

2020 Annual General Meeting Report



St James
VOORSCHOTEN

FAITH IN ACTION | **40**
YEARS

*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.*

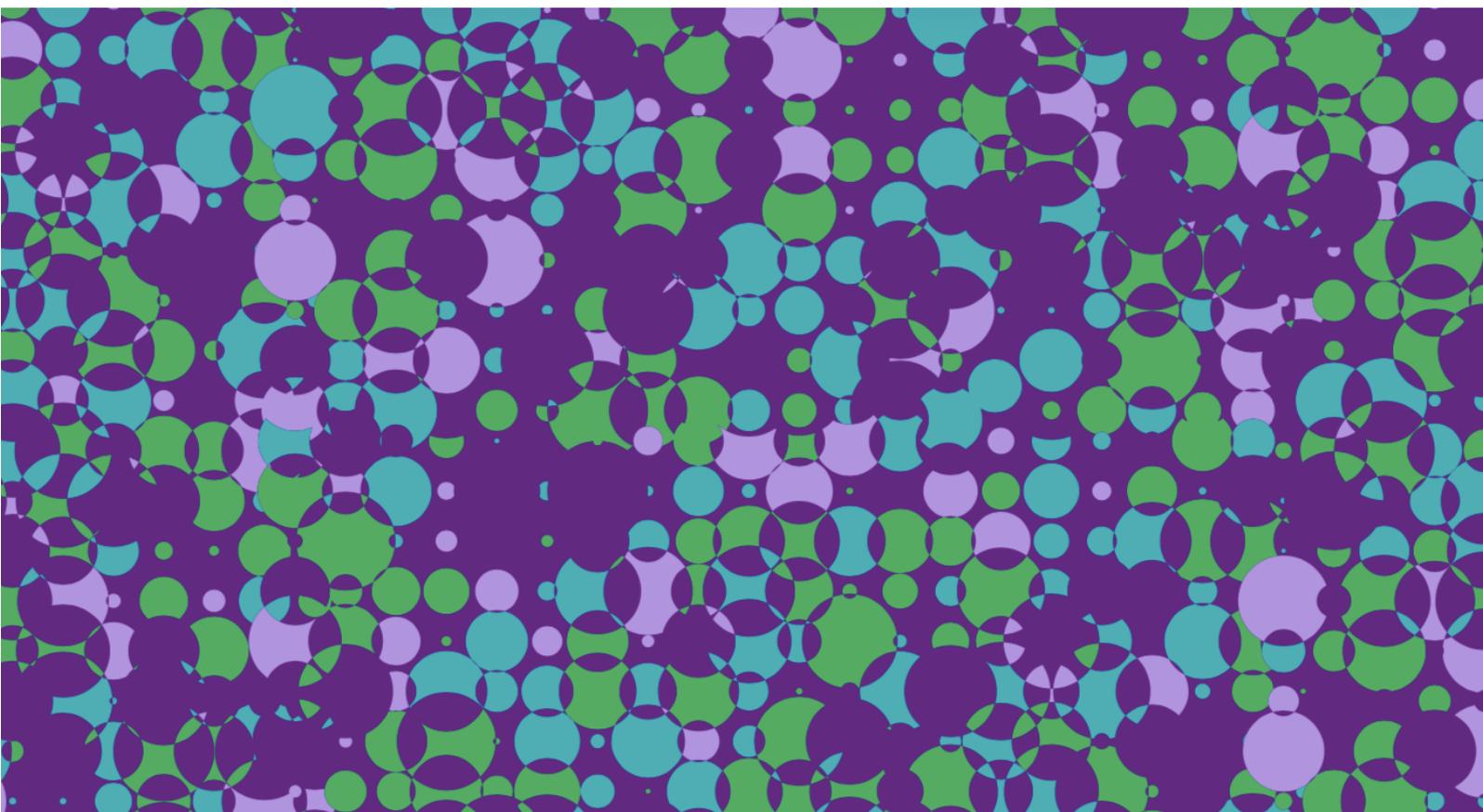


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ADDENDUM DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Friday 11th September 2020

Dear friends,

Our Annual Meeting was originally scheduled to take place on Thursday 26th March. However this was postponed because of the Covid-19 pandemic. This delay is permissible under both Dutch law and the Church of England's own rules, provided we hold the meeting no later than 31st October. The church council has therefore decided that the meeting will take place during our first physical service on **Sunday 27th September**. A formal letter of notification is attached.

You might ask how we can hold a meeting during a service, and what such a meeting will look like under the current restrictions. Our proposal is to keep the meeting as brief as possible, whilst ensuring we meet our legal obligations.

- We will therefore hold an **online pre-meeting** via Zoom on **Thursday 24th September** at 19.30. The login details can be found below. At this online meeting the annual report, including the accounts and budget, will be presented informally, and there will be the opportunity to ask questions. This pre-meeting does not have any legal status, but our aim is to reduce the time needed for the formal meeting on the Sunday. If you want to attend this online pre-meeting but have difficulties accessing Zoom, please contact Matt or me in advance for the necessary help.
- The **formal meeting** itself will take place during the service on **Sunday 27th September**, where the intercessions would normally take place. (It may sound unusual to mix spirituality with business, but it is a practice that many churches follow, recognising that Jesus is Lord of all our lives, not just our Sunday worship.) The necessary items will be covered as indicated in the attached agenda. If you are present at the service/meeting and are on the electoral roll you are entitled to vote. If you are present but not on the electoral roll you can adopt the status of an 'observer', but are not permitted to take part in the voting.

The annual revision of the **electoral roll** was completed earlier this year before the lockdown occurred. There is therefore no requirement to hold a second revision. If you are not on the roll and would like to be added, please contact our electoral roll officer Bronwyn Lucas for more information: bronsmail@hotmail.com. She can also make the revised roll available for inspection if you wish to see it.

Nominations are open for the roles of churchwarden (Rebekka Gelders and Steve Hanford are standing), our two Archdeaconry Synod Reps (Fulco Jongsma and Sue Kirby are standing) and the church council (six of the ten seats are becoming vacant). The nomination forms are attached. It is possible to submit nominations by email provided they are electronically signed. ([Click here](#) for how to do this) Completed forms should be returned to the council secretary, Debbie Simpson (secretary@stjames.nl), dropped off at Chopinlaan 17 or submitted on the day.

The **annual report** was completed and distributed in March, before the lockdown. Since the report looks back on the previous year there is no need for it to be amended, so it is attached to this email in its completed form. The next report, due in spring 2021, will tell the story of this unusual year and the many creative ways in which our church has responded so positively.

In closing I would like to express my sincere thanks to Demetra Koelling, our acting treasurer, who has faithfully filled the gap since Mike Waters' departure in the spring. In this interim period she has identified and initiated a number of key areas for development which her successor will be able to build on. We are indebted to her and wish her every blessing as she now steps back from this role.

Please join with me in praying for a joyful and encouraging meeting in which we can celebrate God's faithfulness to us, and look forward to his guidance and provision in the coming months.

With best wishes,

Ruan

Login details for pre-meeting on Thursday 24th September

- <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89187276761>
- Meeting ID: 891 8727 6761
- Passcode: (available on request from ruan@stjames.nl)

Chaplain's Report (Ruan Crew)

They used to say that life begins at 40. However when it comes to St James there has been plenty of life from the very start, when we were planted in the music room of the British School in the spring of 1979. And thankfully there is no sign of that vitality slowing down with the passing years. It is a wonderful thing to be part of a church family that is vibrant and flourishing – experiencing the abundant life that Jesus promises (John 10:10).

This annual meeting marks the close of a year celebrating our 40th birthday. The main event was of course that last weekend of March 2019, when former and current members came together to celebrate God's faithfulness and our shared history. A team was formed to organise the party, and we enjoyed a memorable occasion at the British School that included a sit-down meal, live music and line dancing. The next morning we reconvened in the hall for a celebration service led by Bishop Robert, including confirmations, followed by a drinks reception in the atrium.

Since then it has been a busy year on the ministry front. At a recent church council meeting we reviewed the life of our small groups, and were pleasantly surprised to be reminded how much is going on in between Sundays. We often think only in terms of the 'homegroup model', but any small and informal gathering of church members that comes together with a purpose (study, prayer or simply fellowship) counts: consider the quarterly book club, the regular worship team practices, Friday evening youth, and so on. What was clear to us at that meeting is that we need to find new ways of communicating all of this better, so that new church members can find their way to a small group that works for them. Watch this space.

There are many other things I could mention, but here are just a few: the daytime Alpha Course that began in the autumn and continues through to the summer. A new Christmas Eve all-age service, at 4pm in the afternoon (a response to the fact that, for the first time, we had no venue for a Christmas Day service). Linked to that, new and creative approaches to reaching out to children and families. The Tea Dance in January. The church weekend in mid-March.

The congregation itself continues to 'turn over'. One moment we are saying goodbye to dear friends moving on; the next we are greeting new faces who then rapidly settle in and become part of the family. We have also suffered more bereavement this year than we are used to. In particular we were saddened to lose Peter Weijnen, Helen Schoo and Tom Galvin.

Turning 40 can also mean that a bit of 'nip and tuck' is needed. This happened in at least two ways. First of all, our logo and house-style were given a refresh, which has now been rolled out across all of our print and digital output. Image isn't everything – it's the substance behind that counts – but it is nonetheless vital in this Instagram age. Our online presence is a large part of our outreach strategy, and we want to make our church as inviting and accessible as we can. Secondly, the Chopinlaan kitchen – being only four years younger than the church itself – was in need of refitting, and that was successfully carried out in January.

As I close, I would like to give thanks to everyone in St James for making it such a delightful church family, and for being such committed and active members. Our church life is very hands-on, but that in itself brings many rewards. In particular I would like to mention Matt, currently our ordinand but moving towards ordination in June, and then becoming a full-time curate for the next three years. It is such a joy working together: "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labour" (Ecclesiastes 4:9). And Mercedes, our energetic and enterprising youth worker, who does huge amounts of pastoral work with our young people between Sundays and below the radar. We are also well-blessed with our wider ministry team: Anthony our long-serving Reader, Deborah and Karen as Readers-in-training, and everyone who contributes to our Sunday worship. I would like to say a particular thank-you to Carol Waters, who has faithfully and competently continued to coordinate musicians, rehearsals, song selections, etc. Finally to our church council and our standing committee – both are such excellent and capable groups to work with. My thanks to Alina, who is handing over the baton after two productive years; Steve, entering his sixth and final year as

churchwarden; and Mike, our outgoing treasurer, and someone who has accompanied and supported me in leadership since my arrival here some seven years ago.

Church Warden's Report (Steve Hanford & Alina Stretton)

This has been a year of milestones for St James. We have celebrated our 40th anniversary. As usual it's been wonderful to see the commitment and enthusiasm of our church family as we organize and celebrate together and by the time you are reading this report we will have brought our anniversary year to a close with what I'm sure will be a wonderful, inspiring and family fun church weekend away.

As we reach the end of the year we will also be marking a couple of other milestones. Alina has served as warden for a couple of years now, always joyfully and wonderfully but she has now decided to step down and make way for a new member to come forward and serve in the role. Thank you Alina for being willing, able and joyful in the role. It's been a privilege to work alongside you.

Mike Waters has served as our treasurer for many more years than that and this will be his last AGM as treasurer. The importance of solid and capable financial management is crucial to our smooth running at St James. We are very fortunate with the Lord's provision in our chaplaincy in so many ways and finances is one where we should be particularly thankful. The careful and effective stewardship of God's provision is one of the ways we glorify and worship him. Mike's professionalism, clarity of thought and willingness to trust in the Lord's provision has really marked out his time as treasurer as being special. So a rather large and special thank you to Mike for his faithful service.

At the beginning of February this year we were invited to the Deanery Day event. This Deanery Day was intended for churchwardens, council secretaries, safeguarding officers, synod representatives and treasurers. We had a large number of people attending and the aim of the organisers focused on how to help us as we carry out crucial roles in helping run our Anglican churches here in the Netherlands. It was a very inspirational day, we connected, exchanged experiences, shared and had lots of fun in the process not to mention the delicious spread of food. Thank you Ruan, in your capacity as the Area Dean of the Netherlands, for organising the event and encouraging us to attend.

So as always for St James a time of change is upon us. We have often wondered how things will continue when significant contributors to the life of our church move on or put down the roles they have played. We have also witnessed how the Lord has spoken to members of our congregation and seen how just the right person steps forward to fill the gaps created and then goes on to build their own special contribution to the life of St James. This year again we have candidates for the roles of Warden and Treasurer. Elections have to happen of course and we must not prejudge that process, but we are confident that the candidates we have are capable to be faithful servants in the future.

As we say goodbye to our 40th anniversary year there is a strong sense that as we look into the future that the Lord continues to pour out his blessings on us. Matt will progress from Ordinand to Curate. It has been amazing to see how all the pieces have come together to create this fantastic opportunity for St James to thrive and flourish and to become even better at preaching the word, loving our neighbour and becoming an even brighter light of Christ in our community.

Diocesan Synod Report (Anthony Cummings)

The Diocesan synod met in Köln from 10-13 June. I attended as one of the three lay representatives of the Archdeaconry (of North West Europe). After an opening Eucharist, Monday evening was taken up with introductory matters for the 'new' synod, minutes of various previous meetings and the Bishop's Presidential Address.

Each of the following three mornings commenced with a Bible study, led by Revd Dr Christian Hofreiter - an Austrian apologist (whom some of us may have heard at New Wine Europe a few years ago). His theme, based on Colossians, was Bible, Spirit and Identity. Starting with our identity in Christ, he went on to our ability to present our faith to others (do you have your 'elevator speech' ready?) and the centrality of Christ in making sense of everything else.

Other sessions covered the Common fund (money), the ministry of the laity, ministry with young people and various other ministries. We also looked at clergy conditions of service and their well-being before diving into along exploration of Diocesan accounts and budget. Many of these topics are similar to discussions we have at our Council or Annual Meeting but at the next level, as it were.

Equally important, but without reams of supporting paper, are the conversations with fellow members of Synod over coffee, meals, or a glass of local beer. As always in the church of Christ, relationships are more important than business!

Archdeaconry Synod Report (Fulco Jongsma & Sue Kirby)

Archdeaconry Synod, October 3rd-5th, 2019: In October last year Ruan, Anthony, Fredrik and I attended the Archdeaconry Synod at Drongen, Belgium, together with about ninety other participants from the diocese of North-West Europe. Even the joint trip there was enjoyable. This year we unfortunately missed Sue, but luckily Fredrik was added to our group.

After the opening of the Synod by the Archdeacon Paul Vrolijk, Bishop Robert Innes kicked off with a presentation called 'Testimony of Hope', about his mainly positive experiences in Europe. In the first two days there were three talks by Michael Harvey, a founder of Back to Church Sunday and author of the books 'Unlocking the Growth', 'Meer dan Welkom' and 'Ich glaub, Ich lad ein'. He turned out to be a great motivational and humorous speaker, discussing the topics: 'Why don't we already invite?', 'Creating a culture of invitation' and 'Best practice ideas', about actively inviting friends and acquaintances to church. His ideas are practical and well applicable to our own congregation.

In between meetings a fun exercise was organised to get acquainted with our fellow Synod members. In the afternoon of the second day we attended four short sessions about outreach and ministry themes, after which Ruan got on stage to interview both Bishop Robert Innes and Bishop Johan Bonny of Antwerp.

On the third day the more official Deanery AGM and the Business Meeting took place. The General Synod had suggested that the (Archdeaconry) Synod representatives should be elected to a maximum of six consecutive years. This rule could be implemented in 2020, if the Annual Chaplaincy Meeting so decides. But those representatives could be re-elected after one year out of office.

Each day contained a Morning prayer before breakfast, a Midday prayer before lunch and Compline in the evening, all held in the intimate atmosphere of the chapel of the historic Old Abbey monastery buildings. The meals were enjoyed together in the old refectory. And the Synod ended with a Eucharistic service. These frequent moments of worship and reflection, forming the backbone of this Synod, gave the entire assembly a sense of unity, fellowship and divine inspiration.

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 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
- 2 Churchwardens elected annually
- 3 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); Steve Hanford, Alina Stretton (Churchwardens); Fulco Jongsma, Sue Kirby, Fredrik Knoeff (Archdeaconry Synod Representatives); Anthony Cummings (Reader); Vera Atlas, Emily Crew, Jan-Hendrik Erasmus, Rebekka Gelders, Demetra Koelling, Brian Routledge, Matt Thijs, Gillian Weinberg, Debbie Simpson (secretary), Mike Waters (treasurer).

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

Electoral Roll (Bronwyn Lucas)

The Electoral Roll has been updated. There were eight additions and six removals, and the number is 95 for the year 2020.

Safeguarding (Debra Lambert)

St James is committed to being a Safe Church. Last October, the Diocese in Europe released its revised Safeguarding Policy and Guidance, aligned with the National Safeguarding Team's Parish Safeguarding Handbook. It has been adapted and expanded to suit the requirements of our international diocese. To reflect these changes, our own Safeguarding Policy is being updated and will soon be accessible on the church website.

Safeguarding is a shared responsibility of all members of our chaplaincy congregation, who through vigilance, adherence to best practice and acting promptly whenever a concern is raised, help to ensure we maintain a safe and secure environment. As such, I encourage everyone to read our policy.

In addition, the "free" online training has also been updated and greatly improved. This can be done by anyone and can be accessed here:

<https://europe.anglican.org/safeguarding/online-training>

For those working in children's ministry it is required that you complete the "refresher training" (C1) every 3 years. There are other chaplaincy roles that also require the completion of part or all of the online training. You can either check with me or via this link to see what your role requires:

<https://europe.anglican.org/downloads/safeguarding/safeguarding-officer-guidance/2019/section-1/chaplaincy-roles-checklist.pdf>

Over the last year, there have been two events that I have been able to attend. The first was the Level 2 Safeguarding training in November, (a refresher for me) and just recently the Deanery Day in Amersfoort, which enabled me to meet and chat with other safeguarding officers, which was very helpful.

With regards to our children's ministry team, we now have 35 cleared volunteers, but we are always happy to have more helpers. If you are interested, please come and talk to me to find out more.

Treasurer's Report (Mike Waters)

Summary

In 2019 St James had a deficit of €982. Cash increased further by €7,989. Total assets were €669,315.

Income and Expenditure 2019

Income of €172,911 was 4% over budget as giving via plate and PGS increased. Operating cost was €137,997, 9% higher than budget and 2% higher than 2018, mainly due to ministerial costs, which reduced less than expected.

Balance Sheet 2019

Current Assets increased to €88,106, mainly cash on deposit, and Current Liabilities increased to €18,791. Overall our balance sheet reduced by €982 to €669,315.

Budget 2020

The proposed budget for 2020 generates a surplus of €146 against a total income of €192,000. The assumptions for this budget are that income will increase by 11%, driven by a new curacy grant of €16,500, and €3,000 rental from Ambachtspad, in the second half of the year. Property maintenance costs will decrease by €13,000 as no major works are planned. Ministry costs will increase by 21% as we budget a curate for the second half, and the final part of the increase in our diocesan share to ~10% of income.

Our cash balance and provisions remain similar. The current cash balance represents approximately 6 months of cost coverage, providing a sound fiscal foundation to support operations and some certainty in terms of what commitments can be made. There is no change foreseen in this situation.

Income and Expenditure Year to Date Jan-Dec 2019

	2019 Jan-Dec budget	2019 Jan-Dec Actual	Variance
Members Income			
Planned Giving Scheme	150,000	155,862	€ 5,862
Collections	10,000	10,683	€ 683
Special Collection & Other Income	7,000	6,366	€ (634)
Total Income	167,000	172,911	€ 5,911
Expenditure & Outgoings			
Rental BSN hall	10,000	5,696	€ (4,304)
Property operating costs	18,000	22,764	€ 4,764
Cost of other rentals/hall hire/hall fit out	5,000	3,585	€ (1,415)
Bond Interest (Ambachtspad)	4,500	4,500	€ -
Sub-total Buildings and Property	37,500	36,545	€ (955)
Ministerial Salaries and on-costs	75,000	85,330	€ 10,330
Outreach, Literature, Conferences, Publicity	8,000	7,746	€ (254)
Office and Administration	1,500	6,322	€ 4,822
Professional Costs, Bank Fees & Insurance	5,000	2,055	€ (2,945)
Sub-total ministry costs	89,500	101,452	€ 11,952
Total Church Operating Outgoings	127,000	137,997	€ 10,997
Total Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	40,000	34,914	€ (5,086)
External Giving/Contributions			
Diocese and Affiliation Contributions	15,000	14,548	€ (452)
Planned External Giving - Mission Partners	16,500	14,907	€ (1,593)
Local Social Welfare	1,500	0	€ (1,500)
Special Collections paid or accrued	6,500	6,441	€ (59)
Total External Giving	39,500	35,896	€ (3,604)
Net Surplus/Deficit	500	-982	€ (1,482)
External Giving/Contributions			
Diocese and Affiliation Contributions	9%	8%	
Planned External Giving - Mission Partners	10%	9%	
Planned External Giving - Local Welfare	1%	0%	
Giving from Special Purposes	4%	4%	
Total external giving	24%	21%	

Main reasons for variance	
Property maintenance over budget	€ 4,764
Ministry costs above budget	€ 11,952
Income above budget	€ 5,911
External giving under budget	€ (1,593)
Total variance	€ (1,482)

Balance Sheet - December 2019

Euro €	Dec 2018	Dec 2019	Change
Current Assets			
Bank and Cash	80,147	88,106	7,959
Accrued Income	100	0	-100
Advance Payments	0	0	0
Total Current Assets	80,247	88,106	7,859
Current Liabilities			
Creditors	5,775	9,136	3,361
Sundry accruals	4,175	9,655	5,480
Provisions			0
Total Current liabilities	9,950	18,791	8,841
Current Assets less Liabilities	70,297	69,315	-982
Fixed Assets			
Buildings	750,000	750,000	0
Total Fixed Assets	750,000	750,000	0
Long Term Liabilities			
Ambachtspad 2018 bonds	150,000	150,000	0
Total Long Term Liabilities	150,000	150,000	0
Total Net Assets	670,297	669,315	-982
Represented by:			
General Reserves			
General Reserve b/fwd	670,959	670,297	
Building revaluation			
Change in provisions			
Surplus/(Deficit) for Current Year	-661	-982	
Balance c/fwd	670,297	669,315	
Total Reserves	670,297	669,315	-982

Income and Expenditure - Budget 2020

	2019 Actual	2020 Budget	Change
<u>Members Income</u>			
Planned Giving Scheme	155,862	157,000	1%
Collections	10,683	11,000	3%
Curacy grant	0	16,500	
Other income and special collections	6,366	7,500	18%
Total Income	172,911	192,000	11%
<u>Expenditure & Outgoings</u>			
Rental BSN hall	5,696	8,200	44%
Property operating costs	22,764	13,000	-43%
Cost of other rentals/hall hire/hall fit out	3,585	4,000	12%
Bond Interest (Ambachtspad)	4,500	4,500	0%
Sub-total Buildings and Property	36,545	29,700	-19%
Ministerial Salaries and on-costs	85,330	109,000	28%
Outreach, Literature, Conferences, Publicity	7,746	8,000	3%
Office and Administration	6,322	3,500	-45%
Professional Costs, Bank Fees & Insurance	2,055	2,500	22%
Sub-Total Ministry Costs	101,452	123,000	21%
Total Church Operating Outgoings	137,997	152,700	11%
Total Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	34,914	39,300	13%
<u>External Giving/Contributions</u>			
Diocese and Affiliation Contributions	14,548	17,500	20%
Planned External Giving - Mission Partners	14,907	16,654	12%
Local Social Welfare	0	1,500	
Others (appeals and DDF grant)	6,441	3,500	-46%
Total External Giving	35,896	39,154	9%
Net Surplus/Deficit	-982	146	
<u>External Giving/Contributions</u>			
Diocese and Affiliation Contributions	8%	9%	
Planned External Giving - Mission Partners	9%	9%	
Local Social Welfare	0%	1%	
Others (appeals and DDF grant)	4%	2%	
Total external giving	21%	20%	

Balance Sheet - Budget 2020

Euro €	Dec 2019	Dec 2020 Bu	Change
Current Assets			
Bank and Cash	88,106	88,252	146
Accrued Income	0	0	0
Advance Payments	0	0	0
Total Current Assets	88,106	88,252	146
Current Liabilities			
Creditors	9,136	9,136	0
Accrued Expenses	9,655	9,655	0
Sundry accruals			0
Total Current liabilities	18,791	18,791	0
Current Assets less Liabilities	69,315	69,461	146
Fixed Assets			
Buildings	750,000	750,000	0
Total Fixed Assets	750,000	750,000	0
Long Term Liabilities			
Ambachtspad 2018 bonds	150,000	150,000	0
Total Long Term Liabilities	150,000	150,000	0
Total Net Assets	669,315	669,461	146
Represented by:			
General Reserves			
General Reserve b/fwd	670,297	669,315	-982
Building revaluation			
Change in provisions		0	0
Surplus/(Deficit) for Current Year	-982	146	1,128
Balance c/fwd	669,315	669,461	669,461
Total Reserves	669,315	669,461	146

Independent Examiner's Report (Brian Routledge)

To the Chaplain and Wardens of St James, Voorschoten

As requested by the Annual General Meeting, I have examined the 2019 accounts of St James, Voorschoten.

The review was not a full and complete professional audit but carried out to the best of my ability.

I am satisfied that the accounts are a true, fair and accurate record of the transactions carried out during 2019 and the financial position of St James, Voorschoten at year end 2019.

Many thanks to Thérèse Jongsma for her contribution, in particular as electronic recording has increased.

A special vote of thanks to Mike Waters, stepping down as our treasurer. A solid foundation has been built.

Blessings



Brian Routledge
Middelgeestlaan 6
2251 RZ Voorschoten

Sunday Services (Ruan Crew)

Sunday mornings are always a hive of activity. Without these essential, behind the scenes ministries St James would not be the organised and friendly welcoming place that it is.

Such ministries include:

- The Altar Team, who make the worship area ready for the service, and prepare the altar for Holy Communion.
- The Cash Counters, who count and record the collection.
- The Coffee Team, who prepare the refreshments after the service.
- The Communion Assistants, who assist with the distribution of the bread and the wine.
- Intercessors and readers, who participate in the service by leading the prayers and readings.
- The Flower Team, who decorate the hall before special services.
- The Music Group and Youth Band, who lead the sung worship in the service.
- The Prayer Ministry Team, who are always ready to pray for anyone after every service.
- The Sound Team, who make sure that everything in the service can be heard.
- The Verger and Chair Team, who arrive early on Sunday morning to set up the hall; chairs, tables, etc.
- The Welcome Team, who welcome visitors, newcomers and everyone else.

Read more about some of these ministries below.

Music Group (Deborah Beasley-Suffolk)

The worship group leads and accompanies the sung worship each Sunday morning with a desire to help members of the congregation come into the presence of God and to glorify and praise him. For services, the songs and music is chosen for the weeks ahead by the music group usually over a working lunch after the service on a prearranged Sunday. For Christmas, Carol Waters and Debbie Beasley-Suffolk usually invite a wider group to participate in traditional carols sung in four parts. Thanks should be extended to Damian Beasley-Suffolk who played the organ for the carol service in Het Kruispunt at the Nine Lessons and Carols Service.

Members of the group who are able, join together on a Tuesday evening to practise the music for the following Sunday and have a pleasant evening of worship together. On a Sunday morning, the group arrives at 9:30 to assist the sound team in setting up the equipment and they stay behind at the end of the service to put it away. We would like to take this chance to thank all members of the sound team for the work which they do.

Periodically, the Youth Band enhances the Sunday morning worship music and is a welcome addition. We are delighted that Matt Thijs, our ordinand in training, has become involved with the organisation of this music. We always welcome new members; please contact any of the music team if you are interested in joining us.

Youth Band (Matt Thijs)

The Youth Band have been contributing to the worship at St James for a number of years now. I took over the leadership from Tim Hanford and Matt Kirby last year, who left to go to university. The band consists of an ever-changing group of young people, and we've been happy to include some new members recently. Music and young people always seems to be a good combination.

We play in the Sunday service about once a month, and we have midweek practices at Ambachtspad. A special thank-you goes out to the adults who have helped me run the group: Kesia, Lizelle, and Mercedes. If you are youthful and musical (or just enjoy music), why don't you join us for a practice to see if you enjoy it?

Sound Team (Peter Stretton)

I would like to welcome Matthew to the sound team, he has been a great help since joining in the Summer, with him and Tim who joined early last year we are back to almost full strength. In addition a number of the youth have been helping, their assistance is most welcome.

The most noticeable change in the past year is that our mixing system is now wireless. Gone is the old cumbersome mixing desk and the large fire hose of a cable running the length of the hall. Now we control everything wirelessly with a tablet. This makes the weekly setup and breakdown a whole lot simpler. An added benefit is that there are fewer pops and cracks making their presence felt during the services due to there being fewer pieces of wire connecting everything together.

All-Age Events (Matt Thijs)

Each year we have a number of all-age services which usually take place on special Sundays: Easter Day, Pentecost, Harvest, Christingle and Christmas Eve. The All-Age Team (which includes Diana, Lizelle, Lisette, and Rebekka) have worked hard this year to make sure these services are creative, bi-lingual, and inclusive for people of all ages. Both the Christingle and Christmas Eve services were well attended by visitors and new-comers, which was encouraging.

The team have also taken time to evaluate our Messy Church events, which were previously run 5 or 6 times a year. Aside from Messy Easter, most of these events were not very well attended, despite a lot of effort being put into advertising and preparation. We realised there were multiple reasons for this, including questions around timing (Saturday afternoons), the fact that we are a dispersed, networked community, and the busyness of family life. Consequentially, we have decided to reduce the number of Messy Church events, choosing to focus on those that are well attended, and also seeking to think of other creative ways of building community for families with young children. This has led to a number of initiatives which are currently being piloted, including local small groups for parents and children, and church family brunches (next one on 5th April after the service).

We are also piloting 'St J's Club moments' in the Sunday services; an extended moment with attention for the children before they go out to their groups. This 'moment' is being used to include them in our corporate worship, through singing and playing instruments, through activities, and through short object lessons. Hopefully these initiatives will help to strengthen the all-age nature of our church.

First Steps & St J's Club (Diana Hanford)

We can be very excited about the Children's ministry at St James. We had a number of new families joining St James who are now well settled into St J's Club and First Steps. We have babies once more who are of course the St J's club and youth of the future! Weekly attendances continue to fluctuate and can be 8 one week and 15 the next. St J's club is organised so that both English and Dutch speaking children are catered for. This can prove a challenge to the leaders at times but the children seem to be enjoying themselves.

We like to sing (and dance), we listen to worship songs so that the children will recognise more of what we sing in church, we pray for Open Doors children, we read the bible in both languages, we ask questions and try to take the teaching deeper for the over 7's, we do craft and play games.

In First Steps we provide a safe environment for the very young (under 5's) and try to keep to a structure so that alongside playtime there is a bible story and simple craft. May God continue to bless St James with families.

Youth (Mercedes Masters)

It's been another year working with the youth at St James, and there aren't enough words to express how happy I am with the growth we've all made throughout this time. We've had new faces join us, we've had old faces re-join, we've had people staying on from last year, and we've said good-bye to those who have turned 18 and are going beyond St James' youth. I am incredibly proud of the welcoming nature of the youth, and how open the youth (and parents) are to examining a wide range of topics, including ones that are still a hot-topic for conversation and debate, such as LGBTQIA+ relationships. The embracing of considering harder topics in a theological light is something all of the youth should be proud of, and in particular the youth-led Going Green initiative, which strives to make the church a greener environment. As a youth group we have grown together in this past year, continuously learning from each other and develop new and stronger relationships within ourselves, each other, and our personal relationship(s) with Jesus. It's been an absolute pleasure working as the youth leader in St James for another year, and I look forward to what the next months bring from every youth individually, and for St James' youth collectively. A huge thank you extended to the youth, the parents, the volunteers, and the church team for helping me keep the amazing energy and events afloat -- would not be able to have the successes without you all!

Pastoral Care (Ruan Crew)

In a congregation our size, our approach to pastoral care can best be described as intentional and relational. Most pastoral care takes place through the relationships that exist within the church, and this is a strong way we put our faith into action: by reaching out to each other in times of need. However, there is also an intentional aspect: together with a team of pastoral people we aim to ensure that no one slips through the cracks. Alongside my regular visiting as part of my ministry, this team helps us keep our eyes and ears open, and so bring needs to each other's attention.

We also have a confidential prayer chain, where prayer requests can be shared to a closed group of authorised prayer partners.

Small Groups (Ruan Crew)

There are all kinds of small groups happening in our church community, and it is not always easy to keep track of them all! But here is an overview of our homegroups and other small groups, together with their contact persons:

- Leiden homegroup (monthly): Gea Hakker
- Voorburg homegroup: Joyce van Boldrik
- Voorschoten B&B (breakfast and bible study): Nick Lambert
- Prayer Gathering (monthly): Ruan Crew/Matt Thijs
- Evergreens lunches: Debra Lambert
- Museum visits: H  l  ne Leclerc
- Book club: H  l  ne Leclerc

Read more about some of these small groups below.

Bible & Breakfast (B&B) (Nick Lambert)

The Bible and Breakfast group was formed in early September 2019. It has continued with the core mission of the original Men's Bible-Study Breakfast to provide an early morning Saturday bible study, fellowship and quiet prayer time, helped along by a hearty cooked breakfast. The closure of the Church Office had led the Men's Bible-Study Breakfast to need to meet in each other's homes, but this had proved that it was impractical to remain as a men's group. As a consequence, the new B&B was established and is simply open to all who can get up early on a Saturday morning.

In 2019, the B&B pursued a study to examine what the bible has to say about the roles that we play throughout our lives, highlighting good and bad examples of these and to pick out some role models. For 2020 the B&B is studying biblical meals, starting (of course) with breakfast. Attendance ranges from 3 to 6 members. Newcomers and new hosts for the B&B are always welcome.

The Book Club (H  l  ne Leclerc)

Due to sickness, work and moves, the book club took a break in the first part of the year. A few of us met in late June to review J. Hudson Taylor – A Man in Christ by Roger Steer. Our autumn book was The Trouble with Goats and Sheep by Joanna Cannon, which five of us reviewed in January 2020.

Evergreens Lunches (Lisette Crew)

Evergreens Lunches are our quarterly social events for the older members of the congregation. Typically, it's those who are retired and/or over 60, but we're not too strict.

It's a chance to have a shared meal, often seasonal, whilst enjoying fellowship with one another. During the lunch we pause for a short thought from the Bible by Ruan or Matt, and then enjoy a hymn or two.

These lunches are always popular and we are fortunate to be able to use the facilities at Huize Bijdorpe, which is a real blessing. There is a lot of fun and laughter, good food, lifted spirits and this is a ministry that blesses all who are involved.

Museum Visits (Hélène Leclerc)

Since the group's first visit in 2018, we have grown into a group of five or ten. Visiting the exhibitions usually takes from one to two hours. Then we come together around coffee, tea or a meal to share our views on the exhibition and for fellowship. It is also a great way for newcomers - and oldcomers - to the Netherlands to learn more about this beautiful country and make friends. 2019 was a busy year: we visited 7 exhibitions including the Gods of Egypt at the Museum of Antiquities and the newly renovated Lakenhal in Leiden, the works of Van Gogh and Hockney at the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, and North and South at the Museum Catharijneconvent in Utrecht.

Newcomer's Lunches (Lisette Crew)

Just as in previous years we have continued the tradition of welcoming our new members of our congregation at our home for the Newcomer's Lunches, every 2 or 3 months or so. It's always an informal time of food and fellowship and it has been good to get to know new people. It is a great opportunity for them to get to hear more about the St. James family and to share experiences with other new people 'in the same boat'. We are grateful that several of the 'Newcomers' have now made St. James their spiritual home and become valued church family members.

Social Events (Olivia Hubée)

40th Anniversary Celebrations

St James celebrated its 40 year anniversary on Saturday 30th March 2019 with a fabulous evening of entertainment which began with special activities for children and a borrel to welcome some 200 guests from both near and far. Former church members travelled great distances to meet up with current members and a great time was had by all. The borrel was followed by a delicious dinner provided by Mike's Place, line dancing led by a local dance group and great 60's music from The Tickets guitar duo. On Sunday 31st March a special Anniversary service of Holy Communion and Confirmation was led by Bishop Robert. After the service there were speeches followed by cake and 'bubbly'. A dedicated team from St James formed a committee to organise the party on Saturday evening and the special Anniversary service on Sunday morning.

Tea Dance

The St James All Age Social Tea Dance took place on Saturday 18th January this year with around 60 participants from church and the wider community. Line dancing at the 40th anniversary celebration proved to be enormous fun so it was felt that another opportunity to get everyone dancing would be a great idea. Sarah Weinberg agreed to come over from England to lead us in the basics of swing dance and Bronwyn Lucas provided the sweet treats and cakes to boost our energy levels. Roll on the next one!

MISSION & OUTREACH

Mission Partner Support Team (Phil Gottschalk)

The St James MPST is composed of: Phil Gottschalk (Chair), Vera Atlas, Fulco Jongsma, Karen Gallagher, Rina van Rijn and Rev. Ruan Crew (ex officio).

Our task is to present the ministries of the missionaries whom our church supports to the members. We try to accomplish this mainly through the presentation of "Mission Partner Slots," monthly five to ten minute brief presentations to explain what our mission partners are doing.

Currently we have six couples as mission partners and a several organizations.

Couples:

Hans & Mary van der Corput - Hans is a medical doctor serving in Nigeria.

Tim & Nicky Sandell - They are working at evangelizing and discipling university students in Volos, Greece.

Rahman & Nelleke Yakubu - Rahman is an instructor in Intercultural Studies at Tyndale Theological Seminary. They also continue to have contact with Project Share Ghana, which they started.

Trich & Derek Dodds - The Dodds served many years with YWAM in counselling ministry and teaching.

Bill & Irene Manley - The Manleys originally went out to Mongolia from St James. They are entering retirement, but we continue to pray for them.

Phil & Linda Gottschalk - Both Phil & Linda are full time faculty members at Tyndale Theological Seminary. Phil teaches mainly in the area of apologetics. Linda is Chair of the Division of Research & Writing and also teaches church history.

Organizations:

ICS - The Intercontinental Church Society - Our "patron," ICS, helped start St James and is involved in church planting throughout the Diocese of Europe.

Diocesan Development Fund - This fund is kept and administered by the Bishop of Europe to help where needed.

Schiphol Airport Chaplaincy - Millions of travellers pass through Schiphol each year. Our chaplains there help minister to people who have various needs from travel weariness and need of a place to rest and pray to helping repatriate people.

Project Share Ghana - Project Share was started by Rahman & Nelleke Yakubu. It continues to work as a separate ministry in north Ghana. It helps with farming techniques, helping pregnant women eat right and prepare for birth, helping new mothers feed their children well and care for them, giving educational help (they built a school!).

Open Doors - Open Doors started many years ago to reach out to those in Communist countries. Now they focus on "Closed" countries places where Christian workers are not allowed and where Christians are persecuted for their faith. They are involved in education, outreach and encouragement.

Rev. Emmanuel Kasereka Kiharami - Diocese of North Kivu, Congo - Emmanuel and his wife care for more than forty orphans, feeding, clothing, housing and educating them. Emmanuel is a graduate of Tyndale Theological Seminary.

Alpha Course (Olivia Hubée)

Inspiring, sometimes challenging, thought provoking and revealing.

The new version of the Alpha course that we have been following since last October is all of the above.

Often new versions can be disappointing when compared to the original, however, those in our group who have attended previous Alpha courses, agree that this course is just as good if not better. Discussing the big questions about faith can be daunting and I was doubtful about whether this course was for me, however I have been touched not only by what we have watched but also by what my fellow Alpha participants have contributed to our discussions. Sessions will continue until beginning June and new participants are always welcome (please speak to Ruan).

Cross Examined (Matt Thijs)

Cross Examined is a series of talks which seek to equip us to better discuss the difficult questions of our faith. This year, we have looked at topics such as “Why should I believe a 2000-year-old book?, How could a loving God allow so much suffering in the world?, and How could a loving God send people to hell? Cross Examined takes place a few times a year on Sundays after the service and is coordinated by Debra Lambert. Speakers include Prof. Phil Gottschalk, Ruan and Matt.

Social Media (Matt Thijs)

In order to increase our online visibility, we have been expanding our digital presence on social media and through the church website. This means that we are currently present and active on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. If you have experience in graphics and design, we would love your help in expanding this ministry.

The Feel-At-Home The Hague Fair (Olivia Hubée)

On Sunday 2nd February, the annual Feel at Home in the Hague Fair took place in the atrium of The Hague City Hall (Stadhuis) and once again the church of St James was represented. A team of loyal volunteers manned the stall and made sure there was always someone on hand to meet and greet during the whole event. All of the leaflets were given out and there were many animated conversations between our church members and the passing public! We also We also invited people to fill in a simple survey to help us make decisions about future representation at the Fair.