



# Annual General Meeting Report 2023



*A vibrant international English-speaking Anglican church  
serving the Leiden area, offering a spiritual home  
to people of all ages and from all over the world.*

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### Curate's Report (Matt Thijs)

From the Curate's perspective, the past year has presented both challenges and opportunities for St. James. The main challenge was to lead the church during the interregnum period following the departure of Ruan and his family in July. However, the church has demonstrated its adaptability and resilience as many people have stepped up to make this transition period a success. The Church Council, the ministry team, and numerous volunteers have all played a vital role in ensuring that St. James stays on track as the recruitment process for a new chaplain continues.

The ministry team has undergone other significant changes in the past year. Mercedes Masters has left after serving as our Youth Worker for four years, and we are currently advertising for a new Youth Worker. Our readers Debbie Beasley-Suffolk and Karen Gallagher have moved back to the UK, but I am pleased to report that Iris Boerhout, a reader-in-training, has taken on some of their workload. Additionally, the council has appointed several Congregational Worship Leaders, including Steve Hanford, Paul and Jenni Leach, and Matthew Payne, to help lead services. Unfortunately, Sherley St. Juste had to step down from her role as Safeguarding Officer due to her new job, but Sue Kirby has graciously taken over the position. Debbie Simpson is resigning as council secretary in preparation for a future move to the UK. Diana Hanford is continuing to provide essential office support and assistance with service preparation.

I would like to extend a special thank you to our church wardens, Peter and Fredrik, for their hard work. Peter has offered to stand for re-election as church warden at the upcoming annual meeting, but Fredrik will be stepping down. Both have done an outstanding job, and I am extremely grateful for their dedication and support.

Aside from the challenges of the past year, there have also been numerous exciting opportunities due to the easing of Covid restrictions. For the first time in a few years, we were able to gather in person for Easter and Christmas, which was a wonderful experience. Our Church Weekend at Emmaus in Helvoirt was also a tremendous success, and we have resumed many in-person events and ministries, including monthly bring-and-share lunches, a number of small groups, and various ministries including our children's and youth ministries, and our prayer ministry team. It was also wonderful to see three people baptised and three more confirmed.

This year has been a thrilling one for me personally as well. My wife Lizelle and I welcomed our first child, Ezra, into the world. Furthermore, I am in the final stages of my curacy training, which I plan to complete by the summer. I consider it a tremendous honour and delight to minister at St. James, and I am grateful to God for this opportunity. As we look to the future, we pray for His blessing.

## Church Warden's Report (Peter Stretton)

2022 was an eventful year. It started off with everyone still in a Covid shutdown, so everything was online including the 2022 AGM during which Fredrik Knoeff was formally appointed church warden. At the same AGM we were also able to fill all the vacancies on the church council.

Shortly afterwards we were able to start with in person services at the Bondsgebouw which the Catholic church generously allowed us to use.

As if this was not enough fun already, our vicar was called to decamp himself and his family to a new (to him) church, complete with a traditional brick building and a parsonage, in the centre of Utrecht leaving us in the very capable hands of our curate Matt. At this point the wardens needed to engage with ICS and start the process of recruiting a new vicar. The recruitment process is continuing as this report is being written.

The Autumn term saw us moving back into the British School hall which seems to be our spiritual home and at this point things did settle down a little.

Our thanks go to all the committee members, our council members, and Sunday volunteers whose work all helps to make sure the church continues to serve the community we live in.

## Archdeaconry Synod Report (Fulco Jongsma)

The Archdeaconry Synod started with a News presentation by Bishop Robert Innes about the intensifying crises, recent conferences, the vision of the Church of England, spending plans, the Diocesan Vision and with some encouragements.

By the Open Doors ministry for the persecuted Church several presentations were given about learning from, praying and caring for the persecuted Church.

Several other topics were presented and discussed: Recovering, rebuilding and refreshing spiritual and Church life, Safeguarding, Environmental issues and Living in Love and Faith.

Each morning and evening we could attend a church service in the chapel.

At the end the AGM of the Anglican Church in The Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg was held.

### The purpose and values of the Archdeaconry Synod

The time the Archdeaconry Synod calls,  
this annual gathering of pious souls,  
a time to meet again the faithful few,  
gathered to share their faith anew.

A time for new representatives to search,  
to engage with issues facing the Church.  
A time to equip, encourage and inspire,  
to further the Church mission we so admire.

A time to gather and to pray,  
to chart a course for the coming day.  
A time of fellowship and grace,  
to build each other up and to praise.

A time to discuss, listen and to learn,  
to gain insight and to discern.

A time to seek God's will and plan,  
to seek His guidance for the faithful clan.

A time to share our joys and fears,  
to share our worries, doubts and tears.  
A time of living in hope and love,  
to carry out our Lord's will above.

A time to spread the gospel with a smile,  
to show it in an Archdeaconry style.  
A time to prepare flour with a little yeast,  
and to enjoy the Synod dinner feast.

The Open Doors ministry for the persecuted Church

With this ministry we are so blessed,  
to learn from and to care for the oppressed.  
Open Doors, opening hearts and minds,  
so the Church is no longer so confined.

A praying people, from around the world,  
united in the Spirit, flags unfurled.  
We lift up our brothers and sisters living in pain,  
in the knowledge that we never pray in vain.

Our presence is felt, our prayers heard,  
our care is given, our actions not deferred.  
We offer hope and friendship, a bond of love,  
to the persecuted Church a mourning dove.

The other topics that were presented and discussed

Let us pray, let us seek and let us share,  
let us be instruments of God's care,  
let us recover, rebuild and refresh,  
our spiritual and Church life, let us bless.

We were made guardians of the earth,  
let us protect God's gift, protect its worth,  
let us treat the environment with respect,  
for its beauty we should not neglect.

We seek answers in our heart and mind,  
acceptance for each one to find,  
guidance, support and understanding,  
as living in love and faith can be demanding.

## Church Council Report (Debbie Simpson)

The Church Council is the Church's governing body. It consists of a combination of ex-officio members and elected representatives, with a mixture of spiritual and legal responsibilities. The Church Council shares with the Chaplain in the decision-making process. The Council meets up to ten times a year.

A smaller Standing Committee consisting of the Chaplain, the Curate, the Church wardens and two other Council members meets in-between Council meetings to carry out the actions agreed by Council.

The Council is made up of the following members:

- Chaplain ex-officio
- Curate ex-officio
- 2 Churchwardens elected annually
- 2 Archdeaconry Synod Representatives elected tri-annually
- 1 Licensed Reader ex-officio
- 10 elected lay members-one of whom is appointed Treasurer and another Secretary
- Co-Opted (up to 2 positions)

This year the following members served as elected Council members:

Ruan Crew (Chaplain), Matt Thijs (Curate), Peter Stretton (Churchwarden), Fredrik Knoeff (Churchwarden), Fulco Jongsma, Sue Kirby (Archdeaconry Synod Representatives), Iris Boerhout van Veen, Rebekka Gelders, Katie Hanford, Stephan Hinderer, Graham Mapp (Treasurer), Brian Routledge, Debbie Simpson (Secretary), Gillian Weinberg, Anja de Reus (co-opted), Ada Uche (co-opted).

Warm thanks are extended to the outgoing Council members for their devoted service.

## Electoral Roll (Bronwyn Lucas)

The Electoral Roll of the Church of St. James Voorschoten, stands at 88 at the time of the Annual General Meeting of 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2023. In 2022 the number on the Electoral Roll was 88. In 2023 there have been 13 additions and 13 deletions.

## Safeguarding (Sue Kirby)

Safeguarding is all about loving our neighbour and ourselves. At St James, we are trying to create a space where everybody feels safe to pray and worship, and in a few cases, work through issues that they have encountered in their lives. This means that many people can feel vulnerable and perhaps even be vulnerable.

As most of us are volunteers, we can all work together to be as 'innocent as doves' when welcoming all into the presence of God, but as 'shrewd as snakes', when protecting everybody from harm. (Matt 10:16).

We can all do our bit by registering our 'innocence' publicly by filling out all the forms, doing the police checks etc. so that we show that we are 'safe'. That will help everybody know we are serious about protecting the vulnerable. We show our shrewdness by ensuring that everybody follows our safeguarding policies and, if required, do the training offered by the diocese.

As I too, am a volunteer, and not too experienced with computers nor safeguarding, I would really appreciate your help with timely submission of forms, etc. Let us all keep the Church of St James safe and sound both now and in the future.

On a final note, I would like to thank Sherley, who has carried the responsibility for this vital role for the past 2 years.

### Treasurer's Report (Graham Mapp)

#### **Income and Expenses 2022**

##### **Income**

PGS was at 140K, I believe this is the steady state.

The Curacy grant was paid for all of 2022.

Property and a legacy generated some serious income in 2022.

Cash giving, although small continues to be helpful.

##### **Expenses**

Rental costs in total were slightly above budget.

Building costs were also above budget.

Salaries were substantially below costs.

All other costs were above budget.

##### **External Giving/Contributions**

More or less on target.

##### **Result**

Healthy surplus of 18K

## Financial Statements

Income and Expenditure Year to Date Jan-Dec 2022

	2022 Jan-Dec budget	2022 Jan-Dec Actual	Variance
<b>Members Income</b>			
Planned Giving Scheme	150.000	139.224	(10.776)
Collections	1.000	2.288	1.288
Curacy grant	42.000	44.081	2.081
Special Collection & Other Income	4.000	14.725	10.725
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>197.000</b>	<b>200.319</b>	<b>3.319</b>
<b>Expenditure &amp; Outgoings</b>			
Rental BSN hall	10.000	6.000	(4.000)
Property operating costs	0	3.785	3.785
Cost of other rentals/hall hire/hall fit out	0	5.707	5.707
Bond Interest (Ambachtspad)	4.500	4.500	-
<b>Sub-total Buildings and Property</b>	<b>14.500</b>	<b>19.992</b>	<b>(5.492)</b>
Ministerial Salaries and on-costs	150.000	120.360	(29.640)
Outreach, Literature, Conferences, Publicity	2.000	4.146	2.146
Office and Administration	0	4.019	4.019
Professional Costs, Bank Fees & Insurance	0	2.726	2.726
<b>Sub-total ministry costs</b>	<b>152.000</b>	<b>131.251</b>	<b>(20.749)</b>
<b>Total Church Operating Outgoings</b>	<b>166.500</b>	<b>151.243</b>	<b>(15.257)</b>
<b>Total Operating Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>30.500</b>	<b>49.076</b>	<b>(18.576)</b>
<b>External Giving/Contributions</b>			
Diocese and Affiliation Contributions	15.500	15.962	462
Planned External Giving - Mission Partners	15.000	15.150	150
Local Social Welfare	0	0	-
Special Collections paid	0	0	-
<b>Total External Giving</b>	<b>30.500</b>	<b>31.112</b>	<b>612</b>
<b>Net Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17.964</b>	<b>17.964</b>
<b>External Giving/Contributions</b>			
Diocese and Affiliation Contributions	8%	8%	
Planned External Giving - Mission Partners	8%	8%	
Planned External Giving - Local Welfare	0%	0%	
Giving from Special Purposes	0%	0%	

Main reasons for variance	
Income above budget	3.319
Property costs over budget	(5.492)
Ministry costs under budget	20.749
External giving over budget	(612)
<b>Total variance</b>	<b>17.964</b>



Balance Sheet – December 2022

Euro €	Dec 2021	Dec 2022	Change
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Bank and Cash	62.270	102.588	40.318
Accrued Income	0	(2.000)	(2.000)
Advance Payments	0	0	0
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>62.270</b>	<b>100.588</b>	<b>38.318</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Creditors	0	7.265	7.265
Sundry accruals	6.130	17.295	11.165
Provisions	75	0	(75)
<b>Total Current liabilities</b>	<b>6.205</b>	<b>24.560</b>	<b>18.355</b>
<b>Current Assets less Liabilities</b>	<b>56.065</b>	<b>76.028</b>	<b>19.964</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Buildings	750.000	750.000	0
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>750.000</b>	<b>750.000</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Long Term Liabilities</b>			
Ambachtspad 2018 bonds	150.000	150.000	0
Rent Chopinlaan deposit	0	2.000	2.000
<b>Total Long Term Liabilities</b>	<b>150.000</b>	<b>152.000</b>	<b>2.000</b>
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>656.065</b>	<b>674.028</b>	<b>17.964</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>			
<b>General Reserves</b>			
General Reserve b/fwd	662.901	656.065	(6.836)
Building revaluation			0
Change in accruals			0
Surplus/(Deficit) for Current Year	(6.836)	17.964	24.800
Balance c/fwd	656.065	674.028	17.964
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>656.065</b>	<b>674.028</b>	<b>17.964</b>

Budget 2023

	2023 Budget
<b>Members Income</b>	
Planned Giving Scheme	140.000
Collections	2.000
Curacy grant	22.000
Additional giving	14.000
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>178.000</b>
<b>Expenditure &amp; Outgoings</b>	
Hall rental	10.000
Property operating costs	10.000
Cost of other rentals/hall hire/hall fit out	2.500
Bond interest (Ambachtspad)	4.500
<b>Total Property</b>	<b>27.000</b>
Ministerial salaries and on-costs	70.000
Outreach, literature, conferences, publicity	2.000
Office and administration	2.000
Professional costs, bank fees & insurance	2.000
<b>Total Ministry</b>	<b>76.000</b>
<b>Total Church Operating Outgoing</b>	<b>103.000</b>
<b>External Giving/Contributions</b>	
Diocese and Affiliation Contributions	16.000
Planned External Giving - Mission Partners	15.500
<b>Total External Giving</b>	<b>31.500</b>
<b>Net Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>43.500</b>

### Income

PGS is unlikely to go up above 140K  
 Curacy grant runs out in July  
 Property income will be steady  
 One less Minister saves money

### Property costs

In 2023 there will be some spending on bathrooms

### Reserves

The Surplus is healthy, but reserves are at 57.500. The target is 75.000, so an additional 17.500 should be paid into the reserves this year.

### Bonds

These should be reissued in December 2023. The current account balance was used to pay off one of the Bonds early in 2023.

## **2023 and beyond**

Projections out until 2025 suggest that. Finances should remain stable; however, the effects of inflation should be anticipated, thus it is recommended not to spend all the surplus in the coming years, but build the reserves to 100K.

## Independent Examiner's Report (Brian Routledge)

To the Wardens of St James, Voorschoten

Dear Peter and Fredrik

As requested, I have examined and reviewed the 2022 accounts of St James Voorschoten. The review has been conducted to the best of my knowledge and my ability. The review is of a limited scope and is not a full professional audit. Nonetheless, I find the accounts to represent a true and fair disclosure of the financial position of St James at year end 2022 and of its results for the year 2022.

Many thanks to Thérèse Jongsma and Graham Mapp for their hard and excellent work in the for the maintenance and preparation of the accounts in a professional manner.

Brian Routledge

*Received by email on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023*

## OTHER REPORTS

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### Iris Boerhout- van Veen (Reader-in-training)

My name is Iris Boerhout- van Veen. I am 31 years old, married to Danny and I have two young daughters. I have been a member of St. James for 8 years. I have started my training to become a licensed lay minister, also called reader, in September 2022. As a reader I am allowed and trained to perform certain roles within the church. Since January 2022 I have been allowed to do preaching, leading services, doing the intercessions, being Communion assistant and leading an evening of the Lent course. The position is a volunteer position, but my training is financed by the church, for which I am very thankful. Currently I successfully finished one class of my training and I am awaiting the grade for my second written assignment. I feel very encouraged by the congregation, they are very supportive of whichever role I have during the service and that gives an extra boost to the enjoyment of this whole process and season of my life.

### Diana Hanford (Children's Ministry)

Over the years we have seen a moving wave of children in First Steps, St J's Club and onward into youth. Some come and go, whilst others make it through all the groups into adulthood. We are grateful that there are children's and youth groups available and give thanks to all those who volunteer to lead and help each week.

We are very happy to see many new young ones in First Steps. In the immediate period after our online meetings ended, we made a special effort to make sure we had a creche available for families. This has continued and we now have a regular group of under 5's gathering on Sunday mornings.

Children move to St J's club when they are 4 years old but this can be flexible too. Children moving to secondary school or group 8 in the Dutch school move up to youth. Currently we have 5 regular members in First Steps and 14 in St J's Club.

All our leaders and helpers have a certificate of good conduct from the local authority. We follow the guidelines of the safeguarding policy laid down by the diocese of Europe.

The monthly structure is: First Sunday of the month – all groups celebrate together with an all age family Holy Communion service, followed by a bring and share lunch. Food brings people together and we look forward to many more shared lunches. We also see this as an opportunity for the children to be actively involved in leading a service.

The second and fourth Sundays are usually Morning Worship and the third Sunday Holy Communion. The plan is for the children to return to their parents towards the end of the service or for Holy Communion. For this we rely on the wardens to tell us when to come back to the service, so thank you to them.

*Matthew 19:14 - Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."*

Matthew Payne (Leading Congregational Worship, Morning Prayer, Small Groups)

### **Leading congregational worship**

Since a bit under a year ago, I have been occasionally leading congregational worship and preaching on Sunday mornings. I've been grateful for the opportunity to serve God in this way. I've appreciated the feedback from Ruan and then Matt about how to learn and grow in this service as well.

### **Morning prayer**

Midweek prayer has been taking place on Zoom since March 2020. It lasts about thirty minutes and follows the Daily Prayer service on the Church of England website. Each day has a set liturgy, and typically we will listen to a hymn together (easily streamed via Youtube), read a psalm and a passage of Scripture (usually the New Testament reading) and have a time of open prayer. At the start of 2022 while we were adjusting to post-pandemic life, daily prayer took place on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 9.00 to 9.30 and on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 21.00 to 21.30. Since the summer we have shifted to three services of daily prayer a week, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 9.00 to 9.30. At the moment I am leading on Monday mornings and Matt on Wednesday and Friday mornings. It is very easy for anyone to join via the link on the St James website (What's On > Prayer), where the link to the words for each day can also be found. Anybody is very welcome to join and people can participate as much or as little as they wish – no issue tuning in with microphone muted just to listen! As a communal way to be praying together through the week this is a great initiative that would be good to keep going.

### **Small groups**

Most small groups went online during the pandemic and the story of 2022 for St James in this area has been how to retain growth and participation in small groups that were happening online, and open up opportunities and spaces for people to meet offline. I was helping lead Discipleship Extended with Ruan and Fulco in 2021, but for the Lent course in 2022 I started hosting an offline group on Tuesday evenings, at the same time as an online group was meeting. This offline group then continued to meet weekly to read Philippians together, and is now being hosted by Mattie and Boaz on Thursday evenings. A similar story seems to have played out across the church in terms of old small groups being restarted as well as new ones being created. There are now offline and online groups meeting on different days of the week and in different geographical parts of the parish. It's very encouraging to see this kind of enthusiasm for meeting for fellowship, to pray and to read God's Word together, and let us be praying that God sustains this, so that anyone in our church can find a small group that suits them.

Esther Scherpenisse (The Green Team)

Here's a brief summary of what we have done in 2022:

The St. James Green Team consisted of four members in 2022: Ada Ugouche, Esther Scherpenisse, Fulco de Jong, and Katie Hanford. In January 2022, Green Team member Esther Scherpenisse was officially instated by the church as the St. James environmental officer. In September, Katie Hanford announced her departure from the Green Team.

The Green Team undertook four main actions in 2022. First of all, we investigated the possibility of lowering the carbon footprint of the St. James properties by placing solar panels on the roofs of the two buildings. We had an expert come to check out the roofs. Ambachtspad turns out not to be suitable for solar panels, the other building might be.

Future investigation is warranted. Second, we spent this year discussing and preparing the St. James environmental strategy. To that end, we had meetings with the Church Council as well as a group of church members. This project is ongoing and we hope to be able to finish a draft strategy in 2023 for Council approval. Thirdly, we have continued our awareness campaign in the weekly St. James newsletters, offering tips on how to live more eco-friendly, reading suggestions, and prayer. We also encouraged the St. J's Club to have an eco-themed lesson plan during Creation tide. And fourth, we have tried to ensure the St. James Church weekend was as eco-friendly as possible, by offering a carpooling sign-up sheet and speaking to the organisation committee about having vegetarian food options.

In 2023, we hope to finish the St. James environmental strategy and goals for the next seven years. We also hope to organize a few fun activities with the congregation around ecological and sustainability themes, such as a clean-up, a potluck, a photo challenge and a movie night.

### Ada Uche (Church Council, Youth)

In the past year, I have had the opportunity of being involved in the St James church council and in the youth ministry, specifically with organisation and the recruitment of a youth pastor. It has been inspiring to see the value that St James places on ensuring that our church also provides community for our youth. The recruitment process is thorough and fair, with focus for having a living faith and being able to connect with the youth.

I have also had the opportunity to serve on the church council and being a part of that has been both inspiring and enlightening. It is great to see how much prayer, wisdom and forethought goes into making decisions for the church. It is also great to see that the checks and balances are properly maintained and that the council -together with the congregation works hard to ensure that St James remains a healthy church.

### Walter & Liz Wassenaar (Church Weekend Away)

From Friday evening July 1st till Sunday July 3rd, we enjoyed a lovely and inspirational Church Weekend Away. Together with 45 members of the St James Church family we gathered in the Emmaus Retreat Center in Helvoirt, not far from Waalwijk and Den Bosch.

The good thing about a weekend away is that it is a very nice occasion to speak to other members of the congregation. With plenty of space inside and outside, there always was time and space to relax, to chat and there was a program with good content. Stephen Hance, the national lead for evangelism and witness in the Church of England, presented two very interesting and sessions full of content on the challenges of outreach in this day and age. He and his wife Jacqui were also available for prayers and a good chat. The Church Service in the Chapel was another highlight of the weekend.

If you weren't there - we can really recommend going. The Open-Mic evening might not immediately have seduced everyone to be on stage, but those who were there reported they were positively surprised by all those performing. We remember the unforgettable dry humour-based Cinderella play by the Crew family and the great quality of singing and dancing at the Karaoke, with Mercedes and Anna in good form. We do not remember Walter's effort to make us remember more nouns and numbers.

A Church weekend away is a great way of spending time with God and with each other. Thanks to all those organizing it.