possibilities for us all, but obviously not without serious disruption. It has been a privilege to be part of a group in which every point of view and opinion is offered and received with such respect and sensitivity.

There is much to look forward to and get excited about in the coming year. We live in interesting times. As I reflect on the year just past, I must thank Charles for his wisdom and support, Hugh and Meg for the many gifts and skills they share, and Jane and Cornell for their commitment and dedication as Churchwardens. I feel enormously grateful and extremely blessed to be part of such a diverse, vibrant and inclusive community, where in the words of our mission statement "laughter" and "prayer" are both common currency. So thank you - to all of you. In the words of Dag Hammarskjöld: "For all that has been, thanks. For all that will be - yes!"

The Revd Lindsay Meader

4 Annual report from The Revd Meg Johnson

First, let me say a big 'thank you' to the community of St James's for their enormous support and concern over the last 17 months when my shoulder took a closer look at the pavement followed by a blinding cataract in my left eye. The cards, phone calls and chocolate did much for my morale and for my health in general! This has, of course restricted what I have been able to do at St James's, with two further operations in August and October and rather a lot of physiotherapy since. However, since the beginning of 2007 there has been a great improvement and does now seem to be light at the end of the tunnel! Hurrah!

Despite all this it was a great joy that on Easter Day last year all four of us were able to concelebrate. During this year I have preached and presided whenever this has been possible and I am extremely grateful to Charles, Lindsay and Hugh for taking over duties that I was unable to fulfil. I would also like to give special thanks to our churchwardens, Jane Preest and Cornell Jackson, for their unstinting hard work, even through their own troubled waters.

I remember a conversation I had with Lindsay about 6 months after her arrival and a year after mine. We both remarked that we still got excited about St James's. I have to report that a further year on I can still say the same. We have an extraordinary community with a variety of different talents, interests, experience and enthusiasms which are shared in abundance and which I find a joy to work with.

In May last year I retired from my full-time work at the Diocese of Southwark. I had worked for the diocese for 17½ and during that time had seen 3 diocesan bishops, 9 area bishops and 15 archdeacons come and go, working closely with 8 of them.

Over the past 3 years I have acted as pastoral tutor to one of Southwark's ordinands and it was a very happy occasion when she was ordained deacon last September. I am also involved in spiritual direction.

As many of you know, I have a particular interest in Christian spirituality/mysticism in its broadest form and how it links with the spirituality of other faiths - or none. I now feel in a position to begin what I had hoped to do a year ago; that is to start a group exploring this area of Christianity that has been greatly neglected in this age of reason. I shall be working with Simon Dawson on this and we plan to have our first session after the service on Palm Sunday.

I look forward to the year ahead with the folk who have become my fellow travellers.

The Revd Meg Johnson

5 Annual report from The Revd Hugh Valentine

These days, 'reporting' and 'auditing' have assumed addictive proportions. And so have strategic plans, targets, and performance indicators. That's not to say there is no place for such things - in moderation; it's just to say that I've had an epiphany, have been born again, seen the light and want to shout '*repent! repent!*' against any unchecked obsession with them.

So this year I shall avoid any hint of 'things done' in the report I am required to submit to this volume. I'd rather speak of things explored and considered. And since all the evidence is that this impressive volume is not read by anyone, none will be the wiser...

I have thought a good deal this year about belonging and following. It would be hard not to, as a Christian in the Anglican neighbourhood of town. I have considered the claims of what might be inadequately described, respectively, as the 'Archbishop Akinola' and the 'liberal Anglican' schools; I have thought about the Church (both as the institution and the gathered and hysterical 'Body of Christ'); I have listened to others, observed them and myself. The results haven't been terribly encouraging.

All this has thrown me back to the paint-stripper method of 'doing theology'. What, amidst all this flim-flam, might be worth living by? The result may not surprise anyone. It is to consider the Gospels, in full knowledge of the many problems of authorship, cultural bias, and translation, and to ask if the person of Jesus therein revealed is to be trusted as someone worth following. This is the subjective approach to faith and I cannot understand any other.

It is no new approach when faced by external 'religious' claims and authorities:

"You will say Christ saith this, and the apostles say this, but what canst thou say? Art thou a child of Light and hast thou walked in the Light, and what thou speakest is it inwardly from God?"

(Margaret Fell, quoting from her first encounter with George Fox).

And my answer (working hypothesis) is that this shadowy, beguiling, potent and attractive figure *is* worth following, with at least a hundred ever-changing questions in tow.

The Revd Hugh Valentine

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Section C Church Officers and Legal reports

6 Annual report from the Churchwardens

Church renovation

The next big challenge for restoring our beautiful church is replacing the roof. We have had slow but steady growth in our fundraising campaign in 2006. However, we have had some stellar special events.

Elizabeth Elliott ran the Paris marathon on April 9th. She completed the course in just over 4 hours. Elizabeth was equally successful with sponsorship. She zoomed past the initial estimates for raising funds.

On May 1st, we are had our first St. James May Day fete with the theme of "raise the roof!" We had activities for the children, maypole dancing, games, a treasure hunt, stalls and tours of the church. The master of ceremonies this day was the great Diane Crocker. Key to the success of this day was the efforts of our former market manager, Joel Lewis.

On September 4th, we had our first SJP quiz night. Thanks to great efforts of Diane and Ray Crocker, we had an incredible time while raising money.

In addition to raising funds, these activities generated the additional benefit of building the community of St. James's Piccadilly.

Joel came up with the idea of the bookstall in our market. This sold second hand books on an honour basis. This has turned out to be very successful.

Overall, we raised about £110,000 in 2006.

In 2007, the efforts continue. In April, our business committee is planning to hold a gala evening in the church to raise funds.

Personnel

St James's is very lucky that, when sadly we say goodbye to loyal and hard-working members of the staff team, we are able to recruit new people who are able to take on the work with the commitment and reliability we value so much.

This year there have been some changes in the vergers team. We have not lost the knowledge and dedication of Paul Circus (although he reached retirement age) because he has been able to take the part-time vergers' job. And we welcome Andrew Yoshiro who began work as a full-time vergers here after Christmas. We have had 2 part time vergers this year. Tom Cheetham was here for a few months at the beginning and was succeeded by Raja Halder, who left us in December to pursue his career as a musician. We are grateful to the vergers team for all they do so willingly and conscientiously, especially at times when they are short staffed. And we thank Ray and Fiona who continue to help with church cleaning each week, and Gerald whose care of the garden helps to keep that little green oasis a calm and peaceful place.

In November Joel Lewis, who had been our market manager for seven years, left for a job nearer his home in Brighton. He had become an important member of the community at St. James's, often involved in activities beyond the remit of his market, room hiring and health and safety job. For instance he was a key figure in the organisation of last year's May Day event. We miss his friendly presence, but we are delighted to have in Gary Thomas a very experienced market manager, who is already coming to grips with his job, and we look forward to the stable and successful market he will be able to maintain for us.

At the time of writing we are without our parish secretary, Polly Haste, who has been unable to work since her stroke. We have had some very competent and charming temps, but, of course, they cannot replace Polly's knowledge and experience, and we very much look forward to seeing her back in the Rectory as soon as she is well. In the meantime we send her and her family our love and best wishes.

It is very good to have this chance to say thank you to all the Rectory staff, who work so diligently to enable St. James's to be the place it is. The work 'behind the scenes' is, of course, vital, and we would soon come to a standstill without the efforts of Ashley and the valiant verger team, or Ann and Neil administering our fundraising and the PCC respectively, or the volunteer receptionists and Verity our archivist, not to mention Finna and Josephine, or our tireless clergy team, whose vision for St. James's inspires us all.

Cornell Jackson and Jane Preest

7 Annual report from the PCC Secretary

The PCC sometimes feels like a large and old-fashioned engine, valiantly attempting to power St James's through momentous decisions: twenty people struggling to reach agreement on topics from power suppliers (economy v environment?) to how our voice can be heard in the wider church and beyond (can St James's ever speak with one voice?). Simon Dawson has done a fine job as chairman, allowing feelings to be expressed as consensus is - usually - reached.

At the ACPM in April 2006 four new members were elected to the PCC: Ray Crocker, Helen Holmes, Fiona Markey and Verity Smith. Cornell Jackson and Jane Preest were thanked for their hard work over the past year and elected to continue as churchwardens. Pam Mills has been unable to continue as Honorary Secretary and Jo Hines has replaced her. Simon Dawson has continued as Chair. In the summer Derek Lamden stepped down and Stephen Muggleton was co-opted to the PCC in October 2006.

There have been 12 meetings of the PCC, all well attended. Meetings start at 6.30 and continue till 9, with very occasional overruns. Four times a year PCC members adjourn for a meal afterwards; otherwise there are sandwiches and coffee midway through the evening.

The amount and variety of topics covered in these meetings is remarkable and it is a credit to Simon that almost all the sessions have finished on time, with hardly any sense of business being rushed. Since the sums of money under discussion have become ever more complicated and daunting, James Dow gave a brief lesson on how to read financial reports. The PCC keeps in touch with the different aspects of life at St James's with regular reports from the vergers and the market manager, the concert manager and the site manager. Inevitably, site development has taken a lot of our attention as we inch towards a means of proceeding, which will make financial sense, without losing sight of the original inspiration behind the project.

The need to find a balance between the vision at the heart of St James's, as summed up in the mission statement, and the practical details involved in keeping such a complex institution going means topics covered in a typical PCC meeting range from women bishops to moving pews to the creation of a space for children during services which will be more robust than the Grinling Gibbons font. Given such a weight of business, it would be easy for the PCC to become just another committee meeting; the fact that this does not happen is due to the *open slot*, a half hour period which is set aside each month for any topic members wish to raise. This provides a much-needed opportunity for the group to 'breathe' and reflect, without any pressure to find solutions or table resolutions. In fact the open slot often ends up by raising more questions than there were at the beginning. This time is so valuable that the PCC is hoping to find a way for the whole community to have a similar chance, perhaps at a shared monthly lunch after the service, for exploring, discussion and reflection.

Jo Hines

PCC membership and attendance 2006/7

<i>Name</i>	<i>No of meetings eligible to attend (up to 29/1/07)</i>	<i>Actual no attended</i>
<i>Kenny ALIU</i>	11	7
<i>Caroline CLARK</i>	11	7
<i>Tom COOK</i>	11	10
<i>Ray CROCKER</i>	11	8
<i>Simon DAWSON</i>	11	10
<i>James DOW</i>	11	8
<i>Jo HINES</i>	11	10
<i>Roy HOLLAND (Deanery Synod rep)</i>	11	10
<i>Helen HOLMES</i>	11	6
<i>Cornell JACKSON (Churchwarden)</i>	11	10
<i>Fiona MARKEY</i>	11	11
<i>Stephen MUGGLETON</i>	5	4
<i>Jane PREEST (Churchwarden)</i>	11	10
<i>Heather SIMMONDS</i>	11	9
<i>Verity SMITH</i>	11	8
<i>Heather WILLIAMS</i>	11	11

8 Annual report from the PCC Chairperson

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the committee that oversees and manages the life of the church. There are about twenty council members. Some are elected for a three-year term, whilst others such as the clergy, churchwardens and treasurer are automatically members of the PCC because of their duties.

We meet formally once a month, and there are many other smaller meetings where groups of PCC members get together to work on the various projects and tasks we have set ourselves.

The first of our tasks was to monitor and oversee the “business” life of the church. We took regular reports from the various officers such as the site manager, market manager, treasurer, and concert manager. Their reports can be found elsewhere in this booklet so I won’t repeat what they said here, but it may be worth emphasising one theme that seemed to come out of all the reports. Back in 2006 the theme was human overstretch. Due to staff vacancies and other reasons a lot of our staff were feeling overloaded with work. Those vacancies have now been filled and things seem to be improving.

The overarching theme this year was an awareness of possible financial overstretch. As a church we receive no financial support from central sources, and we have to raise the money to pay our entire running and staff costs ourselves. We rely heavily on income from the market and from concerts, and from money given in offertory collections and stewardship.

In past years we have managed to balance the books without too much struggle. But we seem to be moving into a slow recession where the market and concert managers are struggling to maintain their planned income levels, whilst our potential costs may rise due to the demands of site development. This is not a serious problem yet. Past treasurers have deliberately built up cash reserves in the “fat years” in expectation of possible future famine, yet we need to be aware of the risk and monitor the situation carefully in the next few years.

The two other major tasks of the PCC were work on the site development process and the PCC *strategy*. Reports of both of those tasks can be found later in this booklet.

I want to finish by thanking the various members of the PCC for the work they do. We have had various visitors to our meetings over the year, many of who have commented on the quality, enthusiasm and commitment of our various committee members.

Whilst all are worthy of praise I feel the need to mention Neil Lamont in particular. Neil works one day a week to prepare our agendas and minutes (as well as this annual report). He does that job well, and his work is a major factor in making our PCC life run smoothly. Neil is taking a few months sabbatical in the spring and summer of this year, and we all wish him well on his journeying.

Simon Dawson

9 Annual report from the PCC Hon Treasurer

Annual report from the PCC Hon Treasurer

The financial results of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) are presented in the *Annual Financial Report and Accounts for 2006*, to be read in conjunction with the PCC's *Annual Report* (they form the main part of the *Annual Financial Report*, which is *Appendix A* to the *Annual Report*). The accounts are presented for approval at the APCM.

I am pleased to inform that the results for 2006 record the following. The facts behind these figures are explained in the paragraphs that follow:

- total funds have slightly fallen from £561,512 last year to £559,530 this year
- there is an overall deficit of £1,982 compared to a surplus of £105,315 for 2005
- there is a deficit of unrestricted income over unrestricted expenditure of £97,788 compared to a surplus of £73,885 in 2005

The main reason for the deficit in 2006 is that the PCC spent £104,667 on work for the site development project. This money came from general funds. If we excluded this expenditure, we would have broken even in 2006 (surplus of £6,879 rather than the deficit of £97,788).

Site development will have a major impact on our financial position in the years to come, the PCC has designated £250,000 from general funds should the project go ahead. More details of the project are described elsewhere in the annual report.

£115,856 was received as part of funds raised by the fundraising team for the renovation of the church. This included £2,958 from the books stall in the market and £1,649 from the May Day fair.

The market (under the management of Joel Lewis for most of 2006) has continued to provide our main source of income of £223,577. Joel has now moved to a new job with the Emmaus community in Brighton. I would like to thank Joel for his work through the year in ensuring that the PCC continued to receive this reliable income stream, and welcome our new market manager - Gary Thomas. The market has faced difficult trading conditions in the past couple of years with a fall in income for 2006 to £223,577 from £243,967 in 2005. Managing with these changing conditions and trying to reverse this decline in income is very important for our community.

Income from service collections and, donations and visitor giving has been steady. Your regular and continued support through Gift Aid is greatly appreciated and encouraged. Gift Aid brings us significant extra income through the tax benefits so, if you do not give through Gift Aid and would like to know more about it please ask me for details.

The PCC in its budgets from 2005 set itself a target of raising £10,000 through increased stewardship to fund the cost of the new stipendiary priest. This campaign was successful with £11,250 raised. I would like to thank Ilse Boas for leading the stewardship campaign.

The licencing of Church property (Caffe Nero and the flat above it) has also provided a steady stream of income. We also benefit from letting the basement in the Rectory building. Some of the main tenants are West End shows who use it for rehearsal space. Again, Joel Lewis deserves our thanks for arranging this important income source.

Sarah Baxter has worked hard to ensure that the church has been let successfully throughout the year to evening concert performers. She has also continued to book prestigious lunchtime performers and our thanks are due to the lunchtime stewards for encouraging generous donations from the audiences.

The PCC's funds are reviewed monthly throughout the year. At the end of 2006 the PCC held £311,462 in *unrestricted funds* of which £54,895 were held for *general purposes* in accordance with the *reserves policy*, which is intended to provide for the costs of church management and administration for the year ahead. In considering the sum of £54,895 we should bear in mind that in 2006 we spent £664,335 of unrestricted income. It is vital that we develop and maintain adequate reserves particularly as the proposed site development is likely to disrupt income streams and expose the PCC to the financial risks inherent in almost all building development.

At the end of 2006 £256,570 was held in *designated funds*, set aside out of *unrestricted funds* for special projects ministries, to replace church assets and for future building repairs (as opposed to renovation). Designated funds include £250,000 set aside by the PCC in 2006 to provide for general costs in years ahead in lieu of site development. It is anticipated that further sums will be set aside where available in 2007.

Restricted funds were £248,068 against £153,087 in 2005. The *restricted funds* include £191,736 for church renovation. There are also 6 smaller *restricted funds*, namely:

- the organ appeal fund £5,272
- garden replanting £870
- the diversity project £940
- creative liturgies £463
- debates £275
- for replacing albs £103

The PCC is delighted that Rupert Hambro is continuing to chair the fundraising appeals committee for 2007.

Your continued support for fundraising both by regular financial giving and through your time and assistance with fundraising activities is greatly appreciated.

The reappointment of the auditors Slater Maidment is proposed to the APCM for approval.

Finally but most importantly I would like to formally thank Josephine Ndyanabo for her hard work and support as finance manager at St James'.

Prof. James Dow
PCC Hon Treasurer

10 Annual report on fabric, goods & ornaments from the Churchwardens

Our building, and everything in it, is very well-used. This year having a building site next door has added to the workload of our site manager and vergers who bear the brunt of the care for our fabric, goods and ornaments. The builders next door managed to make a hole in the East Window, and suddenly Jesus needed a new knee! Of course those responsible put it right, but not without the considerable involvement of Finna and the vergers.

There has been some creative thinking, which has improved our facilities greatly. First the toilets at the back of the church had a major re-fit, which involved swapping the ladies and gents! The result has been to create much more useful spaces, which are also easier to keep clean - though inevitably they have needed some extra maintenance too.

There was some anxiety about the vulnerability of our unique Grinling Gibbons font as long as the only place we could provide for children during the Sunday morning service was the space around it. For a while it was protected with a piece of carpet, which was effective, if not very attractive. Removing some pews in the south aisle has given us a very useful space, which can be used for children on Sunday mornings and for other groups at other times too. So far this is a trial arrangement and the PCC will assess it after a few months.

Another new feature of daily worship is the *prayer focus*. It is the carefully arranged display designed to aid meditation, which - now that it is on wheels - can be moved between the prayer corner, the side chapel and wherever else it would be useful.

For some years we have had a loop in church to assist people who wear hearing aids. It is very good that now we have one in the meeting room downstairs too.

Ramps were installed in the courtyard to improve access to the church some time ago. They also need maintenance of course, and one has been of particular concern this year.

The PCC group making a risk assessment for St. James's identified fire as the major area for attention, so we have had alarms installed in the narthex, push bars now secure the west doors, sidespeople are trained in evacuation procedures and we have had an evacuation exercise. The church renovation programme includes a more extensive alarm system.

All this and there are still light bulbs to change, gutters to clear, algae to remove, and still a few leaks to deal with. The list goes on, but the willingness of Finna and the vergers does not falter. Thank you very much!

Jane Preest

11 Annual legal and administrative report from the churchwardens

The Church of St. James's, Piccadilly. The Parish of St. James's. The Deanery of Westminster (St Margaret). The Diocese of London.	St. James's Church Piccadilly. 197 Piccadilly. London W1J 9LL.
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The PCC following the APCM 2006:

<p>Clergy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reverend Doctor Charles Hedley, Rector. • The Reverend Lindsay Meader, Associate Priest (from Nov 2005) • The Rev Meg Johnson, NSM (from April 2005) • The Reverend Hugh Valentine, NSM. ① <p>N.B. ① Hugh prefers to be known as Worker-Priest.</p>	<p>Ex-Officio Members:</p> <p>Churchwardens:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cornell Jackson • Jane Preest <p>Deanery Synod Representatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roy Holland • Heather Simmonds
<p>PCC members elected April 2006:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kenny Aliu • Ray Crocker • Helen Holmes • Derek Lamden • Fiona Markey • Verity Smith <p>PCC members elected at 2005 or 2004 APCM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caroline Clark • Tom Cook • Simon Dawson • James Dow • Jo Hines • Heather Williams 	<p>Changes to the PCC over the last year</p> <p>Members who have left since the 2006 APCM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derek Lamden (PCC, until June 2006) <p>Members who have joined since the 2006 APCM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stephen Muggleton (PCC, co-opted Oct 2006)

The PCC is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.

<p>The PCC holds the following Trusts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Archbishop Tenison Trust • The St. James's Trust • The United Charities Trust 	<p>Information about Trust Funds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Archbishop Tenison Trust – the interest of this trust is shared between St. James's Piccadilly & St. Anne's Soho for general purposes. • The St. James's Trust – this trust is an amalgamation of 20 small trusts with particular reference to social welfare and religious education. • The United Charities Trust – this trust provides small pensions to parishioners.
<p>Bankers & Legal Advisors to the PCC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bankers - HSBC Bank PLC • Solicitors - Winkworth Sherwood 	<p>Auditors & Financial Advisors to the PCC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slater Maidment

12 Deanery Synod: report on the Westminster (St. Margaret's) Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod met three times this year. In May 2006, brief reports on the last Diocesan and General Synods were presented and a budgetary motion was passed asking Deanery parishes to contribute to the maintenance of six church primary schools. Dates were announced for four further Deanery Synod meetings. Jane Williams, wife of Archbishop Rowan Williams addressed the meeting on *'power and authority in the church.'*

The two St James's representatives then wrote to the Area Dean, requesting that Deanery Synod meetings include discussions on important issues, in particular on the question of women bishops.

At the second Deanery Synod meeting in November 2006, the Revd Lindsay Meader was elected clerical secretary to the Deanery Synod and Jonathan Bell (St Anne's Soho) was elected treasurer. A report from the July General Synod included details of two debates and decisions taken regarding women bishops. A number of those present took the opportunity to ask questions. A Deanery Forum followed, with a presentation and discussion on minority ethnic concerns in the Diocese of London.

At the third meeting in February 2007, there was a comprehensive presentation and discussion on church schools in the Deanery (including 8 primary and 3 secondary). Greater interaction between these schools and the churches is sought. This also had an interfaith opportunity as many of those attending (both staff and students) are of other faiths.

Although there has been little formal business at these meetings, the St James's representatives have found them a valuable meeting point for sharing experiences with people from other churches in the Deanery. More detailed reports have been made to the PCC.

Heather Simmonds

Section D SJP policy and procedure

13 The SJP constitution

The parish of St James's Piccadilly is a parish within the Church of England as defined by canon law. Individual parishes within the C of E do not, therefore, have a separate constitution. Instead, they work within a framework for governance (the Parochial Church Council etc) and follow all the rules/guidelines laid down by the wider Church of England.

For further details of the full C of E constitution see pages 1 to 6 of

- *A Handbook for Churchwardens and Parochial Church Councillors*
(MacMoren & Briden, 1996)

14 Method of election for PCC members

Parochial Church Council members are elected to serve on the PCC for a period of 3 years. In addition St James's has representatives elected to the Deanery Synod who sit on the PCC ex officio, as do the 2 churchwardens and the clergy. The numbers to be elected are laid down by the Church of England/diocese, as they are related to the number of people on the parish's electoral roll. In 2005 St James's is entitled to 12 elected PCC members and 2 Deanery Synod representatives

15 Risk management at SJP

In 2005 a small group from the PCC, headed by Cornell Jackson, systematically analysed the various risks faced by St James's (including financial, reputational, legal and physical risks) and identified the possible steps to mitigate them.

During the course of 2006 another thorough risk analysis was undertaken. This highlighted a few areas of concern, with fire risk as an area of particular importance. However, nearly all the necessary actions to mitigate the risk have now been undertaken.

Regular risk analysis, follow-up action, and maintenance of the risk register is managed by a member of the PCC, currently Ray Crocker (deputy churchwarden).

Charles Hedley

Section E SJP managers' annual reports

16 Concerts Manager

This could be written as an extremely long list of music events that took place at St James's Church during 2006. The conclusion that could be drawn from the many names would be that we have the most diverse music programmes in London. However, lists can be dull and in no way reflect the musical year.

We had a Hungarian Gypsy Jazz band, a saz quintet from Turkey, a liturgical choir from Kiev and a string quartet from Poland amongst our international flavours. Some of the musical instruments were new and extraordinary and it would be invidious to name just one. However, the Korean taegum was a wonderful discovery for me personally. A traverse flute made from bamboo with the haunting quality we know from the European equivalent but more mellow.

Michael Chance, the counter tenor - singing from our gallery - down to a soprano and a singing bowl below, was another magic moment. There were points at which you couldn't tell the change from one sound to the next.

Florilegium better known for their European baroque performances performed music from the same period written by the Chiquitos Indians.

From the pop world we had The Divine Comedy and Raul Midón. Nicky Spence, the Scottish tenor launched his new CD and Classic FM brought the violinist Roman Mints. There was a great deal of interest at the appearance of Sean Lennon, although he was rather upstaged by the presence of his mother Yoko Ono, bedecked in a sailor suit and top hat.

Amongst the many liturgical works were St John Passion, Mozart's Requiem and Haydn's Stabat Mater. The saxophonist, Christian Forshaw performed his popular CD 'Sanctuary' as part of the London Saxophone Festival.

St. James's Church took part in the Mayor of London's open rehearsal weekend in the summer. We were asked by City Hall if we would be able to admit members of the public to rehearsals for free. It gave me immense pleasure (and I admit to a little smugness) to be able to say that St James's Church is open during all our rehearsals and the lunchtime recitals thanks to the Rector, churchwardens and the PCC!

Sarah Baxter
Concerts Manager

17 Markets Manager

Piccadilly Market

I joined St. James's one week before Christmas and have had a very limited amount of time to familiarise myself with the issues affecting Piccadilly market. However, it is of some considerable concern that, if comparing results from 2006 against those of 2005, revenue from the main market fell by over £17,000. In addition, income derived from the Tuesday antiques market dropped by just over £2,000.

Addressing this decline needs to be given priority and I plan to work closely with market traders to develop ideas for a strategy to move forward. I am currently reviewing plans for forthcoming advertising. It is likely that a different approach will be used, as the concert manager and I are likely to pool resources and utilise the skills of a marketing professional, to work on promotion of both concerts and the market.

It would seem that the morale of market traders is low and a factor contributing to this has been a spate of recent break-ins. Several traders have lost considerable amounts of stock and I am currently reviewing our security arrangements. My view is that the company we use at present are performing poorly and it is likely that we will employ a new contractor within the next month.

Room Hire

Income from room hire fell £7,912 below budget for 2006. As most of my time has been spent on issues involving the market, I have had little time to consider the reasons for this. I do feel, however, that the room hire section on our website needs improving. Photographs of the rooms need to be added and I am liaising with Hugh Valentine on this.

The end of year figures can be found in the *annual financial report*.

Health & Safety

Unfortunately I have not had the time to consider this aspect of my job, or to report on what happened prior to my arrival.

Gary Thomas
Markets Manager, St James's Church

18 Site Manager

Last year we installed solar panels; this year we've monitored their output – it's 25% less than anticipated. So Simon Dawson and I are currently in discussion with the designers to see if there are any useful adjustments to be made.

More discussions concern the enormous plane tree, which overhangs the café courtyard. It's far too big for its boots and pushing over the wall that holds up the garden. I've poked about with our architect, our engineer, the Westminster arboricultural officer and even the Archdeacon. There are two approaches. Plan A: take out the tree, rebuild the wall and plant another tree somewhere else in the garden. Or plan B: keep the tree, rebuild the wall now, and again in 15 years and again in 15 years after that..... At the time of writing we await further enlightenment.

Meanwhile our concerns with the rest of our exterior include all our other trees, the electrical supply for the market stalls, trip hazards presented by the miles of paving in our various gardens which rise up and sink down for no apparent reason, and the wheelchair ramps which are a year older than their designed life. So we prune, we feed, we upgrade, we re-bed, we repair.

The development next door between us and Waterstones has had some impact. The most poignant event was a huge concrete delivery that blocked Jermyn Street, delaying the start of a funeral as the hearse couldn't get through. But considering the scale and complexity of the process, relations with the contractors (Sir Robert MacAlpines) have been good. I've found "I've only had to ask" and they've sent a team of men to move the altar, or a huge old pew, all in their luminous yellow jackets and on their best behaviour. It does help that their site agent also supports Chelsea.

A scaffolder dropped a shackle, which bounced off into our East Window, making a hole in Jesus's thigh. There was no argument about costs, just a lot of paperwork, a hunt for specialists and a 2 stage repair - a short term effort in clear glass and then the permanent repair in stained glass to match the original. I was deeply impressed by the skills of everyone involved. The man who drove the "cherry Picker" crane looked about 12 years old, but manoeuvred the platform 20 metres up in the air to within millimetres of the glass. The crane was left on our paving for weeks instead of days and scrunched up the York stone; so that had to be repaired and in the end the whole event took 8 months to unfold.

Since I arrived 7 years ago our concert lighting has been a constant anxiety for Sarah our concert manager. At the time of writing the problem is nearly solved as I've finally found an electrician who doesn't suck his breath in over his teeth when I show him the problem. Similarly we're on track with a solution to our leaking spire as I've found an abseiler who thinks laterally while working vertically: the abseilers will anchor themselves to the steel structure inside, rope right up to the cupola and slide slowly down the outside applying special grungy grey paint as they go. So we save on scaffolding and gain time to raise funds for long term restoration.

Safety concerns on the stairs from the church to the vestry prompted a face lift there. It was too dark. The light-bulbs were politically sound low energy type but took a second or two to reach full brightness; so we reverted to the immediate response of the old fashioned ones. We replaced the liver and black colour scheme with

sunshine yellow and pale grey. We stuck non-slip tape to the stairs but the unexpected consequence here is that it catches the hems of surplices. Safety issues also lead to the installation of a system of smoke detectors and fire alarms in the church and the conversion of the great west doors to allow emergency exit.

So while the clergy attend to our souls and our hearts I do my best for our buildings, thankfully with the concerned support of our team of vergers, all our outside experts and in house volunteers.

Finna Ayres



*Repairs to the East window:
the cherry picker crane carries the stained glass expert up to the window*

Section F SJP community reports

Involvement in the Sunday Eucharist

19 Intercessors

The contribution that members of the community can make to the liturgy by leading the intercessions continues unabated. Indeed, we consider it important that individual lay members should be involved in leading the worship. Sadly, a long-standing member - Catherine Gregory - had to leave as she was moving out of London and our good wishes go with her

Ilse Boas

20 Readers

One of many distinctive features in our Community Eucharist is the involvement of our team of readers, who read not just the Old or New Testament reading, but also the Gospel reading, reminding us that sharing the Gospel is the work of all God's people.

There are currently 27 folk who share in this ministry, including several people who have joined in the last year. We are always happy to welcome new readers.

We were particularly sorry to say goodbye to Jean Selwyn, one of our long-serving and most conscientious readers, who moved to Norfolk after 40 years living in St. John's Wood. We offer our thanks for her commitment and dedication, we wish her well in the future and look forward to seeing her whenever she comes back to visit.

We are grateful to Diane Crocker who last year took over the task of organising the readers' rota.

The Revd. Lindsay Meader

21 Servers

The serving team play a vital part in the Community Eucharist each Sunday, as well as supporting other special services throughout the year, not least at the major festivals.

Our servers share a number of key roles - 'Crucifer', 'Book' and Left and Right 'Candle'. Each role has particular duties; because of the weight of the processional Cross, the Book and the Gilbert salver used for the offertory, not every server undertakes the duties of Crucifer or Book. All four servers administer the chalices during Communion.

The servers work closely as a team and we are grateful to Meg Stewart for her input and expertise in training and liturgical movement, Ray Crocker for his skills as co-ordinator and Elizabeth Elliott who has only recently relinquished the task of compiling the rota. We are delighted that Tove is back on board after a short break, and hope that in time we will be able to welcome back Dominique Vouillemin who has had an extended break due to injury.

We are especially grateful to Simon Dawson and Lavinia Rosenthal, both faithful, long-standing members of the team who are standing down, and we wish Simon well in his forthcoming move to Salisbury.

It is encouraging to welcome some new members to the team: Frances Diamond and Helen Holmes joined at the start of the year, and Frank Kihere and Leon Clarke will be starting after Easter.

The composure, prayerfulness and dedication with the servers embrace their duties greatly enhances our worship and is a huge support to the clergy. A big thank you to each and every one of them!

Members of the Serving team: Ray Crocker, Frances Diamond, Elizabeth Elliott, Bill Glen-Doepel, Nick Hamilton, Helen Holmes, Cornell Jackson, Mark Lowther, Fiona Notman, Tove Sperling, Meg Stewart and Keith Turton

The Revd Lindsay Meader

22 Sidespeople

Sidespersons are often the first people that worshippers meet as they come into the church and can make a difference to how visitors feel about the community, as do welcomers in the latter part of the service.

The practical aspects of being a sidespersons involves arriving half an hour before the service, placing service sheets on appropriate chairs, putting aside large print sheets for those who need them and asking four members of the community to collect the offering and another two to bring the bread and wine to the altar for the liturgy. Greeting people at the door continues throughout most of the service as the congregation increases in size after eleven o' clock.

There is usually a lull until the collection, when sidespersons may be required to assist with tying awkward strings on the collection bag and will organize the latter part of that procession.

Another aspect of sidespersons duties includes the, hopefully, never-to be-needed fire drill which Ashley regularly undertakes with us after the service.

During the notices, as the service draws to a close, two welcomers introduce themselves to newcomers and invite them for a chat after the service. This gives us an opportunity to talk to newcomers individually and to discover what brought them along to St. James's and what we may be able to offer them. Some are keen to talk to us about their spiritual journey and others are interested in the groups that meet in the church or in the building itself.

There is at present a dearth of sidespersons and welcomers, ten and nine respectively, with some only able to serve occasionally. A recent request for more people to volunteer drew a response from one person only. Some are reluctant to offer because they feel shy (there's no need to be, as the greeting is usually very brief!) or imagine that the task is more onerous than it sounds. We need to think about how we can persuade regular members to fulfill these very important roles.

Laura Hamilton

23 Sunday hospitality (organised by Christian Aid)

The Christian Aid group continues to provide a now more extensive range of hot drinks and biscuits for the congregation after the Sunday morning service. They are a team that is dedicated and hard working. We continue to be grateful to St James's for funding expenses and to the vergers for their assistance to our work. We are also grateful to Pam McKenzie who continues to make sure supplies are kept up to date. Hospitality is part of the ministry of the church and there is still space for more members of St James' to become involved. This year we raised £1620.63 from providing hospitality, which is an increase from previous years. We are grateful to all involved in helping to achieve this.

Tony Sanchez

24 Welcomers

Being a welcomer is no less delightful a role than that of sidesperson. We have the enjoyment and fun of welcoming new people to the life and theology of St. James's.

The conversations that take place between welcomers and newcomers are often personal, as many talk about their long search to find a faith community that is open, friendly and affirming. Where appropriate, introductions can be made to members of the community who organize special interest groups.

The success and high turn-out of a recent welcomers' party, organized by the clergy and Jane Preest, has encouraged the team to hold more welcomers' parties in the future. It is a good way of introducing welcomers to each other and enabling them to get to know the clergy and others on the welcoming team.

We have lost several of our regular welcomers and have gained two new people on our rota. If any member of the community would like to join the team, they would be more than welcome.

Laura Hamilton

Ministries

25 Children at St James's

There are several families with young children who regularly attend St James. During the past year we have also welcomed numerous visitors and their parents.

Throughout the year parents and children have been particularly welcomed on the second Sunday of each month, when there has been an activity organized for the children during the sermon and prayers. This year, we appear to have achieved this without the aid of a (formal/planning) meeting!

There is now a new space in the south aisle where the children and toys can be during the services. We are also more aware of involving the children in other ways in special services eg Harvest, and the carol service on Christmas Eve.

The children seem to appreciate our efforts but there is still a lot of work to be done in this area of our ministry.

Elizabeth Lil

26 Lay singers and church music: report from the Director of Congregational Music

Over the last 12 months we have continued to enjoy music from a wide range of people, both amateur and professional - the lay singers, soloists (instrumental and vocal), small 'ad hoc' groups, visiting choirs and instrumental ensembles. There have also been regular opportunities for everyone to sing, as well as for us all to be silent. This variety hopefully caters for the widely diverse tastes of our community.

Service Settings

In our efforts to extend and develop the congregational music that we use, some additional texts have now been set to music and hopefully will become part of our standard repertoire soon. This is very much work in progress and all feedback is welcome.

Lay Singers

As always, the pool of people who make up the lay singers changes constantly, as does their availability, so this year we have welcomed new singers but have also had to benefit from the talents of others less often. We continue to enjoy the challenge of performing more demanding repertoire at Christmas and Easter when we are supported by additional professional musicians.

Thanks

I would like to thank all those who have given up their time to provide music for the services during the year and also those who provide encouragement, support and feedback. As ever, particular thanks to Malcolm Hicks with whom it is always a joy to work.

Elizabeth Lil
Director of Congregational Music

27 Laying on of hands

The ministry of the laying on of hands is offered on the last Sunday of each month, with the exception of August and December.

Usually at least three members of the team (sometimes more) are commissioned immediately after receiving Communion and move to the side altar where all are welcome to come forward to receive this ministry. The laying on of hands is a ministry that finds many different expressions, but each member of the team seeks, on behalf of the whole community, to be a channel for God's healing.

Over the last year we have resumed the practice of those offering this ministry being able to take part in a short act of preparation before the service, including prayer and anointing, led by a member of the clergy team.

Thank you to all who offer this valuable ministry: Shirley Dixon, Bill Glen-Doepel, Lavinia Rosenthal, Tony Sanchez, Paul Standeven, Meg Stewart, and to our faithful 'usher' - Jocelyn Henry

The Revd Lindsay Meader

Groups

28 Christian Aid support

It has been mainly a year of consolidation for the group. We have continued our regular fundraising activities mainly providing hospitality after the Sunday service and collecting from the public during Christian Aid week. There will be a separate report for Sunday hospitality but this year we raised £1620.63 from our efforts in this area.

With the continued help of members of the wider St James' community and from the vergers we raised £1386.37 during Christian Aid week. It was a credit to all involved that the process of collecting seemed to run very smoothly with few problems. We did not sell Christmas cards this year as there was a problem getting stock. In addition, the church brought out its own Christmas cards to raise funds for restoration, which might have presented a difficult choice for parishioners. However, we will consider going back to selling Christmas cards in the future. Our total income therefore for the last year was £3,007. Our total expenditure was £191.79, which has been a drop from previous years. This expenditure has been borne by the church, for which we are very grateful, enabling our total income to go to Christian Aid.

As ever we continue to be very concerned about the injustices of the international trade system and about poverty in the third world. Unfortunately, this year as a group we have not organised involvement in campaigns to address this but this is something we would like to become more involved with in the future. We no longer sell fair trade goods but we continue to support their development and will take the opportunity where we can to contribute to their promotion.

This year we did have a talk by Thomas Rodriguez and his colleague Rachel from Christian Aid. They talked to the congregation about the work of Passage House in Recife in Brazil. This is the project for which the funds we raise on Sunday are earmarked. This earmarking was done in memory of Sarah Root who died in 2001 and was a Christian Aid activist and member of St James'. Thomas and Rachel successfully portrayed the work of Passage House and how the funds we raise make a difference to the care and education of street girls in Recife. Hearing this helped to affirm the work we do and inspire us to continue. We would like to continue to have speakers from the larger Christian Aid organisation and perhaps also show films from them about the work they do and the issues in which they are involved. If we can we would also like to develop links with other Christian Aid groups.

As a group we have ideas about other activities we would like to do in the future. We have thought of involving children at St James' during Christian Aid week, perhaps using resources from the larger organisation to communicate the issues we are trying to address. We have also thought of having a 'performance event' to raise funds that would be equally split between Christian Aid and the church restoration fund. We would invite members of St James' to contribute a performance of say drama, dance, music, poetry or any piece of performance. Tickets would be sold for the event. Moves have begun to set this in motion. As ever we are grateful for the community at St James' for its support for our work.

Tony Sanchez

29 Group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered persons (and other marginalised people)

We once again underwent dramatic changes over the past year. Our approach this year drifted shifted away from a consensus-driven approach and towards a ministry service model. Only a tiny minority of group members participated in activities and decision-making. Throughout, however, we continued to be driven by Bishop Gene Robinson's advice to come out of our gay ghettos and become more integrated - but not invisible - with others in society and the church.

Nonetheless, despite less participation by the group, the creation of our virtual community (through *Google Groups* in 2005) continues to stimulate the gradual expansion of the group. This past year saw the group grow to over one hundred members - 105 at the writing of this report. This is a 25% increase since the last annual report. However, unlike last year our growth this year was less international in nature, but we continued our endeavour to understand and link to other faith communities such as Islam. Besides an increase in membership, the group archive of materials continues to grow, and will be moved from Yahoo to Google soon.

In addition to our virtual community we continue to hold shared lunch meetings on the second Sunday of every month. They were mostly discussion forums, but we did have poetry reading and sharing of news on sexuality issues.

Although this report normally begins with April, a special mention of our March activity is vital since the Anglican Communion is trying to find some way to get evangelicals, Anglo-Catholics, and progressive Christians on the same page regarding homosexuality. Last years' report was written before it took place. We hosted journalist and clergyman John Halford. He is the editor of the Plain Truth magazine and more recently Odessa magazine. John met us to see how evangelicals might be persuaded to conduct same-sex union blessings in their churches. It is through friendship (especially), re-interpreting the Bible, eliminating church bullying, negotiating the terminological minefield, and finding a way to minimise the sociological impact (e.g. childrearing) of such unions that evangelicals can succeed. On the other hand, gays have to understand the heterosexual point of view and make some sacrifices, much as conscientious objectors had to sacrifice themselves to win the approval of society. So too gays have to carry a burden until - like with inter-racial marriage - the church has enough time to catch up. Part of this is eliminating the extreme voice of the gay community and finding consensus. John left us with these challenges and others.

Later in the spring, we continued the theme of evangelicals and the gay issue by discussing the topic "Alpha course: Is it homophobic." We read a chapter in one of the course textbooks written by Holy Trinity Brompton. In general the group agreed that the Alpha course isn't so much homophobic as it is ignorant.

Then Brenda Harrison from *Changing Attitude* (CA) visited us. It was founded to "create a space for conversation with those who disagree with us" and promotes "diversity as a basis for unity." She focused on the global South and how discriminated groups must work together.

In the summer EuroPride became the focus. A visit to Southwark Cathedral by the Archbishop of Canada Andrew Hutchinson prefaced the season. He urged that all Anglicans be "true" Anglicans and stretch our bonds of affection. We once again had an information booth in Trafalgar Square. The highlight was a request from a Catholic lesbian couple for help in finding a church to marry them in Canada since they didn't want a UK "fake" marriage. The next day we celebrated a wonderful Eucharist entitled aptly "*we belong to one another*" where we celebrated our relationships in general rather than just LGBT relationships. In celebration the altar was decorated in pink; Robin read "*A vision of an age*

of universal love". Simon delivered a sermon on how we must be inclusive or we are separated from God and one another and we sung special hymns by June Boyce-Tillman, Sydney Carter, and Bill Wallace. The following week, our meeting continued this general pride theme. For example, we discussed age of consent, polygamy, and pornography - all general issues of concern to us all. We also discussed Joan Blackwell's article on why should we care if the Anglican church splits?

However, our summer barbecue was rained out. We continued the theme of going beyond LGBT relationships to see how we all fit into the general picture - such as wars, Mosque life, nudity, condom use, decency laws, voyeurism, sex museums; and so on.

The summer ended with a lively presentation and discussion on sexuality in Islam, which prefaced a talk by a major Islamic teacher on the "Muslim Jesus." Muslims are much like conservative Christians in their viewpoints but surprisingly have less guilt about sexuality than they do. They tolerate, for example, polygamy and even bestiality—but homosexuality is not tolerated.

Our Autumn programme featured an open forum followed by a dazzling talk and dialogue between our Rector Charles Hedley and our presenter Lisa on the topic of moral relativism. An article summarising the presentations will be printed in a future issues of Piccadilly Press. This is certainly a topic that goes well beyond the LGBT community and appeals to the general SJP community. We then held our annual Christmas shared lunch featuring wine, mince pies and other goodies. Much of our time was spent gathering opinions about a proposed major name change. In general, most of the group wished to retain all the gay labels in the name although they disagreed amongst themselves about what labels should be retained or added. However, most agreed that a "straight" label does not belong in the name.

Finally, our winter section began with Urs Mattmann reviewing his new book *Gays & lesbians reclaiming the spiritual journey*. His presentation included exercises featured in his book and a discussion. The next month, an important meeting was then held where we discussed the purpose of the group in conjunction with the proposed name change. However, this was prefaced by an important presentation and discussion led by Puck on the asylum process for refugees especially as it pertains to marginalised persons such as gays and lesbians. We have at least two such persons who have sought for and received assistance from SJP. Without such help it is likely that these persons would be sent back to their country of origin and suffer prison or worse.

The proposed name change was then discussed. It was decided by consensus that we will retain some form of the LGBT labels in our name but it may be accompanied either by a qualifier and/or advertising to make it more inclusive and values-based. It seems John Halford was quite correct about the terminological minefield we engage when discussing gay issues. Also, during this meeting there was an urgent and heartfelt appeal to address bisexual and transgendered themes. Secondly, it was proposed that the Group formally organise with elected officers (e.g. leadership team), a mission statement, and a constitution.

Also, during this time John Halford met with Jeremy Marks of *Courage* ministries (he spoke to us the previous year) to continue the dialogue on how evangelicals might be able to bless same-sex unions. Reverend Lindsay Meader hosted them at SJP. As an evangelical Jeremy was able to provide some insight about how to reach evangelicals more effectively.

Finally, our winter season will end with a Bible study by Reverend Mary Robins on "*sexuality and the Bible*." This event will occur after this report goes to press.

All in all, our group had a lively and provocative year. We pray we can become ore effective in our Lord's service.

Richard Pullin

30 Vagabonds

The Little Vagabond

By
William Blake

*Dear mother, dear mother, the church is cold,
But the alehouse is healthy and pleasant and warm;
Besides I can tell where I am used well,
Such usage in Heaven will never do well.*

*But if at the church they would give us some ale,
And a pleasant fire our souls to regale,
We'd sing and we'd pray all the live-long day,
Nor ever once wish from the church to stray.*

*Then the parson might preach, and drink, and sing,
And we'd be as happy as birds in the spring;
And modest Dame Lurch, who is always at church,
Would not have bandy children, nor fasting, nor birch.*

*And God, like a father rejoicing to see
His children as pleasant and happy as he,
Would have no more quarrel with the Devil or the barrel,
But kiss him, and give him both drink and apparel.*

Introduction

The vagabonds are a group of mainly Christian spiritual enquirers. We meet informally once a month in a pub close to St. James' to discuss a topic of interest. We take our name from William Blake's poem *The Little Vagabond*, a character who prefers the alehouse to the church (Blake was baptised at St James'). The topics of interest are spiritual in nature. We also visit each year other places of worship.

Meeting structure and location

We generally start our pub sessions with a lunch and fellowship time starting at 13:00. We usually split our sessions into two periods - although this may vary - with a break in between. Our session ends no later than 16:00.

Most of our meetings take place at the Captain's Cabin Pub near Piccadilly Circus:

Captain's Cabin,
4 Norris Street, London SW1Y 4RJ.

Hope to see you there!

We look forward to very interesting discussions, ales and soft drinks in 2007!

Vagabonds programme for 2007

- **Jan 21** **Christian mysticism** - a look at the role of mysticism in Christianity
Meeting time: 13:00 Meeting place: Captain's Cabin Pub
Chair: Meg Johnson Chair leg: David Carter
- **Feb 3** **Visit to the Ismaili Centre** - visit to the London spiritual home of the Shia Islamic sect (repeat visit on May 12th)
Meeting time: tbc Meeting place: Ismaili Centre, Cromwell Gardens,
London SW7 2SL (S Kensington underground)
Chair: Cornell Jackson

- **Feb 19** **The Ismalis** - discussion on the Shia Islamic sect
 Meeting time: 13:00 Meeting place: Captain's Cabin Pub
 Chair: Cornell Jackson
- **March 19** **The Trinity: then and now** - how to interpret the doctrine of the Trinity?
 Meeting time: 13:00 Meeting place: Captain's Cabin Pub
 Chair: Charles Hedley Chair leg: Leon Clarke
- **April 15** **Evolution and Genesis** - can evolution and Genesis be reconciled?
 Meeting time: 13:00 Meeting place: Captain's Cabin Pub
 Chair: David Carter Chair leg: Cornell Jackson
- **May 12** **Visit to the Ismaili Centre** - visit to the London spiritual home of the Shia
 Islamic sect Chair: Cornell Jackson
 Meeting time: tbc Meeting place: Ismaili Centre, Cromwell Gardens,
 London SW7 2SL (S Kensington underground)
- **May 20** **Music and spirituality**
 Meeting time: 13:00 Meeting place: Captain's Cabin Pub
 Chair: Christine Patton Chair leg: Cornell Jackson
- **June 17** **Parables: the power of the story**
 Meeting time: 13:00 Meeting place: to be announced
 Chair: Lindsay Meader Chair Leg: Margaret
- **July 15** **Visit to Antiochian Orthodox Church** - visit to the church that claims to
 directly descend from the original Christian community in Antioch
 Meeting time: tbc Meeting place: St Botolph, Bishopsgate
 Chair: Leon Clarke Chair leg: David Carter
- **Aug 19** **Desert spirituality** - exploration of the 'desert experience' and its connection
 with the 21st century
 Meeting time: 13:00 Meeting place: Captain's Cabin Pub
 Chair: Lindsay Meader Chair leg: Christian Michel
- **Sep 16** **Christian history: Thomas More and Henry VIII**
 Meeting time: 13:00 Meeting place: Captain's Cabin Pub
 Chair: Christian Michel Chair leg: Cornell Jackson
- **Oct 21** **Religion and psychology**
 Meeting time: 13:00 Meeting place: Captain's Cabin Pub
 Chair: Isabel Clarke Chair leg: Leon Clarke
- **Nov 18** **Book study: the Poisonwood Bible**
 Meeting time: 13:00 Meeting place: Captain's Cabin Pub
 Chair: Meg Johnson Chair leg: Lindsay Meader
- **Dec 16** **Christmas party and 2007 planning session - come to celebrate with
 ideas for next year**
 Meeting time: 13:00 Meeting place: Captain's Cabin Pub
 Chair: Cornell Jackson

*If you have any further questions, contact Cornell Jackson at
cornelljackson@gmail.com*

Cornell Jackson

Activities

31 Piccadilly Press

The Piccadilly Press continues to entertain and inform St James's community four times a year. It offers a variety of articles from book and film reviews to short stories and poetry, written by members of the congregation or by visitors. Themes include theological, political and moral issues. Real life stories are always very popular with the readers. For example, in 'Passage to Heaven' Rachel Lewis gave a touching account of the lives of vulnerable young girls in Recife, north-east Brazil, who risk ending up on the streets and are aided by St James's through Sarah's Fund, while Josephine Stein wrote about the warm welcome she received at Launde Abbey during a retreat there and Frank Kihere wrote of his difficult experiences in the asylum prisons of SE England.

Many thanks are due to the editorial team who meet quarterly and include Rev Lindsay Meader, Ilse Boas, Verity Smith, Ceinwen Sanderson, Roy Holland, Puck de Raadt and Finna Ayres. They bring enthusiasm and new ideas to the discussions as well as devoting their free time and energy to the production of the magazine. An important theme this year in our discussions has been about increasing magazine sales. Thanks to Lindsay for kindly hosting the meetings in her study.

Special thanks are due to the volunteers from the editorial team who sell the magazine. It still remains great value at 80p a copy. Many thanks also to Elizabeth Elliott who has worked very hard as subscriptions manager this year and to Heather Simmonds, the managing editor who continues to produce and edit each issue. She tirelessly encourages people to write, chases up outstanding articles, works on layout and then gets everything to the printers on time. Heather, aided by her new computer, is always keen to hear from anyone interested in writing for the magazine.

Finally the editorial team is very grateful to all those who buy the magazine and hope that they will continue to enjoy reading it in the future.

Editorial Team: Finna Ayres, Ilse Boas, Roy Holland, Puck De Raadt, Janet Lucitt, Lindsay Meader, Ceinwen Sanderson, Heather Simmonds Verity Smith

*Janet Lucitt
Piccadilly Press Secretary*

32 Work with asylum seekers

Introduction

This year Home Office has finally hit the headlines with a catalogue of disasters relating to their asylum 'policy': their failure to remove *End of Procedure* asylum seekers; the several thousand 'foreign nationals' lost between the prison establishment and the Home Office; the botched introduction of 'tags' for asylum seekers; the proposed exclusion of asylum seekers from subsidised ESOL English classes in order to accommodate economically useful Poles and Bulgarians; the 99% refusal rate of *fast track* cases in which those who report have been tortured are frequently ignored ... it all gets worse and worse. Where is the hope for a better future?

Practical support work: updates on people we supported in 2005/6

The Zimbabwean mother/activist you helped look after for so long was finally granted full refugee status; she no longer needs to rely on St James's for subsistence as she has been allowed into the benefits system. She is highly qualified and is looking for work, though she is still recovering from the psychological and neurological damage sustained both in prison and during the long frightening wait for the wheels of the law to turn.... We are currently trying to get her 6 year old daughter to South Africa, but the British Embassy in Harare have refused her a visa....

The Francophone torture victim found wandering outside the Heathrow detention centres was refused over and over, and has disappeared into the dark yonder....very likely he has been picked up from his Leeds hotel and returned to his country.

Practical support work: 2006/7: what support to people during 2006-2007?

As our regulars will have noticed, the Ugandans still in jail last year are now all out, and to our pleasure a number are regular attenders at St James's. Ongoing material support is necessary because several are not on *National Asylum Support System* welfare, so travel cards and phone cards to ring the folks home remain important. So do the jacket or coat suddenly appearing from nowhere when needed. One received communion the day after his release: Cilla Francis was his faithful visitor and continues to ask to be sent back to visit someone else. Other members of our community are engaged in standing surety, providing first class material and personal support. One positive outcome was the Ugandan lunch for survivors suggested by Charles and Lindsay, which has been superseded by a monthly 'all St James's' community lunch. But I believe that a 'detention survivor group' was a creative idea, which I hope will be resumed, since those who have spent a lot of time in detention are often best understood by those who have been through it themselves.

The very ill woman released from Yarlswood women's detention centre and hospitalised in the Maudsley for six months has regained her speech, and was released to a caring visitor's household in Bedfordshire. She is sane but still very damaged and frequently experiencing terrifying flashbacks. The civil action for medical neglect being conducted by Birnberg Peirce Solicitors is progressing slowly, but we have hopes she will win both her asylum and her civil case.

The young Rwandan family man whose wife and child were helped by St. James's with travel for prison visits has been released on bail, and returned to his partner and baby. He has now been told to return to Kigali and apply for a spousal visa from there, disregarding the well-documented risk he runs because of family links. This legalistic interpretation of 'Article 8' of the HRA (Right to Family Reunion) applies to all such cases. More often than not, despite thorough documentation, these requests are refused, and appeal becomes impossible because the family has no funds. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this couple are now having marital problems.

Statutory context of asylum work: changing perspectives?

The two dreadful *fast track* end-to-end detention programmes, which accelerate progress through the legal procedure at unmanageable rates, remain firmly in place despite damning research conclusions by Bail for Immigration Detainees (*Working against the Clock*, BIDUK.org, 2006) and very strong views from Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons as well as other legal professionals.

Although parliament was told *fast track* procedures would last no longer than 3-4 weeks, clients continue in detention for months, many for up to a year. Medical care in detention centres continues to be a problem, and the rapid intervention network set up in response - *Medical Justice* - is growing stronger. Privatised, contract-dependent, under-skilled and complacent medical services inside detention centres, never object to Immigration Service interpretations of 'fitness to detain'. A proposal to make them accountable not to the Home Office but to the National Health Service might improve the situation.

Yet the political perspective is changing. Two actions, church-driven but not church fronted, promise some hope:

The first is the campaign 'Strangers into Citizens', which is aimed at the 250,000 or more 'illegals' of every kind. If successful, it will cut human trafficking, expand tax contributions, and save public expense of destitution and health care

Secondly, the Independent National Asylum Commission is also church driven and pump-primed for its start funding. When the government refused a Parliamentary Enquiry into the many looming Home Office failures, the churches were among those who decided to set up an expert Independent National Asylum Commission. It is intended this should be as influential as 'Faith in the City's' Archbishops' Commission was in the 1980's. The INAC has already started to invite evidence from barristers, asylum seekers, immigration officers, security guards, airline staff, activists, asylum detainees, solicitors, welfare NGO's, doctors, teachers, schools, prison inspectorates, the Children's Commissioner, asylum visitors, sureties, churches supporting asylum seekers in the community.....In short, anyone who has experienced the working of the British asylum procedure. The coordinator is IAC-Jonathan Cox, (jonathan.cox@cof.org.uk). Members of St. James's would be welcome to submit a report on our experience in supporting asylum seekers.

Once again, my blessings and thank yous to all for St. James's unfailing support of these very personal aspects of asylum work, allowing small gestures of personal care that a ruthless and un-resourced system fails to provide.

Puck de Raadt

33 Interfaith work

Throughout the last year we have continued to explore ways to establish and develop links with those of other faiths. Our links with the *Dialogue Society* waned somewhat after our main contact, Ismael, moved away from London, although we have recently had a positive approach from the new Director, who is keen for us to explore new dialogue opportunities. Several of our “Interfaith” group have attended various talks and workshops at St. Ethelberga’s Centre for Reconciliation and Peace and one member returned with greetings from Saeed Abdul-Rahim, an independent Muslim educator, who we invited to lead a workshop on “*The Muslim Jesus*”. The workshop took place in September and was very well attended, not just by SJP but also by many folk from outside the community. Possibilities for the coming year include further workshops and developing links with St. Ethelburga’s.

The “Interfaith” Group comprises:

Ilse Boas, Tom Cook, Puck de Raadt, Laura Hamilton, The Revd. Charles Hedley, Sara Mark, Fiona Markey, The Revd. Lindsay Meader, Robin Miller, Richard Pullin, Tony Sanchez, Verity Smith

Lindsay Meader

Worship and prayer

34 Chakra breathing prayers

The chakra breathing prayer group in a Christian setting has been meeting every three months in the side chapel between 1.30 and 3.00pm. Mary Robins has been mainly facilitating, with Helen Holmes organizing the administration and co-facilitating in January 2007. The group attendance has averaged 20 men and women of all ages and from a diversity of ethnic backgrounds.

The group has enabled a circle of people to relax and breathe through the eight chakras, as the facilitators talk them through this, to inspire closer connection with God.

All members of the congregation are encouraged to attend - especially those who have not been to at least show their support for this innovative group at St James's.

There has been heartening feedback from members of the group who are asking that the group increase its frequency to once every two months at least. What do you think?

One member said

'I love the chakra group since it offers me a safe place to come and belong with others in close connection with our creator God. I don't have many places to go, and I live alone, can we not meet more often please?'
(regular member of St James's)

It would be a good thing to make links with other like groups at St James's to raise awareness of our presence and maybe increase numbers, to form a supportive network.

Please feel welcome to discuss the group with Mary or Helen at any time. We look forward to you gracing us with your presence soon.

Helen Holmes

35 Creative liturgies

During 2006 we held a creative liturgy on 9 July on the topic of women bishops, timed to coincide with the General Synod discussion on taking this forward.

It was an interesting enterprise marrying the theme of appointment of bishops with the informal style of the creative liturgies. We began with a celebration of the gifts of men and women working together, moved into a lamentation of the ways in which we have fallen short in terms of discrimination and failure to work with difference. A symbolic action enabled us to experience the power of circles rather than pyramid-like power structures to express a society of equals - to include, embrace, to promote harmony and balance – the circle of love, the circle of life. Though we recognised that women within hierarchical structures can equally become caught up in pyramid-like behaviour. The role description and qualities desired of bishops within the Anglican Communion was read out, and the compassion and wisdom at the core of these surprised and humbled us.

We completed the liturgy by claiming a vision of wholeness/holiness, and our trust that this will come to being in a renewed church that can be leaven in our world, and have an embodied inclusive gospel to proclaim. We ended with a circle dance.

This liturgy was created by Lindsay Meader, Mary Robins and myself, with thanks to Ashley Ashworth and Charles Hedley for their support and participation.

Petra Griffiths

36 Dance

Dance for Services

In 2006, Hildegard of Bingen's saint's day fell on a Sunday. A request to dance to one of Hildegard's songs during the Eucharist service on that day resulted in the whole service of 17th September being about Hildegard of Bingen. We danced to the song *O Viridissima Virga*, translated as 'oh green stem'. Some members of the *Dance into Worship* liturgical dance network augmented the core of dancers who came from the St James's community. Thanks to everyone taking part, we presented a special dance that followed on beautifully from the sermon.

We are looking forwards to some more dancing in services during 2007.

Danced liturgies

This monthly event is 1.30 – 3 p.m. on the 3rd Sunday of the month and usually takes place mainly in the Chancel area of the church. The group has found that a mixture of circle and other dance works well. A spoken prayer or prayers and body prayer are also used, particularly to open and close the session. Attendees are usually both members of the St James's community and people who have seen the event listed in the Church's monthly diary leaflet or elsewhere. Numbers attending still vary from month to month. The current mood of the group is very positive.

A short session of circle dance was one of the activities on offer during the 2006 May Day fair at St James's. Several people associated with the church remarked 'So that's what you do'. It seems that in the busy life of this church, they had never seen one of these events on a Sunday afternoon.

Heather Williams

37 Julian group

The Julian group continues to sit fortnightly on Thursday evenings from 6.30 to 7.30 pm. Whereas previously this was in the tower room, in the last year it has moved to the clergy room to provide easier access.

The group is part of the nationwide network of Julian meetings, which exists to share and encourage the practice of silent prayer in the Christian tradition. The network, set up in 1973 and named after Julian of Norwich, takes a deliberately minimalist approach bound only by the principle that the groups should be about silence.

Here at St James's we take it in turns to provide focus into the silence with a short reading, have about 30 minutes of silence, and then pray the prayers of intercession that have been left in the church that week. We then finish by saying the Grace together. We are a small core group, but anyone is welcome to join us at any time - there is no membership involved. Or simply be with us in Spirit when we sit. As the Lebanese poet Kahlil Gibran wrote: *'in prayer we rise to meet those people praying at the same time that we would otherwise never meet'*.

Nick Hamilton

38 Labyrinth walks

The St James's labyrinth has continued to surprise this year. Because of not having co-facilitators, I had wanted to run the walks quarterly instead of monthly. However, several regular participants came forward to say they would keep the walks going monthly, since they would be missed if less frequent.

Our labyrinth is based on the one on the floor of Chartres Cathedral, though it is painted in colours onto canvas and brought out for each walk. It was specially made to fit the space we have, and the paths are much narrower than on most labyrinths. Although we walk as individuals, to our own rhythm, each occasion is also a shared one, and we take time at the end to talk about any experience that people wish to share. We never know who will come, or how many, and people find out about the sessions in a range of ways. Most participants are not members of St James's, but people who are exploring spiritually. Two out of the three of us in the labyrinth core group are SJP members however.

Some comments made following walks in the last year include:

- *it is an exercise for the spirit*
- *poetry in motion*
- *a chance to find the stillness*
- *there was so much unity. I didn't need to decide to move round others – it was like a dance*
- *it was nothing like I expected. When I got to the centre, I met God. A healing took place. My suffering was changed and I knew it should be used for others*
- *there was a sense of community and harmony*
- *I found my walk today spiritually reassuring and profound. Thank you...*
- *Labyrinth walks have given me great assurance during the year of a stability underpinning all the flux and uncertainty of life*
- *the centre of the labyrinth and the path in and out of it is like the Tree of Life. Walking the labyrinth, with the way the path turns back on itself, is just like the journey of life*
- *thank you for the peace, harmony and emptiness of the labyrinth walk. It is a key to unlock our souls*
- *looking at everyone walking, the colours were vivid and the labyrinth seemed to come alive. It was remarkable*
- *it's marvellous to have this available on a regular basis. It is so inclusive and flexible. I really love and value this opportunity to be in prayer and silence with my walking companions. Thank you*

I have received a great deal back from the labyrinth this year, and with the core group behind me, am now very happy to maintain the monthly sessions. It has been a help to be part of the spiritual explorers' group at St James's, since that is a communication forum, and I feel the labyrinth walks are more strongly connected to the Church community. The labyrinth was mentioned in the intercessions in January 07, so although it is there primarily for people on the edge of the church, it finally seemed to have come home!

My thanks to Shirley and Iris for keeping the labyrinth rhythm going with me. For anyone wanting further information about labyrinth walking, the Grace Cathedral website is a good starting point, www.gracecathedral.org/labyrinth or the books:

- *Walking the Labyrinth as a Spiritual Tool* by Lauren Artress
- *LABYRINTH, Pathway to meditation and healing* by Helen Raphael Sands (whose labyrinth pilgrimages in the 1990's were instrumental in re-introducing labyrinth walking to the UK)

Resources such as tapes and facilitator training are available through Grace Cathedral.

To order books about the Labyrinth, from the UK contact Greenspirit Books,

tel: 01380 726224

email: alan@gsbooks.org.uk www.greenspirit.org.uk

Petra Griffiths

39 Meditation and prayer for healing

This weekly Tuesday evening service continues to offer a quiet, meditative space and a framework in which to pray together for healing for ourselves, others and the world.

Over the course of the year we have made gradual changes to the liturgy, allowing for more silence and stillness. The prayer takes place around the Taizé cross, which is laid flat in the centre of the prayer space, allowing the opportunity to light votive candles and place them on the cross. Intercessions and thanksgivings from the Prayer Tree are offered during the service. A less formal end to the service includes an invitation for those present to continue to pray and reflect for as long as they wish, or simply to 'rest in the silence'.

The service also offers the possibility to pray with the leader, or to receive the laying on of hands. The ministry team take it in turns to lead the service. We have been delighted to welcome Maggie Butcher onto the team.

Attendance varies and there is a fairly even mixture of "regulars" and new faces from many different walks of life - many of whom are "just passing" but have been attracted by the poster, others come with a particular concern or prayer intent. This service plays an important role in our ministry of healing and is one of a number of important ways in which folk working and visiting in the area can be supported and nourished in their faith journey.

Lindsay Meader

on behalf of the ministry team:

Vera Arde-Acquah, Ashley Ashworth, Maggie Butcher, The Revd Charles Hedley, The Revd. Lindsay Meader

40 Taizé prayer

The Taizé prayer group has continued to meet at St. James's at 5pm on the third Sunday of each month, except December.

The Taizé prayer at St. James's follows the same format as the daily prayer in the Church of Reconciliation in the Taizé Community, including the Gospel for the day being read in as many different languages as we can muster. Simple, repetitive chants are sung in harmonies as a way of entering more deeply into prayer. Taizé prayer provides the opportunity for meditative and reflective worship, not least through the silence that - despite the beauty of the chants - is nonetheless at the very heart of the prayer.

The prayer has been led predominantly by John Downey (of another parish) and also Lindsay Meader, ably supported by one or two musicians. Other volunteers to lead the service are always welcome! The prayer continues to attract a rich variety and diversity of folk, as well as a core group of "regulars". John has recently started an email list, reminding subscribers of the dates of Taize prayer, not just at SJP, but at many other churches across London.

Brother Aloïs, the new prior of Taizé, visited England in November along with some of the brothers from the Community as part of Taizé's ongoing "pilgrimage of trust on earth" and held a service at Westminster Abbey that drew folk from far and wide. Following a last minute request from one of the Taizé brothers, we were very happy to loan them our Taizé icon of the Cross - which played a prominent part on the service - along with Archbishop Rowan Williams and Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor. It was good to recognise several folk from both SJP and our Taizé group, and to welcome more folk to pray around the cross back at SJP the next day.

The Revd Lindsay Meader

Marketing and administration

41 Archives

My second year as archivist has been just as busy as the first as I am still in the process of acquiring, reading, categorizing, copying and - where relevant - distributing a good deal of material on the recent history of St James's. There have been two important finds, the first of these consisting of materials found in a paper bag in the tower, and the second courtesy of Mary Lambert, of whom I shall say more later on. I discovered that the last archivist was Mary Lambert's older brother, John, and that there has been a gap of twenty years between the time he ceased being archivist, and 2004 when I took over the job. My visit to the tower yielded up copies of the *Piccadilly Press* for 1980-1985, and although this is not a complete run, the material is substantial enough to give a comprehensive picture of a time of some turbulence and quite radical change in our church. Although at St James's we are used to a regular turnover of people in our community (I believe that the average length of stay is 5 years), one or two familiar names and faces emerged: a charming photo of Puck de Raadt and the information that in 1984 one Shirley Dixon was a churchwarden! I shall be asking the parish secretary to make copies of these numbers of the *Piccadilly Press* so that they are available to anyone who wishes to browse through them.

1984 was the third centenary of the consecration of St James's Church, an event marked by a special service of thanksgiving attended by the then Queen Mother and an exhibition of the church's history organized by John Lambert. It is worth noting that at this time our church's *theological audit* was written by a certain Dr Rowan Williams. I discovered in conversation with Jane Preest that John Lambert's sister, Mary, was alive, well and worshipping at another London St James's, one situated in Bayswater. A visit to her house yielded up more information about the life of our church after it was rededicated in 1954. We should be grateful to the Lambert family for acting as custodians of so much material at a time when St James's did not appear interested in continuity as well as change. Again, copies have been made of this material and it is available to anyone who wishes to consult it.

The next project, now accepted by the PCC, is a new guide-book. The last one was produced back in 1991, so again there has been a considerable gap and most of us would agree that for a host of reasons the printed material about the history of St James's should not be confined to the present, meagre 15p leaflet.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who have fed me bits of information over the last year: I feel like someone who is working with others on a fascinating giant puzzle.

Verity Smith

42 Stewardship

Note that this report refers to the calendar year 2006

People join the St. James's community and people move away, or their financial circumstances change. All this means that there is a certain fluidity about the stewardship scheme, but we did have the campaign to increase both membership and giving with good effect. The target of an extra £10,000 was met, especially as most donations are covered by Gift Aid.

30 people continued in the scheme giving by standing orders, and 14 of them increased their giving. 21 people joined the scheme, while 6 left, some because they were moving and some for financial reasons. 3 people who were making regular contributions to St. James's but were not in the scheme for purely technical reasons are now included.

Mention must also be made of the traditional stewardship envelopes. We had hoped to stop using them, but it became clear that there were some people who felt strongly that they wanted their gift taken up to the altar during the Sunday service and others, for good reasons, were unable to give regularly. So we still have 9 people using them.

It was suggested during the campaign that there should be annual reminders to members of the scheme to consider the amount they give and at the same time encourage others to think about joining. This is important not only because of the spiritual implication, but also because loss of income from people who left the scheme amounts to approx. one-third of the extra income raised (excl. tax rebate). Another reason for keeping stewardship in mind. It is also important to get the message across that members of the community should join stewardship rather than just put money in the plate on Sunday, so that the PCC knows what income it may expect from the community. However, one has to add immediately that no one will be held to a level of giving that they can no longer afford.

Ilse Boas

43 Website - www.st-james-piccadilly.org

Our website is part of our witness and outreach, and it also serves as an information portal for those SJP members with web access. It is now an established feature of our church and forms part of the nexus of information, witness, activity and worship that creates (forgive the jargon) the 'SJP brand'.

It now has 44 pages. Content has increased steadily over the last year. In particular, the *history* section has expanded considerably. The use of in-page hyper-links has made it easier for visitors to navigate within single pages. The site continues to carry a range of familiar, unfamiliar and sometimes provocative quotations.

The site always carries full diary listings for each month and has dedicated pages for lunchtime and evening concerts.

An important new page deals with access issues and is reached from anywhere within the site via the familiar wheelchair logo.

A direct link from the navigation bar allows online donations – a new feature.

I still see SJP flyers and publications where the web address is either absent or too small and so we continue to miss easy opportunities to make ourselves accessible.

Since the autumn, sermon texts are now available as PDF downloads.

Costs remain minimal – in the order of £100pa (for domain registration and hosting).

In the last twelve months the site received over 65,000 visits. These visitors, over the same period, looked at over 133,000 pages.

Please

- visit and look at the site
- use it for up to date information on events, preachers, meetings and concerts
- consider sending me concise recommendations for books or films we should list
- let me have any comments and suggestions you have on improvements
- express your views or ask questions via our SJP discussion forum

And

- when organising special events, tell me so that I can list the details always cite our web site address on all material from or about SJP - its an important form of outreach and we must make the fullest use of it

Hugh Valentine

hugh@st-james-piccadilly.org

Section G: PCC work

PCC strategy

44 Introduction to the PCC strategy

The PCC *strategy* came out of discussions we had at the PCC induction day in May 2005. We knew that if we were not careful, then the management task of keeping the buildings maintained and the budget in the black would take up all our time. So we came up with a *PCC strategy*, which is basically a list of tasks that are to do with mission and worship, work of the spirit rather than management work (although both are important tasks for the PCC).

PCC members volunteered to take on the various tasks, and we reviewed the progress regularly during the year. How we got on is shown in the various sections below. Some jobs we have ticked off successfully, some are still a work in progress, and a few we have yet to start on. Those jobs are still on the list however, so we can keep working at them next year.

Simon Dawson

45 Diversity

As part of our consideration of *mission* in the PCC strategy we also wanted to look at diversity, and how we ensure that as a church we reach out to people from the widest possible range of backgrounds. (*For full details on mission see section 47 below.*)

We have been progressing various projects over the past two years with the aim of making it easier for people from various backgrounds to belong to our church.

For children (and parents/carers with children) we have continued the regular third Sunday of the month children's activities. The removal of two rows of pews near the prayer corner has created a more friendly place for children to be during services. We have started a new pattern of regular Sunday evening worship, which is targeted partly at those of student age. Through Puck's work with asylum seekers we now have a regular group of worshippers from various African countries, and again we are talking to these people to find out what their needs are, to see what can be done to help this group become part of our church community.

The other part of diversity is *spiritual diversity*, not just diversity of people. Although we follow a Christian journey there are many different ways of progressing down that road. Our diversity strategy is about maintaining that richness of choice.

This report will contain sections from all of our various diverse spiritual groups and activities so I won't describe them here, but I do want to thank the various voluntary organisers for doing so much to enrich our shared spiritual life.

Simon Dawson

46 Liturgy

Last year's annual report was written just after Charles Hedley's sermon (and roving mike) which addressed the liturgy and the themes we are aiming to reflect through it. Some inspiration was taken from Richard Giles' book, *Creating Uncommon Worship*, as well as from our own experience of taking the Anglican liturgy as a framework within which to be creative, hospitable to diverse groups of people, and responsive to today's needs.

After inviting feedback from the community, some small changes were made to the way we do the liturgy:

- the laypeople contributing to services through reading and intercessions are now invited to join the vestry prayers before the start of the opening procession, and take part in that procession, then to join the congregation
- between Lil's introduction to the music for the day, the congregation are invited to keep silence before the service starts
- the Tibetan singing bowl will be played during the silence when people trained to use it are available
- the server responsible for carrying the bible is asked to hold it as high as possible

The liturgy group has succeeded this year in agreeing notes about the meaning of aspects of the liturgy - both traditional Anglican aspects and some of the unusual aspects found at St James's. These notes are to be copied and made available to anyone attending services, not to read at the time, but to take away afterwards.

We have a number of outstanding matters connected with visual aspects of the church. There has been a desire to replace the current mobile altar with one that is more transparent, which suits our circular gathering better, and which could be set up when the Eucharist is announced. Locating designers to help us to create something fitting has been a difficulty. Some visits to other churches in the round such as St Stephen Walbrook, are planned. For midweek morning prayer, the visual dimension has been changed to shift towards more curves and less straight lines in the way the seating is arranged. The idea of having temporary artworks or sculpture on display has been mooted, but it is felt that an artistic committee and policy would be needed in order to bring this off successfully. A colourful cloth for the lectern has been mentioned as a way of making the space less austere. The issue of the step which disrupts the altar space has been discussed a number of times, with the thought that being able to remove the difference in levels would facilitate movement around the altar. The idea of acquiring permission for moveable pews has also occurred frequently in our discussions.

The meetings of the liturgy group have proved a useful place to plan the major festivals and special events. A collaborative policy for services involved drama, movement and other participative elements, was agreed the previous year, and has proved a feasible way of bringing together the different groups who sometimes add dimensions to our worship. Coordination takes time, and collaboration between different groups in creating liturgy is more successful when there is a lengthy planning process, which isn't always possible. There is a danger of services becoming too lengthy unless a very disciplined approach is taken.

This year the planning for Holy Week and Easter has involved extensive discussion of the theology of salvation that informs the way we mark the events of this most significant liturgical season. Lay members of the liturgy group have found it a welcome privilege to be able to grapple with this theme and its implications for our worship.

Members of the group in 06-07 have been: Ray Crocker, Petra Griffiths, Charles Hedley, Meg Johnson, Lil, Fiona Markey, Lindsay Meader, Jane Preest, Hugh Valentine

Petra Griffiths

47 Mission - outreach and welcome

In our strategy the mission task was defined as:

- to reach out actively to all those who want to explore the Christian faith as part of an open and progressive community
- to present a range of appropriate and effective pathways which bring people into contact with our sacred space and our community
- to ensure that spiritual explorers get a warm and effective welcome when they come into contact with us

As part of that mission we also want to look at diversity, and how we ensure that as a church we reach out to people from the widest possible range of backgrounds. (*For full details on diversity see section 45 above.*)

Simon Dawson

48 Events

The PCC events group has not initiated anything new this year, but that does not mean we have not been busy!

We have helped to organise some now traditional parties; the celebrations on St. James's Day and after the Christmas carol service were both well attended, and the LOAF principles which we apply to our Harvest shared lunch are now used whenever we plan to share food. We enjoy some very interesting and satisfying meals as a result! This year we also celebrated with the candidates and the Bishop after the Confirmation in November.

We supported 2 events initiated by the fundraising group. There was the quiz night in October, when quizmasters Ray and Diane got us all thinking, and, since this is St. James's, querying the answers, and there was the great fun of the May Day fete, which everyone thoroughly enjoyed, even though it was not a very warm day.

There have been 3 welcome parties for newcomers to St. James's, and this year we have invited not only the clergy and PCC, but also the welcomers and sidespeople who are usually the first people newcomers meet.

If you have ideas for ways in which our community can celebrate together the events group would love to hear from you.

Jane Preest

49 Communications

Communications is part of our mission work, although in the strategy it gets a section to itself. How do we get the message out to people saying what we are and what we do?

One project is a questionnaire, which will be published shortly. This asks our current community how they first heard of SJP, and explores their experiences of their first tentative steps into the church. Was it welcoming, or was it not, and what can we do to make it easier to feel that newcomers belong here?

Our other project is about notices and signs. Unfortunately our site is so busy that our own message is competing with concerts and markets and Alternatives, and a host of other signals. Many people don't realise that this site is not simply a concert venue and meeting hall, but it actually houses an active, worshipping church community. We need to make the existence of the church community more noticeable to our visitors. There are some planning and aesthetic limits on how bold and brash our notices can be – but we are working on it.

Simon Dawson

50 Pastoral care

Providing effective pastoral care for a community as (geographically) widespread as ours is a continuing challenge, and can only really be effective if it is community-wide i.e. if the care is available for all and in many ways, offered by all. Because ours is not the kind of church where the same people sit in the same pews Sunday after Sunday, there is a danger that absences or needs are not immediately apparent. In that sense, St. James's is very much a "grown up" community and I have been deeply impressed at the care shown to one another.

At our Patronal Eucharist last summer everyone was given a scallop shell (the symbol of Saint James and of the pilgrimage and community life in which we share together). They are invited to take shells to pass/send on to those folk who were not present at the service, or who they knew were in particular need, as a sign of the community's concern and care.

On a practical level, pastoral care within the community has been offered through visits - to folk both at home and in hospital, home communions, telephone calls, emails and face-to-face conversations. It is a ministry undertaken by both clergy and community. We are also supporting Laura Hamilton in her training on the Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary course.

Of course, our responsibility for pastoral care extends to the wider community and we are exploring ways to reach out to those who work and spend time in the parish. We are on the verge of launching a drop-in centre for those working in restaurants and hotels (an idea suggested by Laura). We are also offering weekly lunchtime sessions this Lent, inviting folk to see the church as an oasis where they can take "Time Out" in the middle of the day and journey within . . .

As Associate Priest, pastoral care is my primary and predominant concern and "being available" is very much a priority. I also co-ordinate a list of prayer requests for individuals (only first names are used) which may be used in Eucharistic, healing services and morning prayer, so please feel free to contact me with prayer requests. Most important of all, please don't hesitate to get in touch if you'd like to have a chat, are concerned for someone else, or are aware of any emerging needs or concerns of which might not yet have come to our attention.

The Revd Lindsay Meader

51 Spiritual education and exploration

The groups coming under this umbrella are:

- Alternatives
- Vagabonds
- labyrinth walk
- chakra breathing prayers
- creative liturgies

Each of these groups makes their own report elsewhere in this report.

The spiritual explorers group has continued the work begun last year. A further Biblical Literacy course took place in the Autumn. This consisted of a programme of 4 workshops each one looking at 7 chapters of the book of ACTS. The series looked at the coming of the Holy Spirit into the life of the early church, examined the meanings behind Luke's writing and how and where it might relate to our present day. The programme had a good attendance and was well received.

This year a course of 3 workshops looking at 'What God do we believe in, or NOT believe in' is already underway.

- *1st session*, 'Cultic God', took place in March and was led by The Revd Charles Hedley
- *2nd session*, 'Inclusive God? - NO! ...YES?' will be led by, The Revd Mary Robins in June.
- *3rd session*, 'Creative God' will be led by The Revd Lindsay Meader in July

After a difficult year health wise when ideas and plans had to go 'on hold', I feel I am now in a position to start a group for those who feel drawn to exploring a broader and less conventional spiritual path. I shall be running this with Simon Dawson and it will be in the form of an open discussion group, learning who we really are and exploring and sharing mysticism/spirituality in our lives today. This will include seeing how Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism and Sufism have much in common at their deepest level.

Two theatre visits to see *The War Next Door* and *Underneath the Lintel* have been arranged by The Revd Lindsay Meader. There will be an opportunity to discuss these on the following Sundays.

The Revd Lindsay Meader and Tom Cook are talking to Martin Cochrane about a possible joint workshop between Alternatives and St James.

A community-building 'away day' is being planned in the summer for members of the St James community. We hope this will give new members a chance to meet others and feel more integrated. Possible venues are Sisters of the Community of Christ at Ham Common and St Columba's at Woking.

The Revd Meg Johnson

52 Dialogue with other Christians and people from other faiths

Whilst most sections of the PCC strategy can report some successes we have to admit that the “Dialogue with other Christians” task has made little progress.

This area of work came out of our awareness of problems within the wider Anglican church. For the past few years there have been worldwide disagreements over the place of homosexual men and women priests in the church, and these disagreements seem to come out of a deeper disagreement over the role and authority of the Bible texts.

When we set the strategy we wanted to ease these disagreements, and so we set ourselves the tasks of:

- to engage with other Christians both within the Church of England/Anglican Communion and further afield to build up mutual understanding, respect and love
- attempt to build common ground with Churches that are “different” from us by exploring where we agree (e.g. social justice) and seeking to come together here

We have to admit not much has happened here. The problem is what mechanisms do we use? The Diocesan groups are more business and management oriented, and it has been difficult to use these meetings for a more spiritual or theoretical discussion amongst people from different churches, and setting up other discussions with churches implies finding a willing partner.

Meanwhile, although the world-wide church has deep problems, life at a parish level goes on regardless - so are these attempts at discussions with other churches important? Only time will tell.

The PCC can review progress again at the next induction day, and decide where best to go from here.

Simon Dawson

53 Environment and ethics

Environmental concerns remain a priority for the PCC and now the solar panels on the roof are proving their worth and acting as a model for other churches. Roy Holland and Stephen Muggleton will be carrying out the biennial environmental audit of the Church during February and March 2007. This involves interviewing members of St. James’s staff to find out how far the church has progressed since the last audit on issues such as energy usage and waste disposal and also to assess whether St. James’s is giving out the right messages to the community and the public on environmental issues.

Roy Holland

54 SJP in action

St James's Piccadilly is proud of the work it has undertaken to foster social justice and peace, and hopes and intends that this work will continue. There are plans that will be realised in 2007 and we are always looking for new ideas and ways to show support for people struggling with inequity of many kinds.

In the meantime.....

We have continued to support a variety of causes through the *away giving* scheme, by which we give 10% of our total income every year to groups and individuals nominated by members of our community. This year we gave away just over £13000 in response to 18 different requests. Some goes to organisations we have supported for a while, like Bail for Immigration Detainees (BID) and Puck's work with asylum seekers. Some goes to groups with whom we are fast building relationships, like *Friends of Amasango School* in Grahamstown, South Africa, and *Sisonke (?)*, which supports HIV positive women in Cape Town.

This year we have also been able to help 2 individual students with their tuition fees. A full list of what we have given to whom appears in the annual financial report (see Appendix A to this annual report - a separate document).

December saw the launch of our African lunches. We provided use of the kitchen for several of our Ugandan asylum seekers to cook and enjoy lunch together, and their immediate response was to invite the whole community to join them! It was a joyous occasion, greatly appreciated by the many who attended. After another successful lunch in January, we decided it was unfair that one group should do all the work. So, in future, we will be holding regular community lunches (usually on the 4th Sunday of the month) with different folk volunteering to cook - possibly with a different theme! - each time. We are also exploring the possibility of taking time after these meals to sit down and "chew over" issues of theological and political concern, with a view to looking at how 'SJP in Action' can engage with some of the issues affecting church and society.

The Revd Lindsay Meader and Jane Preest

Other PCC work

55 Fundraising

The next big challenge for restoring our beautiful church is replacing the roof. We have had slow but steady growth in our fundraising campaign in 2006. However, we have had some exciting and stellar special events.

Elizabeth Elliott ran the Paris marathon on April 9th. She completed the course in just over 4 hours. Elizabeth was equally successful with sponsorship. She zoomed past the initial estimates raising funds.

On May 1st, we had our first St. James May Day fete with the theme of “*raise the roof!*” For our activities, we had two treasure hunts, a kids zone, a book stall, a white elephant stall, a T-Shirt stall, match the pictures game, a tea, coffee and cakes stall, a tombola stall, raffle prizes, a cushion stall, a plant stall, an arena where we had the maypole dancing, live music and the now infamous orange race with lots of incriminating photos. Inside the church, we had circle dancing, the labyrinth, healers, the hairdresser to the stars and a team of tour guides. We had a team of effective greeters tasked with bringing in the punters. At the information point was the voice of the fete, Diane Crocker. She provided information and lively commentary throughout the fete. Her commentary was witty and not always politically correct. Key to the success of this day was the efforts of our former market manager, Joel Lewis.

On September 4th, we had our first SJP quiz night. Thanks to great efforts of Diane and Ray Crocker, we had incredible time while raising money.

In addition to raising funds, these activities generated the additional benefit of building the community of St. James Piccadilly. As Simon Dawson, the lay chair of the PCC, said, “*I thought it was brilliant, fund raising AND bringing the community together*”.

Joel came up with the idea of the book stall in our market. This sold second hand books on an honour basis. This has turned out to be very successful.

Overall, we raised about £110,000 in 2006.

In 2007, the efforts continue. In April, our business committee is planning to hold a gala evening in the church to raise funds.

Cornell Jackson

56 Site development

It is difficult to give an accurate picture of the site development project because the project is developing so fast. What I write in mid February may be out of date by the time this report is published in late March. Nevertheless it may be worth describing what happened last year, and outlining the plans for the future.

The site development project is a plan to redevelop various buildings on our SJP site for two main reasons:

- to create more space and facilities on site for our community life together
- to produce a more stable income stream to help pay for the ongoing management costs of our church

The plan entails knocking down both the rectory building and Café Nero building. The rectory will be replaced with a much larger building. There will be an enlarged church hall/conference centre in the basement levels, together with a suite of offices for church management, and to allocate to various projects and groups. On the ground floor there will be a shop fronting onto Piccadilly, with the verger's and clergy offices behind facing the church. The upper floors will consist of four and half floors of commercial offices. It is the income from these offices and the shop, which will be used to pay for the project construction costs, as well as for ongoing church income.

Plans for the Café Nero building are not yet finalised, but the ideas we are working on consist of something like:

- Café Nero as before, probably on the ground floor of an enlarged building
- three floors of accommodation above (two floors for the rectory, and one level of flats for church staff or to let for income)
- a basement level with a meeting room, a small chapel / meditation room type space (i.e an accessible Tower Room), and toilets

If we can build this project we will more than double the space available to the community, as well as making all of it fully accessible to those with mobility impairments.

The whole project took some major steps forward last year. In January 2006 the PCC agreed to spend about £100K on architects' fees to develop our basic idea into a more detailed set of proposals. We received the report in June, and after an additional bit of tweaking through the Autumn the PCC are happy that we now have a viable set of designs that could provide the community with the enlarged facilities that we desperately need.

On the financial side the year started more gloomily with the realisation that we would not be able to follow the original plan of financing the project through some form of mortgage. Our financial advisors recommended instead that we seek a partnership with a larger organisation that would take out a long term lease on the commercial offices. The PCC was initially (rightly) nervous about this because of the long term nature of the 125 year lease, and the necessity of locking our successors into a commercial arrangement. With further advice and reflection however the PCC saw the benefits as well as the risks of such an arrangement, and agreed to explore it more fully.

So as I write this report in February the project is following two parallel paths. Behind the scenes the site development committee is involved in detailed discussions with lawyers and financiers and potential partners to try to put together an partnership agreement that will allow us to move forward on this project.

As a community however we have different work to do. It now seems that this project has moved from being a distant dream to being a viable project that may well happen, and happen quite fast. We need to reflect on this, and make plans for how we want to use this space in the years to come to enhance the life of our community, and develop our Christian mission.

Simon Dawson

Section H: External projects

57 Alternatives

We are pleased to report another fulfilling year of events and continued growing interest in our programmes. Our postal mailing list, whereby people receive our programme of events three times a year, has surpassed the 17,000 mark and our monthly e-newsletter has a subscriber database of over 7,000 worldwide. We are particularly keen to develop the online aspect of Alternatives in the next 12 months, of which the e-newsletter is just one part.

The year 2006 saw a continuation of well-established speakers, talks and workshops, with a new inclination towards events with an increasingly practical application - for example, workshops related to issues of work, money and business. We consider this to be trend that is set to continue, as our audience members seek to apply spiritual principles to the day-to-day aspects of their lives.

In terms of the events we ran in 2006, we welcomed both new and old friends to give talks on their specialist subjects - among them environmentalist Vandana Shiva on earth democracy, Stewart Pearce (Master of Voice at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre) on the connection between soul and song, and best-selling author Deepak Chopra on the seven spiritual laws of love. Perhaps our most memorable talk of the year was that given by a relatively unknown speaker - Immaculee Ilibagiza, a survivor of the Rwandan holocaust.

The staff of Alternatives is taking the organisation's 25th anniversary (occurring in 2007) as an opportunity to plan its future direction. To this end, the operational directors and board of trustees are in discussions about updating the Alternatives website and offering more facilities to its online visitors. In addition to these planned changes, we are seeing some changes of personnel too. We welcome Esther Waldron as a new director while Tom Cook steps aside as a director, but continues to serve as the chair of our board of trustee directors. We also welcome various new volunteers and team members.

Our audience continues to dig deep in contributing to the church restoration fund. Collections from Monday evening talks alone have amassed almost £25,000 for the fund.

All at Alternatives continue to be proud of both our connection to St James' and the opportunity to contribute to the working life of this beautiful church.

Richard Dunkerley, Steve Nobel, Esther Waldron - Directors

58 Blake Society

The Society is a set of people who love Blake - poet, artist and visionary. Our activities are a union of exegesis and inspiration - we search for the provenance of his imagination and we try to act with creativity and vision.

This year is the 250th anniversary of the birth of William Blake and the Society will be hosting a series of events leading up to his birthday on the 28th November and his christening on the 11th December 1757 in St James's Church.

Blake was baptised, married and buried within the rites of the Church of England. Yet in between his spiritual journey was unbounded. The Society traces the trajectory of this life - we visit the places Blake knew, we study the books he owned, we look for clues to understanding his poetry and art, and we recall the anguish that fired his radical politics.

Our year began with Blake's naked portrait of a Prime Minister - the *Spiritual Form of Pitt*. In the late summer we sponsored an international conference on Blake & Conflict at Oxford University. And at the end of the year we welcomed from prison our patron, the pacifist and poet, Adrian Mitchell (the night before he spent in a police cell for protesting against our nuclear deterrent at the submarine base at Faslane in Scotland).

The topics of our monthly lectures continue to range widely: the American counter culture, Zodiacal physiognomy, Richardson's 18th century bodice-ripper *Clarissa*, and the pop-up illustrations to the mystic Jacob Boehme. We visited Linnell's house in Hampstead where Blake would often visit on a summers' day and Wesley's winter home in Bunhill Fields. We watched Blake's film of the life of Christ (his illustrations to the New Testament projected onto a screen one after another). Finally the poet and rock star Patti Smith gave our annual lecture - singing to an enthralled audience that filled the Church.

We have members in 16 countries around the world including America, Australia, Canada, China, Europe, Japan, Russia, and South Africa - and we do all this on an income of less than £2,000. Yet this success hides a contradiction - Blakeans are reluctant joiners. Somehow they have taken to their heart's Blake's saying: *I must Create a System or be Enslaved by Another's*. Yet we persist with a vision to put vision at the centre of our country - the only nation is the imagination.

In the Houses of Parliament on the 12th June we will be holding a lecture on Blake's contribution to the abolition of all forms of slavery. And on the 29th November we welcome to St James's Church the poet and Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams who will give our annual lecture.

We invite all who love St James's to attend.

Contact details:

web: www.blakesociety.org.uk
e: chair@blakesociety.org.uk

Tim Heath (Chairman, The Blake Society)

59 Caravan drop-in

After all the external visible excitement and change last year involving the replacement of the old caravan with the new, this year by contrast would appear to be a much quieter one.

Albeit based on statistics from the first quarter of 2006, our performance would appear to continue to be in the target zone with volunteer attendance coming in at around 90% and volunteers being busy with clients around 70% of their time in the 'van.

So, on the surface at least, after the launch and commissioning of our new vessel last year, this year might be summarised as 'steady as she goes'. However, below decks, to continue the metaphor, a lot is going on with the crew that should have a qualitative, less measurable but significant effect. This has to do with shifting the energy and, switching metaphors, keeping things flowing like a freshly running stream rather than a lazy meandering fen river.

We have limited the tenure of volunteers to eighteen months. This will allow more volunteers to have experience in the Caravan - we were probably averaging around two years. It has meant the team has completely changed between September 06 and the time of writing. One outcome for clients is more drop-in capacity as longer term volunteers with regular client agreements have left. Also, however, there are a lot of fresh faces with fresh enthusiasm to balance the more experienced volunteers. It is important the latter move on to their next level of placement and not get too comfortable at the 'van.

Morale is good with seven volunteers attending their last supervision last week - ie one third of our number on the Roster excluding the back-up team - sharing fond and moving reminiscences and appreciation of the Caravan experience with our new recruits. This did not exclude the difficulties and frustrations of a challenging as well as rewarding placement that are all part of their learning and development process. Appreciation of how much of counselling is a shared process and how much our volunteers learn from our clients unceasingly moves us all. Jung said if nothing happens for the therapist nothing is probably happening for the client.

On a personal note, I too feel privileged and grateful for the rich and fulfilling experience of running the project and I thank all those at St James's for your help and support to the project, our volunteers and to me personally over the last and previous years.

Zak Waterman

60 Ethical Events - Global Development Forum

During March 2006 Ethical Events organised three events in the body of the Church.

The first was the 8th cycle of *Global development Forum* debates (the full details were given in the 2004 SJP annual report). The debates are held on Wednesday evenings starting at 7pm. After a set piece by the speakers, the public is invited to put questions and a discussion ensues.

The March 2006 programme was as follows:

1st March: *The Africa Commission one year on - has anything changed?*

Chair: Lord Joffe, former Chairman of OXFAM The Africa Commission reported in March 2005. A year on, what impact did its work have?

Mr Myles Wickstead, Secretary to the Africa Commission; Professor Lord Desai, Director of the Centre for Global Governance, London School of Economics; Mr 'Dapo Oyewole, Centre for African Policy and Peace Strategy; Mr Anver Versi, Editor, African Business

8th March: *is the WTO's Doha round good for development?*

The Doha round of the World Trade Organisation seems to be in deep trouble. Could it be rescued to become a force for development?

Mr Duncan Green, head of research at OXFAM; Mr Philippe Legrain; Ms Claire Melamed, Trade Policy Adviser at Christian Aid; Ms Sheila Page, ODI.

15th March: *Foreign policy can never be ethical*

Can we expect our government ever to pursue any ethical dimension into foreign policy? Was Clemenceau correct when he said that nations have no permanent alliances, only permanent interests?

Chair: Dr Kate Young, former director of Womankind Worldwide. Panel: Martin Bell, OBE, writer and broadcaster; Rt Hon Clare Short, PC, MP, former Secretary of State for International Development;

22nd March: *Human population growth is a greater threat than climate change*

A few years ago slowing down the growth of population was seen as the key issue of world poverty. Is this one of the hidden issues that cannot be mentioned?

Chair: Dr Camilla Toulmin, Director of the International Institute for Environment and Development. Panel; Mr David Nicholson-Lord, Optimum Population Trust; Professor Chris Rapley, director of the British Antarctic Survey; Mr Tony Juniper, director of Friends of the Earth.

29th March: *Does Europe really care about the South?*

Will the accession of the new countries, none of them with any obligations towards former colonies, signal the end of the interest of the European Union in the development of the South?

Chair: Baroness Uddin, House of Lords; Mr Austin Mitchell, MP, Chair of the Labour Euro-Safeguards Campaign; Mr Tony Colman, former MP for Putney; Mr David Stephen, director of the European Movement.

The October 2006 programme (*Global development Forum 9*) was as follows:

4th Oct: *Making the international economic institutions transparent and accountable*
Development activists have deplored the lack of transparency in the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation. Can the system really ever change?

Chair; Heather Stewart, international economics correspondent of the Observer
Panel: Tim Cullen, former spokesman for the World Bank Group; Jeff Powell, Bretton Woods Project; Professor Peter Willetts, City University.

11th October: *Do we need a Make Poverty History campaign in 2007?*

How does the development community keep up the unprecedented level of support for global development that was generated in 2005? Should there be a new campaign with different objectives?

Chair; Elsie Nemlim, Director of Stand up for Africa Panel: Professor Frances Stewart, Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford; Richard Bennett, Director of BOND (British Overseas NGOs in Development)

18th October: *Does aid help?*

Most commentators are increasingly concerned that aid to poor countries is seen as extension of welfare programmes and does not lead to development. Can aid ever promote economic development?

Chair: Ms Monica Ali, author. Panel: Mr Richard Kozul-Wright, United Nations Conference on Trade and development (UNCTAD); Will Day, consultant to the United Nations Development Programme; Dr Kurt Hoffman, Director of the Shell Foundation

25th October: *Can the United Nations be made effective and coherent?*

Chair; Grace Mukasa, Head of the Africa Programme at Voluntary Service Overseas
Panel; Lord Hannay, former British Representative at the United Nations; Simon Maxwell, Director of the Overseas Development Institute.

The third event was the second **Africa Conference**, held on Saturday **8th July**. The conference was entitled "The role of the African Diaspora in the continent's development". There were 3 separate panel discussions:

- *the political role (the diaspora and home politics)*
- *economic development (the diaspora & economic development in Africa)*
- *the diaspora and the host community (building people-to-people contacts)*

Unlike most such events, most of the panellists in the different debates were Africans. A total of 65 participants attended and it was a lively and thought provoking event. There will be another conference on Africa on 7th July 2007.

The organisers of the various events are most grateful to the Rector and the PCC for their permission to hold these events in your beautiful church. We hope that the nature of the debates and the high quality of the participants add to the prestige and relevance of the church in the life of the wider community of London.

For information about the 2007 programme, please check the website –

www.ethical-events.org

Benny Dembitzer

61 Progressive Christianity Network (PCN)

The PCN Britain website (the progressive Christianity network for GB & Ireland) can be found at <http://www.pcnbritain.org.uk/>

The following excerpt is the page on that website for the PCN London - Central local group <http://www.pcnbritain.org.uk/index.php?section=groups&sub=showgroup&id=1>

Further information:

The group meets monthly on a weekday evening - usually Tuesdays or Wednesdays. The meetings last about two hours 6.30 - 8.30pm. The venue is a meeting room in the basement of St James's Church, Piccadilly. Access is from Church Place and the set of stairs furthest from Piccadilly - there is an intercom on the door.

Those attending usually decide the subject/s for discussion at the next month's meeting. During the last year we've had thoughtful and lively sessions on several chapters of Tony Windross's *'The Thoughtful Guide to Faith'*, one on Gerard Hughes' *'The God of Surprises'* and two on the 8 points taken by PCN Britain from TCPC in America.

The group has a core of about seven regulars and welcomes new people. You don't have to join PCN Britain first - just come along. An email list gives details in advance of meetings, but postal notification can be arranged if you don't have access to email.

62 Zen group

As reported last year the Zen Group is now no longer sitting at St James's but has expressed a wish to maintain contact with the church to deal with any enquiries. The group is currently sitting at the Grosvenor Chapel on South Audley Street on Tuesday evenings from 6 to 8pm.

Enquiries to John Gaynor, who is the Roshi in charge (01473) 822110.

Nick Hamilton



Section I: Sources of Further Help and Information

Clergy

Rector	<i>The Revd Dr. Charles Hedley</i>
Associate Priest	<i>The Revd. Lindsay Meader</i>
SSM (Worker-Priest)	<i>The Revd Meg Johnson</i>
SSM (Worker-Priest)	<i>The Revd Hugh Valentine</i>

Church Officers

Churchwardens	<i>Cornell Jackson, Jane Preest</i>
PCC Chairperson	<i>Simon Dawson</i>
PCC Secretary	<i>Joanna Hines</i>
PCC Hon. Treasurer	<i>James Dow</i>

SJP Managers

Concerts manager	<i>Sarah Baxter</i>
Markets manager	<i>Gary Thomas</i>
Site manager	<i>Finna Ayres</i>

SJP community organisers/contacts

involvement in the Sunday Eucharist

<i>Intercessors</i>	<i>Ilse Boas</i>
<i>Readers</i>	<i>The Revd Lindsay Meader, Diane Crocker</i>
<i>Servers</i>	<i>The Revd Lindsay Meader, Ray Crocker</i>
<i>Sidespeople</i>	<i>Laura Hamilton</i>
<i>Sunday hospitality (org'd by Christian Aid)</i>	<i>Tony Sanchez</i>
<i>Welcomers</i>	<i>Laura Hamilton</i>

ministries

<i>Children at St James's</i>	<i>Elizabeth Lil</i>
<i>Lay singers and church music</i>	<i>Elizabeth Lil (Director of Congregational Music)</i>

Laying on of hands

Shirley Dixon, Bill Glen-Doepel, Jocelyn Henry (usher), Lavinia Rosenthal, Tony Sanchez, Paul Standeven, Meg Stewart

groups

<i>Christian Aid support</i>	<i>Tony Sanchez</i>
<i>Group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered persons (and other marginalised people)</i>	<i>Richard Pullin</i>
<i>Vagabonds</i>	<i>Cornell Jackson</i>

activities

<i>Piccadilly Press</i>	<i>PP editorial team (see report for full list)</i>
<i>Work with asylum seekers</i>	<i>Puck de Raadt</i>
<i>Interfaith work</i>	<i>Lindsay Meader</i>

worship and prayer

<i>Chakra breathing prayer</i>	<i>Mary Robins, Helen Holmes</i>
<i>Creative liturgies</i>	<i>Petra Griffiths</i>
<i>Dance</i>	<i>Heather Williams</i>
<i>Julian group</i>	<i>Nick Hamilton</i>
<i>Labyrinth walks</i>	<i>Petra Griffiths</i>
<i>Meditation and prayer for healing</i>	<i>Lindsay Meader & the ministry team (see report for full list)</i>
<i>Taizé prayer</i>	<i>Lindsay Meader</i>

marketing and administration

<i>Archives</i>	<i>Verity Smith</i>
<i>Stewardship</i>	<i>Ilse Boas</i>
<i>Website</i>	<i>Hugh Valentine</i>

PCC work: groups and facilitators

marketing and administration

<i>Overall PCC strategy</i>	<i>Simon Dawson</i>
<i>Liturgy</i>	<i>Petra Griffiths</i>
<i>Mission (outreach & welcome)</i>	<i>Simon Dawson</i>
<i>Events</i>	<i>Jane Preest</i>
<i>Communications</i>	<i>Simon Dawson</i>

Pastoral care
Spiritual education and exploration
Dialogue with other Christians
(& people from other faiths)
Environment and ethics
SJP in action
other PCC work
fundraising
site development

Lindsay Meader
Meg Johnson
Simon Dawson

Roy Holland
Jane Preest

Cornell Jackson
Simon Dawson

External groups

Alternatives
Blake Society
Caravan drop-in
Ethical events -Global Development Forums
Progressive Christianity Network (PCN)
Zen group

Tom Cook, Richard Dunkerley, Steve Nobel (directors)
Tim Heath (Chairman, Blake Society)
Zak Waterman
Benny Dembitzer
David Carter
Nick Hamilton