



Annual General Meeting Report 2022



*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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Chaplain's Report (Ruan Crew)

I'm glad to see that, this time last year, I did not attempt to predict what the coming 12 months would bring. It has been something of a rollercoaster: mass vaccinations and falling infections, a return to in-person worship, the elimination of almost all restrictions ... and then came the autumn and a new wave, leading to another lockdown over December and January. For many of us it has felt as if life - including church life - has been on hold for longer than we can remember.

But let's be positive: after an extended period of online-only worship we resumed in-person services last summer. In the period up to the autumn we saw a steady rise in numbers, getting back to around two thirds of what we were before the pandemic. It was all hands on deck: chairs, sound and vision, musicians, children's work. The Kruispunt was spacious and convenient, even if it lacked on the aesthetics. At the time of writing we are once again meeting weekly in person at the Bondsgebouw, whilst we wait for the longer-term question of a return to the BSN to be resolved.

Alongside the in-person services the church has done a remarkable job at sustaining the online community. The weekly services on YouTube have been a lifeline for those who are not yet able to consider returning to a church building. The daily pattern of Zoom prayers during the week has become an established feature. Online study groups - daytime and evening - continue to attract healthy numbers. Countless other informal and spontaneous expressions of community have been taking place. If at times it has felt as if we were an underground church, the network of relationships has nonetheless proved itself strong.

We said farewell to a number of people moving away over the last year, but also welcomed plenty of newcomers, some of whom have found us via the online services. There was a higher number of funerals than average, although none specifically linked to covid: Olive, Rolf, Donald, Pit and Margret. We baptised two infants and two adults, all occasions for great joy.

The ministry team continues to develop. Matt was priested in Gent this summer and continues to grow and glow in the role of curate. Mercedes is now in her fourth year here as youth worker, offering excellent pastoral support to our young people. Readers-in-training Karen and Deborah are relocating back to the UK and will be greatly missed, but it is great to see Iris stepping up to start training.

Peter offered to stand as churchwarden a year ago and has taken to the role effortlessly. Rebekka stepped down in the summer, and Fredrik came forward as a replacement, first in an acting capacity and now standing for formal election. Graham as treasurer and Debbie as secretary complete the standing committee team. Debra stepped down after many years as safeguarding officer and is now replaced by Sherley St Juste. We now also have a Green Team, complete with Esther as our chaplaincy environmental officer. Diana continues to provide faithful administrative support, looking after the service powerpoints and weekly emails.

I am very grateful to all these people and many more who give leadership and support, both up front and behind the scenes. Everything that happens reflects the team effort of many talented and committed individuals. Jesus continues to be faithful to his promise to build his church. I won't attempt to predict where things will be a year from now, but we can look forward trusting that his goodness and mercy will continue to guide us in the months ahead.

Church Warden's Report (Peter Stretton)

2021 saw Steve Hanford step down as the church warden after many years in this role, handing the role over to me in the process. The first question for me was, what does the church warden actually do?

The novel situation arising was one where the St James Anglican church had 2 wardens, Rebekka and myself, neither of whom are traditional British people making the question about what the warden does a good one. I quickly discovered the role itself is actually well embedded into British life and even British law, Monty Python in their brilliant Bicycle Repairman sketch add to the mystique of the church warden which I find rather amusing.

In essence, the role is more or less that of a project manager who has the rather vague assignment of making sure everything works. I look at it as being the separation of church and state, our ministers are clearly on the church side of the fence. Holding that in mind there are other tasks such as arguing with vendors about the invoices they send, making sure government regulations are being complied with, and generally keeping the church operational, all of which can be thought of as being matters of state. These automatically become the responsibility of the church wardens.

Following in that vein, the next role added to my name was that of Lay Vice Chair. Which I have no doubt is crystal clear to everyone. By default the Vicar holds the chair, but keeping order amongst the normal chaos found in any volunteer organisation is not always a pastoral function and in this case the task ended up with the wardens with the label vice chair then following.

Normally the church has 2 wardens, when I started Rebekka was already in this role, during 2021 work and family demands meant she was unable to continue. Before Rebekka stood down she did complete a heap of complex HR admin work and I would like to thank her for doing all this. Since then Fredrik has joined in an acting warden role which has been great, Fredrik brings a very different skill set to mine and the church has a lot to benefit from his contribution.

I would like to thank our treasurer for managing our finances, and our bookkeeper for looking after the accounts, the wardens have a responsibility of keeping the church financially stable and this would be impossible without their help. I would also like to thank the council members for their contributions. Without their insights and help with all the church activities we would not have come through the past two years as well as we have done.

Last but not least, I would like to thank all the other people who in their way assist in the running of the church. Let's hope that in 2022 we will be seeing more of each other.

Archdeaconry Synod Report (Fulco Jongsma & Sue Kirby)

Meeting face to face with old friends and new felt like an adventure after so many meetings online. Especially poignant was the quiet time in the chapel after dinner where, despite all the events of the last couple of years, and our memories of difficulties faced or overcome, the peace of the Lord welcomed us in.

The synod had been arranged and expertly managed with a mix of online and in-person attendees using the big screen in the main meeting hall, which worked amazingly well. The purpose of the synod is to engage with issues facing the church with reference to our own archdeaconry, elect representatives to archdeaconry positions and to conduct church business as required in our area. We do all this together, meeting, chatting, worshipping and eating together as we get to know who works and what is going on around our diocese. The main talks were on 'Creation Care and Climate Change' and 'Racial Justice and Reconciliation' – nothing we could resolve in such a short time, but it was good to hear what other congregations are doing and even how these issues affect people as individuals or chaplaincies. The themes 'Living and Love and Faith (LLF)' and 'Safeguarding'. As we are a diverse archdeaconry, we could not hope to agree on every aspect of the discussions but they were all enlightening and engaging.

Sue particularly enjoyed hearing about the work of some of our more unusual chaplaincies and, this year, the afternoon sunshine when she got time to walk around the beautiful Abbey grounds. Fulco was particularly interested in Creation Care and LLF. We also had a great Pub quiz led by Ruan, but which we sadly lost.

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. Due to the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic, this year the meetings have taken place on Zoom and the Council has been able to operate very effectively in the circumstances.

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. These meetings have also taken place on zoom.

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), Rebekka Gelders, Peter Stretton (Churchwardens), Fredrik Knoeff (Acting Churchwarden), Fulco Jongsma, Sue Kirby (Archdeaconry Synod Representatives), Iris Boerhout van Veen, Katie Hanford, Anne Harcourt Brown, Graham Mapp (Treasurer), Brian Routledge, Debbie Simpson (secretary), Gillian Weinberg.

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 23rd March, 2022. In 2021 the number on the Electoral Roll was 91. In 2021 there have been 3 additions and 6 deletions.

Safeguarding (Sherley St Juste)

St James is committed to being a Safe Church. Safeguarding is a shared responsibility of all the members in 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 safeguarding policy, which can be found on our church website: <https://www.stjames.nl/safeguarding>

In addition, there is “free “online training provided by the Diocese and this can be done by anyone. It can be found on this website: <https://europe.anglican.org/safeguarding/online-training>. Just a little reminder 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>

Typical with an expat community, some of our volunteers move away each year. As such, we are always happy to have more helpers. If you are interested in volunteering for a role in children’s ministry, please contact me to find out more. Email: safeguarding@stjames.nl.

Treasurer's Report (Graham Mapp)

Income and Expenses 2021

Income

In 2021 we received €199,935. (This consisted of 151,584 through PGS, The Curacy grant was €41,894 and Cash collection €573. Special appeal raised €5883.

Expenses

In total outgoings for 2021 was €203,036. (Salaries and associated costs €154,466, hall rentals €6000, property costs €13,730). External giving and diocese €31,840.

The salary cost where higher than normal due to extraordinary professional fees incurred. Property costs were higher than normal due to additional maintenance.

Summary

The deficit for 2021 was €6101. The professional costs were €10197 and the property maintenance came to €12,416. We are not expecting a repeat of these costs in 2022.

Balance sheet

Opening balance for 2021 was €67,342 total cash, closing balance for 2021 was €61,241 total cash, making a net loss for 2021 of €6101.

Financial Statements

Income and Expenditure Year to Date Jan-Dec 2021

	2021 Jan-Dec budget	2021 Jan-Dec Actual	Variance
Members Income			
Planned Giving Scheme	160.000	151.584	(8.416)
Collections	1.500	573	(927)
Curacy grant	40.000	41.894	1.894
Special Collection & Other Income	4.500	5.883	1.383
Total Income	206.000	199.935	(6.065)
Expenditure & Outgoings			
Rental BSN hall	4.500	-2.669	(7.169)
Property operating costs	10.000	12.416	2.416
Cost of other rentals/hall hire/hall fit out	6.000	6.217	217
Bond Interest (Ambachtspad)	4.500	4.500	-
Sub-total Buildings and Property	25.000	20.465	(4.535)
Ministerial Salaries and on-costs	130.000	140.197	10.197
Outreach, Literature, Conferences, Publicity	8.000	2.392	(5.608)
Office and Administration	3.500	1.680	(1.820)
Professional Costs, Bank Fees & Insurance	3.000	10.197	7.197
Sub-total ministry costs	144.500	154.466	9.966
Total Church Operating Outgoings	169.500	174.931	5.431
Total Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	36.500	25.004	(11.496)
External Giving/Contributions			
Diocese and Affiliation Contributions	17.500	15.723	(1.777)
Planned External Giving - Mission Partners	16.030	16.117	87
Local Social Welfare	1.000	0	(1.000)
Special Collections paid or accrued	1.500	0	(1.500)
Total External Giving	36.030	31.840	(4.190)
Net Surplus/Deficit	470	(6.836)	(7.306)
External Giving/Contributions			
Diocese and Affiliation Contributions	8%	8%	
Planned External Giving - Mission Partners	8%	8%	
Planned External Giving - Local Welfare	0%	0%	
Giving from Special Purposes	1%	0%	

Main reasons for variance	
Income under budget	(6.065)
Property costs over budget	(4.535)
External giving over budget	(4.190)
Total variance	(7.306)

Balance Sheet – December 2021

Euro €		Dec 2020	Dec 2021	Change
Current Assets				
Bank and Cash		67.770	62.270	(5.500)
Accrued Income		0	0	0
Advance Payments		0	0	0
Total Current Assets		67.770	62.270	(5.500)
Current Liabilities				
Creditors		1.562	0	(1.562)
Sundry accruals		3.307	6.205	2.898
Provisions		0	0	0
Total Current liabilities		4.869	6.205	1.336
Current Assets less Liabilities		62.901	56.065	(6.836)
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		662.901	656.065	(6.836)
Represented by:				
General Reserves				
General Reserve b/fwd		669.315	662.901	(6.414)
Building revaluation				
Change in accruals				
Surplus/(Deficit) for Current Year		(6.414)	(6.836)	(422)
Balance c/fwd		662.901	656.065	(6.836)
Total Reserves		662.901	656.065	(6.836)

Budget 2022

	2022 Budget
Members Income	
Planned Giving Scheme	150.000
Collections	1.000
Curacy grant	42.000
Additional giving	4.000
Total Income	197.000
Expenditure & Outgoings	
Hall rental	10.000
Bond Interest (Ambachtspad)	4.500
Total Property	14.500
Ministerial Salaries and on-costs	150.000
Reader training	500
Conferences and training	1.500
Total Ministry	152.000
External Giving	
Diocese and Affiliation Contributions	15.500
Mission Partners	15.000
Total External Giving	30.500
Total Expenditure	197.000
Net Surplus/Deficit	0

In 2022 an income of €150,000 can be expected. This is based upon the projected income last year before the appeal made in November. The calculation determined that there was a 9.2% increase in income, and what the income would likely to have been if no intervention in November.

Also, the loss of a few families which we expect in 2022 has also been accounted for.

Provision has been made for the reader position; this is pro-rata plus some allowance made for materials.

There is an increase foreseen in salaries as we are now in the time of inflation. This will be enacted in July. A fair and affordable cost of living increase will be made then.

Any overspend will result in a depletion of our cash reserves which are quite healthy at present.

To summarize, we are somewhat constrained by our income, but we are nevertheless in a strong financial position with healthy giving and healthy reserves.

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 2021 accounts of St James Voorschoten. The review has been conducted to the best of my knowledge and my ability. The review is not a full professional audit and is of a more limited scope. Nonetheless, I judge and consider the accounts to be a true and fair picture of the financial position of St James at year end 2021 and of its results for the year 2021.

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

Submitted by email, 6th March 2022

First Steps & St Js Club (Matt Thijs)

Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it. (Proverbs 22:6)

There is perhaps no ministry that has struggled more with the transition from gathering in-person to online than our ministry to children. Nevertheless, the St Js Club team have put in a great effort to continue to give parents the tools they need to help their children grow faith. During the various lockdowns video lessons have been prepared (in English and Dutch) and shared via our YouTube channel, as well as other lessons for families to do at home. And on the Sundays on which meeting together has been possible, our group of volunteers have led the First Steps (0-2) and St Js Club (3-11) groups. During the summer we also hosted some St Js Club events in various homes, and we had a family picnic in the park.

As church is slowly opening up again, we hope to be able to offer weekly groups for all children again soon. A big 'thank you' goes out to the volunteers who make this important ministry possible, and Diana Hanford, Lisette Crew, and Lizelle Thijs deserve a special mention for all the work they do.

Youth (Mercedes Masters)

2021-2022 (so far) has been the second full pandemic year the youth at St James has championed through. Looking back to this time last year, we still had lockdowns and curfews. A year on, as of last week, all restrictions have been lifted, and the youth and volunteers have been adapting so efficiently once again.

St James' Youth has effectively shifted into a 'hybrid youth group', in that we have been blending our youth sessions into a mixture of both virtual and face-to-face ones. As The Netherlands moves into adjusting to the new 'new normal', St James' Youth will also do so by continuing with hybrid sessions. We are currently making Friday evenings in-person, and Sunday mornings virtual. The virtual Sundays have been working really well because it enables all to feel safe – it even meant that whilst I had/was recovering from COVID, I could still run the sessions! Technology really is a blessing at times!

On Friday's we've been having our standard Ambachtspad or Jagerslaan gatherings, which are always a joy! These curfew-free days, they mostly consist of us eating a great amount of food (a happy mix of healthy and not-so-healthy-but-hella-tasty), chatting, making music, cuddling Jackson, and laughing. But even when we've not been able to have face-to-face youth sessions, we've still managed to have amazing online activities: we watch movies together and chat on the side; we have arts and crafts nights; we have game nights; the list goes on! The one thing that remains, no matter whether we're online or offline, is the pure energy and joy the youth and volunteers bring to every Friday. It is never a boring Friday evening at St James' Youth, and now that the weather is looking nicer again, I'm excited to see what these nearly-post-COVID days will bring!

Our most recent update to our Sunday sessions is that we're going through the Alpha course again using their video sessions, leading up to confirmation (for those who want it) which will hopefully be in October 2022! I personally find this so exciting, as the last time we did the Alpha course was in the pre-COVID days (remember them?) three years ago!! I'm finding it amazing because not only do we have new voices in the group, but we also have youth who

have gone through the course before but have now had the giant shift of three years (imagine, the last time the youth and I went through this some were 13, and now going through it again as 16 year olds). The mix of perspectives from new youth, younger youth, 'old youth', experienced volunteers, and a 20-something youth leader produces the most amazing conversations I have ever had about Christianity, the topics and morality within, and religion generally, and I really feel like I am *still* continuing my faith journey *with* the youth.

I would like to take this opportunity to give my thanks to all. Firstly, a big shout out to God for leading me to St James and this wonderful youth group without me even realising that that was Your plan. Secondly, to the youth themselves: you are some of the most incredible people I have ever had the pleasure of exchanging ideas with, without your joy and passion the youth group would not be the wonderful, safe, amazing space that it is! Thirdly, to all the *phenomenal* volunteers – without you there would be no St James' Youth: without your insanely amazing flexibility, we wouldn't have some sessions; without your kind words of support, I would not be able to do my job as well; without your wisdom and openness with your own personal journeys, the conversations would not be as fruitful. Fourthly, to my mentors – there are so many to name, but it's all of you who drop little texts, have had little chats with me in corridors, in car shares, or whilst cycling – thank you. An extra special mention though goes to Ruan and Matt: you have been the best leaders in faith that I have ever had the honour of working with and getting to know, thank you for your guidance, patience, and encouragement – working with you these past three years has been the best! Big love to absolutely everyone that has been there along this St James' Youth journey, here's to more of it!

OTHER REPORTS

The Brewery (Katie Hanford)

The Brewery small group started in September 2020 with 3 members. After meeting in person for a few sessions we were quickly forced to start meeting online due to the covid restrictions. A year and half later we are still meeting online and we have grown to 18 members, some regular, some only joining every now and again. We follow various bible studies from online resources. Over the last year we have followed studies including The Prayer Course, a study on mental health, race and racial justice, and Exploring Prayer with Justin Welby. We hope to start meeting either in person or hybrid form after Easter.

Communication (Matt Thijs)

The lack of opportunities to meet face-to-face has meant that good communication has been more important over these past two years than ever before. This was acknowledged at the Church Council away-morning on 25th September 2021, which has led to a renewed focus on improving our communications. Currently the church is kept up-to-date through the notices in the Sunday services, the weekly email, our social media channels and the church website, as well as word-of-mouth. Thank you to Diana Hanford for the work that she does to make this happen. Currently we are considering the implementation of a church smartphone app to further improve our communication. If you have any of the following relevant skills (proof-reading, writing, graphics design, marketing, technical skills, etc.) then we would love to hear from you.

Evergreens (Lisette Crew)

The 'Evergreens' are people within our church family who are over 60 and/or retired. Normally we get together every quarter for a meal, some singing and a short meditation but this year we were somewhat restricted and had to think of other, creative, ways to connect: delivery of flowers, biscuits and cards, Mid-week Carol service in Zoom, afternoon tea at the Dorpskerk. Hopefully, in the coming year we will be able to meet again for our Evergreens Lunches.

Fellowship Cross (Deborah Beasley-Suffolk)

During the pandemic, the Fellowship Cross coordinator's role became more an overseer of the cross's movement rather than be the one to choose and move the cross from the current holder. The recipient is encouraged themselves to see who the Spirit puts in mind to take the cross to next and when. Some holders have kept the cross a few weeks before handing it on and others a few months. It averaged out at about one exchange/month as before, but now with a more natural, God-led course. The lockdowns made it less coordinated between me and the intercessor to get a regular pattern of prayers for the holder as intercessions were recorded on different days of the week, but this should solve itself as physical fulltime services resume.

It was a treasured time for me to be focussed on a particular person/family from the parish in my daily prayers.

Green Team (Esther Scherpenisse)

The church is called to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew life on earth (Fifth Mark of Mission). In order to help fulfil that mission and the Church of England 2020 pledge to become carbon net zero by 2030, St. James Voorschoten started the Green Team in September 2021. The goal of the Green Team is to help St. James Voorschoten move toward becoming a carbon neutral church, and through our actions, raise hopeful awareness of how the congregation can participate and actually effect change. The team in 2021 consisted of four volunteers from the congregation (Ada Uche, Esther Scherpenisse, Fulco Jongsma and Katie Hanford). The team meets once a month to discuss progress and decide on actions. The Green Team has four key areas of focus: Church (properties), Congregation (people), Wider community (public) and Diocese in Europe.

In 2021 the team focused its actions mainly on awareness within the St. James congregation. During the period of Creationtide (September) the team created video clips on meatless Monday, switching to green energy, and using reusable mugs instead of disposable ones. The videos were broadcast during the online and in-person services, and online so far have collected around 70 views. During Advent (November/December), the team created a 'green advent calendar' which provided subscribers with daily tips in their inbox on how to lead an 'eco friendly' life. The calendar collected around 20 subscribers.

Projects that were started in 2021 but are ongoing in 2022 are:

- The team is looking into ways to fit the church properties with solar panels (Chopinlaan and Ambachtspad).
- The team is setting up an official environmental policy for St. James Voorschoten, to be ratified by the Church Council in Q1, 2022.
- The team would like to get St. James Voorschoten an eco certificate through the A Rocha initiative.

People interested in joining the Green Team can contact the St. James office at office@stjames.nl.

Mission Partner Support Team (Fredrik Knoeff)

This year Phil Gottschalk moved back to the USA and he passed on the leadership of the Mission Partner Support team to Fredrik Knoeff. We are grateful for Phil's work and time. Current members are Vera Atlas, Rina van Rijn, Karen Gallagher, Fulco Jongsma, Fredrik Knoeff and Ruan Crew.

The ministry involves support of our mission partners through correspondence, advocacy and encouragement. We meet at the beginning of each calendar year to consider which mission partners we will support. We also meet during the year to discuss new developments.

Our regular, ongoing Mission Partners are:

- Phil and Linda Gottschalk – Living in US. Moving to Zaporozhye Bible Seminary in 2022 in Ukraine
- Tim and Nicky Sandell – International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, Volos, Greece;
- Rahman & Nelleke Yakubu – Tyndale Theological Seminary, Badhoevedorp, The Netherlands;
- Dr. Hans and Mary van der Corput – Medical ministry, Nigeria;
- Trich and Derek Dodds (retired; being scaled back)

Those supported on a yearly basis:

- Intercontinental Church Society (our “patron”, the agency by which St James was started, the church-planting arm of the Diocese of Europe)
- Schiphol Airport Chaplaincy (ministry to travellers in distress)
- Dr. Betty Sari working on International Students Ministry in The Hague and Breda through IFES
- Open Doors serving persecuted Christians around the world by providing vital support, delivering resources, and providing training.

Monthly Homegroup (Gea Hakker)

The Monthly homegroup meets once a month, usually on the second Monday of the month. We are currently a group of 8 people, studying the Bible together, supporting each other in prayer and enjoying fellowship. Since the beginning of the pandemic we meet online. We try to alternate between a theme and a Bible book. Last year the theme was ‘Heaven’, after which we studied 1 John. Currently we are studying the ‘Apostles’ Creed’. After nearly 15 years of hosting this homegroup, Gea has handed it over to Simon Brooks, an excellent successor!

If you feel you cannot make a commitment of going to a home group every week, but would like to be part of one, you’re warmly invited to join us. Please contact Simon Brooks for further details.

Newcomers’ Lunches (Lisette Crew)

With the Covid restrictions this year we have not been able to continue the tradition of welcoming new members of our congregation at our home. Instead, we managed a few lunches after the service in the Kruispunt Church or in the park, so that we could ensure ‘social distancing’.

It's always an informal time of food and fellowship and it has been good to get to know quite a few new people who have joined our congregation, either by visiting a church service or by joining our online services. 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 many of the 'Newcomers' have now made St. James their spiritual home and become valued church family members.

Online Prayer and Study Groups (Ruan Crew)

Throughout the year we have maintained a regular pattern of weekday prayer using Zoom: Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings, and Tuesday and Thursday evenings. These have mostly been led by Deborah, Karen, Matt or me, and they attract a steady group of up to 10 people at a time.

Fulco, Matthew and I have continued working together to run a bi-weekly online study group. We completed our series in Romans last year, and have done a new course on the Fruit of the Spirit this year. Lent will see us changing tack, with a weekly group studying the Archbishop's Lent book Embracing Justice. Despite having moved back to England last summer Karen has continued to run an online daytime study group, taking place every two weeks on Wednesday afternoons.

Pastoral Care (Ruan Crew)

Pastoral care in our church has a loose but intentional structure. Much of what takes place is informal and flows naturally out of the web of relationships that exist within the congregation. However a small group of us meets from time to time to make sure no one is slipping between the cracks, and to consider areas of good practice such as confidentiality, boundaries and safeguarding. There is now a pastoral care policy in place to help us as we do this.

Prayer Chain (Lisette Crew)

The prayer chain is a group of individuals in our church who pray faithfully for confidential items that anybody can submit by mailing it to Lisette Crew at this email address:

prayer@stjames.nl

This year we have had the privilege of praying for many people in and outside our church family.