

# Contact

A magazine for our community

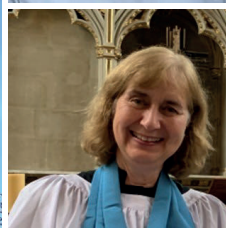


St James' Church, Exeter - Autumn 2025





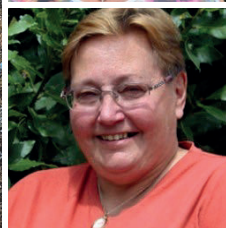
Fr Henry Pryse  
Rector



Joan Ridgway  
Licensed  
Lay Minister



Rachel Martindill  
Churchwarden &  
Safeguarding  
Representative



Sue Pinn  
Churchwarden



Caroline Adams  
Safeguarding  
Representative

## Parish Office

Mount Pleasant Road, Exeter. EX4 7AH.  
01392 420407. [office@stjamesexeter.org](mailto:office@stjamesexeter.org)  
[www.stjamesexeter.org](http://www.stjamesexeter.org)

*Please contact us here for baptisms, weddings, hall bookings and any other Church-related matters.*

## Regular Services

Sunday	8.00 am	Holy Communion (said)
	<b>10.00 am</b>	<b>Parish Eucharist</b>
	6.00 pm	Evening Prayer with Benediction (1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday)
	6.00 pm	Evening Worship (3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday)

Wednesday 12.00 noon Holy Communion

Daily 8.30 am Morning Prayer

Online: Monday and Wednesday

In the church: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

At [www.stjamesexeter.org/services/web-services-and-reflections](http://www.stjamesexeter.org/services/web-services-and-reflections) you can find the Parish Eucharist on Sundays available to watch live or later.



Sharing God's love through worship, fellowship and service

## From the Rectory

Recently I had coffee with a fellow cyclist at the quay; he cycles everywhere and does not own a car. He was off to Budleigh for a swim in the sea and he gave me tips on the best bit of beach to swim from. I had my customary swim in July, around St James' Day, towards Sandy Bay. The trouble was that the tide was coming in and I attempted to exit the sea over submerged rocks, which had been visible when I went in. A couple of falls and scrapes later, I got away from those 'treacherous' rocks and walked out on smooth sand. The landscape/seascape had changed so quickly, but at least I got back to Orcombe Point before the tide cut me off.

This experience helped me to reflect on the many changes in the 'parish-scape' since my licensing as Rector of St James in 2005. Like the sea, there is a relentlessness and faithfulness in parish life – an ebb and flow, if you like. But there is also an unpredictability. We have lost some wonderful people in the last twenty years, but there is renewal and energy, just as there is in the tides and the ocean. In the parish, that can come in the form of new Church members with different giftings and interests and passions.

And naturally enough some folks become part of us just for a season. I was glad we had a good turnout on St James' Day this year, especially as Bishop Mike was taking the service – and there was a lovely spread in the



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hall after the service, as well as a superb cake for my twentieth anniversary. A day or so later, Joan (our Licensed Lay Minister) was re-licensed at Crediton Parish Church by Bishop Moira, the new Bishop of Crediton. We are very fortunate to enjoy Joan's ongoing ministry at St James'.

September is here, when the sea temperature can be at its best, so there are more swims to come, in both Dorset and Devon for me. The start of another academic year beckons, and we especially remember our ordinand, Charlotte, who is now beginning her three years of theological training. We keep her and Mike in our prayers as this new chapter in their lives unfolds.

Harvest celebrations will precede our time of remembering in the church year (All Saints' Day, All Souls' Day and Remembrance Sunday). Then it is not long until Advent, and we all know what comes next...

Happy autumn days to all!



Fr Henry





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## Puzzle Page

				2	9	3	5	6
				5				
5				4			8	
		7			2	8		3
		3	7		5	6		
1		2	9			7		
	4			6				1
				7				
2	6	1	3	9				

## Sudoku: Medium

Fill in the blanks, so that each row, each column, and each of the nine 3x3 grids contains the numbers 1 to 9.

L	A	E	S	E	A	H	O	S	A	R	C
O	C	R	A	D	O	L	P	H	I	N	R
B	R	U	P	O	I	S	E	A	R	N	E
S	O	C	T	O	P	U	S	R	Q	U	S
T	P	U	R	T	L	E	Q	N	U	T	R
S	L	T	E	A	L	T	U	S	A	A	O
W	O	T	P	T	B	E	U	R	Y	T	H
A	B	A	R	K	B	A	F	N	A	R	A
R	S	U	A	R	S	I	R	I	A	U	E
P	T	N	W	A	S	H	A	K	S	T	S
S	E	A	N	H	S	I	E	L	A	H	W
C	R	A	E	S	I	O	P	R	O	P	E

## Word Search

Find these marine creatures in the grid.

Crab

Porpoise

Squid

Cuttlefish

Prawn

Starfish

Dolphin

Ray

Tuna

Lobster

Seahorse

Turtle

Octopus

Seal

Whale

Orca

Shark

Solutions on page 15



We have a birthday coming up. Happy first birthday to our Squirrels! Since the section opened last September, these 4- and 5-year-olds have achieved so much and made us very proud. Most of the original Squirrels who joined in 2024 have now moved on either to our Beaver section or to a Beaver section in another group. Whichever they have chosen, it's pleasing that they started their Scouting adventure at St James'. The same can be said for all our children who are new to Scouting, whether age 4 or 14.

Massive thanks and congratulations to Niki, Debs and Juan for their hard graft on what has certainly been the biggest challenge the group has seen in recent times. They have struck up friendships with the residents of the Old Rectory care home; during the two visits so far, games were played and stories read with the residents. This lovely initiative is also massively appreciated by the care home staff.

Our newly formed Air Explorer section for those aged 14 to 18 is also up and running. It has just started its second full term. For the future in this section and in the Air Scouts, we hope to have an opportunity finally to gain some flight experience. This could be possible through the recent addition of new trustees on our board, who may have contacts and knowledge to enable us to achieve this goal.

Last term, all our sections were busy, as usual. Camping at Huish woods near Taunton and Monopoly Lifesized around the streets of Exeter gave the Cubs plenty of fun. The Beavers learnt about the world around them and discovered some previously unfamiliar religions and festivals. Both of these sections

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achieved a mountain of badges, all based around learning new skills and taking part in challenges. Meanwhile, our Air Scouts represented the Scout Association at Exeter's Armed Forces Day celebrations in the city centre, rubbing shoulders with serving military personnel and Army Cadets. This is one of our main highlights of the year for our group. Our summer fun ended with two days run by Devon Scouts at Bicton College. The activities here included archery, climbing, shooting, tomahawk-throwing, frisbee golf, zorbing, glass-engraving, woggle-making, badge-making, first aid, crafts, orienteering and more – even for the adult volunteers.

This month's big event is a visit to the Fleet Air Arm Museum at RNAS Yeovilton. With nearly 100 children and adult volunteers on the trip, it could be a very busy day.

As always, to find out more about any of our sections or to enquire about our waiting lists, please e-mail [info@exeterairscouts.org.uk](mailto:info@exeterairscouts.org.uk).

Brad Warwick, Group Lead Volunteer

## Do You Remember Learning to Read?

My bet is that, if you took to reading easily, you will have no memory of the process. If it was a struggle, you will remember every painful step along the way. That's what I learned from the volunteers I recruited and trained to go into local primary schools and help children who were finding reading difficult. For some, their motivation was to share their love of literature and the pleasure that reading can bring, and for others it was to try and prevent the feelings of failure and even shame they had experienced as children.

One of my volunteers was a policeman who worked in an area of Banbury rumoured to be responsible for most of the crime in Oxfordshire. He gave a talk to the rest of the volunteers, which has stayed with me; he talked about the well-established link between being excluded from school and becoming involved in crime. He emphasised the importance of helping children to read and enjoy being in school, and how that contributed to breaking cycles of deprivation and low expectations.

What he said made such a powerful impression on me that I started volunteering for Shannon Trust, a charity which works in every prison in England and Wales. I trained prisoners to help other prisoners improve their reading. They use a very structured reading scheme, so there's no teaching involved, just encouragement and persistence.

When I retired, I decided to volunteer in a primary school. We live around the corner from Newtown Primary School, so I wrote, and eventually they let me in! I discovered that primary school children and prisoners alike rely on phonics (concentrating on the individual sounds that make up a word) to begin to read. Children are taught carefully and systematically. I was listening to one little girl read, and we talked about the difference an 'e' on the end of a word makes to its sound. 'Oh, yes,' my six-year-old companion said, airily, 'that's a split digraph.' I humbly confessed that I hadn't learnt anything like

that when I was at school. In my day, it was a 'magic e.'

English, as it is derived from so many languages, often defies the logic of phonics and we have to rely on many other skills to decode what we are reading. To illustrate the point, here is a poem I used to give to my volunteers, to illustrate all the difficulties our language can pose.

I take it you already know  
Of tough and bough and cough and dough?  
Others may stumble, but not you,  
On hiccough, thorough, laugh, and through,  
And cork and work, and card and ward,  
And font and front, and word and sword.  
Well done! And now if you wish, perhaps,  
To learn of less familiar traps,  
Beware of heard, a dreadful word  
That looks like beard and sounds like bird.  
And dead: it's said like bed, not bead –  
For goodness' sake don't call it deed!  
Watch out for meat and great and threat:  
They rhyme with suite and straight and debt.  
A moth is not a moth in mother,  
Nor both in bother, broth in brother.  
And here is not a match for there,  
Nor dear and fear for bear and pear.  
And then there's dose and rose and lose –  
Just look them up – and goose and choose,  
And do and go, then thwart and cart.  
Come, come, I've hardly made a start.  
A dreadful language? Man alive!  
I'd mastered it when I was five.

If you are thinking about volunteering in a school, I would urge you to go ahead. It's enjoyable, stimulating and thought-provoking. And nothing beats seeing hands shoot up when the teacher asks, 'Who would like to read with Hilary?'



Hilary Burr

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## Parish Profile: Brian Cousins

Parishioner Brian Cousins is a familiar face at St James'. The 79-year-old, who lives in Rosebarn Avenue, has returned to the choir where he started singing, along with his children, nearly 40 years ago. Brian has come to know generations of churchgoers at St James' and believes the Church is welcoming and involving. It has certainly involved him in most things, from committees to cooking lunches. His children also maintained their links with this Church.

Born in Essex, Brian came from a family that did not regularly attend church but was taken by kindly Sunday school teachers to the rather puritan parish church. During his time in Chelmsford he was recommended by the Diocese for ordination but his life took him in other directions.



He and his wife, Ann, chose a different way of caring: supporting children and their families. Brian had started a career in education when they married, and he continued in this sector from 1970 until 2000. The Education Authority in Devon was good to him, allowing him to keep national roles in curriculum development, exam boards and the

British Council. Devon also sprang surprises on him by sending him to events in several countries, including an extended commitment to developing an English language project for schools in Hungary. In addition, he was able to develop two charitable trusts. Brian's ongoing studies in languages, cultures and theology informed his second career as an international tour guide.

Fostering children was a constant part of family life. The unwavering devotion and faith of dear Ann and the support and patience of the couple's own children restored the lives of many young people.



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Brian says: 'I came to St James' originally as I had been active in Chelmsford Cathedral, where our two youngest children attended the Cathedral School. My children and I continued similarly in Exeter. St James' was nearer than the Cathedral, and the children's headteacher was a lay reader at St James', who became a friend of the family.' Brian, Ann, their children and their foster children have a long connection to the life of St James' Church.

Nowadays Brian is a wonderful asset to the dedicated team in the choir. He notes that, in St James' services and activities, there is plenty on offer for all ages, with Messy Church for the young, as well as social events and music, adding: 'A warm welcome awaits all who are interested in coming along to see for themselves. St James' is a friendly place, where I have known people from the early days of being involved, sharing activities and bringing up our families together. The Church has outstanding clergy and leaders, services that are both easy to follow and informative, and good music. The people are very friendly towards newcomers and pleased for them to discover what the Church community does.'



## St James' Brownies

Throughout 2025, the girls have been working hard to earn various 'skills builder' badges from the Girlguiding programme, including: Communicate, Feel Good, and Influence. Some of the other activities the Brownies have enjoyed were: celebrating Black History Month, learning about Brownie traditions, figuring out how to budget for a camping trip, making no-bake chocolate brownies, being taught some boxing moves, practising detective skills, and a teddy bears' picnic at the park. Visitors from the Deaf Academy, Barn Owl Trust and Cats Protection were all big hits with the Brownies – and leaders – as was an activity-filled trip to St Nicholas' Priory.

Brownies and Guides come together for a meeting each term. This year they also completed the Eggy Bread and Unicorn challenge badges, as well as enjoying a sunny evening exploring, playing games and toasting marshmallows at Caddihoe. In the summer, a group of Brownies from St James' joined in the Exeter Brownies' residential trip, where they participated in raft-building, climbing and team challenges.

Plans for the autumn term include: devising a challenge badge that we can sell to raise funds for our Brownie and Guide groups, an excursion to Girlguiding



Devon's county campsite for a day of fun with other Brownies from across Exeter, and having a go at some of the new interest badges.

Do you like the sound of what we get up to? Would you like to get involved, either as a young member or as a volunteer? Please get in touch! We would love to hear from you. For young people who wish to join Brownies (7 – 10) or Guides (10 – 14), register via [www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-a-child](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-a-child). To find out more about volunteering with Girlguiding and joining the fun, please go to [www.girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved/become-a-volunteer](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved/become-a-volunteer).

Jemma Davie, Barn Owl





No Time to Say Goodnight to Napoli  
The noise began early on Friday evening, around dinner time. Mostly it was car horns and occasionally fireworks, and there was still plenty of time before Napoli kicked off against Cagliari in the last match of the season. As the game progressed, the noises became louder and more frequent, especially after Napoli scored. Then, when the second goal went in and it became clear that the *Scudetto*, Italy's equivalent of the English Premiership title, was heading south for the second time in three years, the whole of Naples went mad. I couldn't see the actual fireworks from my apartment, but their bright flashes bounced off the block of flats across the road. Vuvuzelas and whistles added to the cacophony. Neapolitans everywhere, even in respectable Chiaia, came onto the streets in huge numbers to celebrate. The city's main square, Piazza del Plebiscito, was thronged with people of all ages well into the following morning. A seventy-something grandmother of my acquaintance admitted that she and her family had finally gone to bed around 5.30 am.

The following Monday, the team had its curtain-call, parading in triumph along the seaside promenade, which runs from Castel dell'Ovo westward to Mergellina. I joined the crowds streaming down Via San Pasquale to honour their team. They were male and female, young and old, many wearing their club's blue shirt or carrying its blue and white chequered flag, which also fluttered from the balconies of some of the expensive apartments overlooking the Bay of Naples.

It was an opportunity for this proud southern city, once the capital of a kingdom, to come together in celebration of its heroes, both living and departed. There were many fans in shirts bearing the names of Scott McTominay and Romelu Lukaku, who had scored the championship-winning goals on Friday. There were even more, including many too young to have seen the man in action, wearing the number 10 shirt of Diego Maradona, the Argentinian legend who led Napoli to the 'double' of *Scudetto* and *Coppa Italia* in 1986-7

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(the first time that a team from southern Italy had ever achieved this) and to a second *Scudetto* in 1989-90.

However, in the context of Italian history and contemporary politics this was never simply a celebration of sporting triumph. This victory allowed Neapolitans to thumb their collective nose at the cities and teams of the patronising North and to say to the country beyond Rome, 'Pay attention to us! We matter!' And so they do. Despite the faded grandeur of its Bourbon past, despite the poverty and unemployment which provide a breeding ground for organised crime, despite the instability of the earth on which the city is built (two perceptible earthquakes during my three months there) and the ever-present threat of the Campi Flegrei supervolcano, there is a real confidence and optimism about this great maritime city as it looks forward to hosting the America's Cup in 2027. *Forza Napoli?* You bet!

Tony Dickinson

## Charity Focus: FoodCycle Exeter

### *Providing tasty meals and a chance to meet people*



Every Tuesday evening at the Mint Methodist Church and every Thursday evening at Beacon Heath Church, you will find groups of volunteer cooks sporting fetching blue hairnets, engaged in activities like chopping vegetables for a curry or a chilli, stirring a huge pan of bubbling soup, or whisking up three dozen eggs to make a large dish of bread-and-butter pudding and custard. Within a couple of hours, a three-course meal is ready to serve.

FoodCycle is a national community dining charity that works to alleviate food poverty and to combat loneliness by offering weekly meals to everyone who would like to come along. Anyone is welcome as a guest – there's no need to book: just turn up on the day to enjoy a free meal!

Each week, volunteers collect surplus fruit and vegetables from local supermarkets, businesses and small shops which have promised to donate food that they are unable to sell but that is still fresh and usable.

At 4.00 pm, the cooking team volunteers turn up, look at the pile of food in the kitchen and plan a three-course, vegetarian menu to cook for the guests, who arrive at 6.30 pm. As a volunteer cook, you never know what you will be cooking until you arrive and look at the food on the table. Will it be a vast array of delicious fruit and vegetables, or will you be faced with 200 boxes of eggs, 50 avocados and

a dozen packets of Brazil nuts, as we were on one unusual week?

The hosting team arrives at 5.30 pm to set the tables and get ready to welcome and serve the guests with a cup of tea before they sit down to eat. As the washing up amasses in the kitchen, heroic pot-washers turn up to play their part in this hugely important and enjoyable project.

Would you or someone you know like to enjoy a free, freshly cooked meal? Or would you like to volunteer? There are plenty of opportunities and you don't need to sign up every week – just when you have the time.

To learn more about the project visit <https://foodcycle.org.uk/location/foodcycle-exeter-beacon-heath> and if you are interested in volunteering at FoodCycle visit <https://volunteer.foodcycle.org.uk>.

Jill Mather



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## A Lavender Lady You Will Need

- Acrylic paints or felt pens
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- Lavender seeds
- Cotton wool
- Dolly peg
- PVA glue
- Scissors
- Wool



## To Make the Lavender Lady

Make a container pouch with cotton wool. Insert the base of the dolly peg into the cotton wool pouch. Around the base of the peg, fill the pouch with lavender seeds.

Cut the fabric into two 16-cm squares. Place one square over the other at 45°, so that the squares collectively form an 8-point star. Place the cotton wool pouch in the centre of the star. Gather up the fabric tightly and use wool to secure it under the head of the peg. To form a cloak, fold the excess fabric back towards the base.

Use paint or felt pens to create a face on the head of the peg. For hair, glue wool to the top.

Tie a strand of wool around the waist. This can be used to suspend the figure as a mobile. Alternatively, arrange the base so that the lavender lady will stand up.

**Next issue copy deadline:**  
Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> October

Anne Killingback



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## Friends of Mount Pleasant Health Centre

So far this year, we have held three fundraising events and each has been quite profitable. The first, a quiz evening in March, was a new venture; another is planned for later in the year. At our Cake Sale in April we almost sold out of cakes and other goodies. Our plant sale in May, held in the open, as usual, was also very well supported.

As ever, many thanks must go to our volunteers, without whom none of this would be possible. Thank you also to everyone who supports our activities. Another fundraising venture will be advertised in the near future.

Book and bric-à-brac sales also contribute a good financial income for the Friends of Mount Pleasant Health Centre. On that note, you will be pleased to hear that our corner in the waiting room is being updated, to make it a more inviting place where you can search for books, jigsaws and interesting pieces of bric-à-brac.

Anyone who comes to Mount Pleasant Health Centre will have also noticed a change in the upholstery of the waiting room seating.

This attractive alteration has been made possible with funds raised by the Friends and by the generosity of everyone who supports us. Thank you! Your donations of clean books and bric-à-brac in good condition are always very welcome.

To find out more about the Friends of Mount Pleasant Health Centre, please visit [www.mountpleasanthealthcentre.co.uk](http://www.mountpleasanthealthcentre.co.uk). Should you wish to join us, our Co-ordinator, Beverley Todd, would love to hear from you on 01392 499291.



Nesta Scales



## Dates Ahead

### September

Wed 10 <sup>th</sup>	12.15 pm	Friends Who Lunch
Fri 19 <sup>th</sup>	2.00 pm	Craft group
Sat 20 <sup>th</sup>	7.00 pm	Harvest supper
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup>	10.00 am	Harvest Thanksgiving Parish Eucharist

Tue 23 <sup>rd</sup>	7.30 pm	PCC meets
Fri 26 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 am	Coffee morning

### October

Wed 1 <sup>st</sup>	3.30 pm	Messy Church
Thu 2 <sup>nd</sup>	7.30 pm	Fr Brian's house group
Fri 3 <sup>rd</sup>	2.00 pm	Craft group
Sun 5 <sup>th</sup>	4.00 pm	Celebrate Together
Mon 6 <sup>th</sup>	2.30 pm	Joan's house group
Wed 15 <sup>th</sup>	12.15 pm	Friends Who Lunch
Thu 16 <sup>th</sup>	7.00 pm	Deanery Synod at Trinity School
Fri 17 <sup>th</sup>	2.00 pm	Craft group
Sun 19 <sup>th</sup>	6.00 pm	Wholeness & Healing service
Fri 31 <sup>st</sup>	10.30 am	Coffee morning

### November

Sun 2 <sup>nd</sup>	4.00 pm	All Souls' service
Mon 3 <sup>rd</sup>	2.30 pm	Joan's house group
Wed 5 <sup>th</sup>	3.30 pm	Messy Church
Thu 6 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	Fr Brian's house group
Fri 7 <sup>th</sup>	2.00 pm	Craft group
Sun 9 <sup>th</sup>	9.45 am	Remembrance Sunday Parish Eucharist
Wed 12 <sup>th</sup>	12.15 pm	Friends Who Lunch
Fri 21 <sup>st</sup>	2.00 pm	Craft group
Fri 28 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 am	Coffee morning
Sat 29 <sup>th</sup>	2.00 pm	Christmas bazaar

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## Puzzle Solutions

### Sudoku

8	7	4	1	2	9	3	5	6
3	1	6	8	5	7	4	2	9
5	2	9	6	4	3	1	8	7
6	5	7	4	1	2	8	9	3
4	9	3	7	8	5	6	1	2
1	8	2	9	3	6	7	4	5
7	4	5	2	6	8	9	3	1
9	3	8	5	7	1	2	6	4
2	6	1	3	9	4	5	7	8

### Word Search

L	A	E	S	E	A	H	O	S	A	R	C
O	C	R	A	D	O	L	P	H	I	N	R
B	R	N	P	O	I	S	E	A	R	N	E
S	O	C	T	O	P	U	S	R	Q	U	S
T	P	U	R	T	L	E	Q	N	U	T	R
S	L	T	E	A	L	T	U	S	A	A	O
W	O	T	T	B	E	U	R	Y	T	H	
A	B	A	R	K	B	A	F	N	A	R	A
R	S	U	A	R	S	I	R	I	A	U	E
P	T	N	W	A	S	H	A	K	S	T	S
S	E	A	N	H	S	I	E	L	A	H	W
C	R	A	E	S	I	O	P	R	O	P	E

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[st.katherinespriory@gmail.com](mailto:st.katherinespriory@gmail.com)

