

St James Parish Church Haslingden

APCM

26th April 2026

The Parish of St James, Haslingden

The Annual Meetings

Sunday 26th April 2026 12 noon

Annual Meeting of Parishioners

1. Election of Churchwardens (*nominations to be received before the meeting begins*)

Annual Parochial Church Meeting (*please sign the attendance sheet*)

1. Apologies

2. Minutes of the last ACPM – Sunday 18th May 2025

These minutes are presented in Appendix I to this report.

3. Reports on Parochial Church Council & Parish Activities

(Please note that all the reports are submitted in booklet form and will not be presented individually)

a) Electoral Roll

There has been no change since last year, with 72 people on the electoral roll.

b) Churchwardens

One of the major events of 2025 was the appointment of Father Simon Lloyd as the vicar of St James' Church Haslingden and St Thomas' Church, Musbury (not quite the full title!). Father Simon was inducted into the post by Rt Rev. Dr Joe Kennedy, the Bishop of Burnley, on the 3rd of April 2025 at St Thomas' Church and a lovely celebration took place.

The Church Wardens have worked with Father Simon to aid development of his vision for the future of the church, acting as his "critical friend", supporting his ministry and liaising with the congregation to ensure smooth operational leadership.

In the background, we have fulfilled our legal and official duties of submitting reports to the diocese, to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and to outside agencies such as insurance

companies. Fabric and property management continues to be a priority as we work to maintain a high standard of repair of the church building and its contents. This is further supported by you in your planned giving to the Church. We thank you for this and your continued support.

In line with this, health and safety remain an integral part of our activities, and we endeavour to ensure a safe and comfortable environment in Church, developing risk assessments and promoting our Safeguarding policy.

Many events have taken place during the year, including our Extravaganza in Spring and in the Autumn of 2025, a Lancashire Evening and a Christmas band concert, to name a few. These events are part of our fundraising strategy. The events supported by the congregation and the community, help us to pay our Parish Share (monies paid to the Diocese) and maintain our beautiful building.

August brought a very sad day when we held the funeral of our much-loved Shirley Adams. Shirley was a vibrant, intelligent, knowledgeable member of our Church family. She served as the Secretary to the PCC but was much more, as she imparted the experiences of her extraordinary life, enriching all activities with her stories and music. She is truly missed!

Father Simon has developed his ministry, bringing new elements to Church services and in the vision to develop the inclusion of more children in worship. He has led the development of a new children's Sunday School and the activities within this. This occurred as our longstanding Sunday School Teachers (50 years' service!), decided it was time to retire. We thank Margaret Heald and Anne Hilton for their love, service and dedication.

Father Simon has led us into the "Leading you Church into Growth (LYCIG) renewal programme. Through prayer, presence, proclamation and persuasion, supported by the Diocese, we will work together to grow our Church. Focus and understanding of this will become apparent as the months progress. However, the aim is to proclaim our faith, share our faith and grow in numbers, just as Jesus would want us to do.

The wardens would like to take this opportunity to thank Father Simon for his continued enthusiasm and dedication; for being an example to us in prayer and service in our Christian life. Long may he continue.

Thank you to everyone who helps in any way to the life of this Church. Without you, the Church would not survive. We hope that you continue to help and support us to grow in faith and numbers.

Miriam on behalf of the Church Wardens

c) Treasurer

The Treasurer's report will be presented in Appendix 2 to this report.

d) Secretary

A hugely sad event in 2025 was the passing of our much-loved Secretary, Shirley Adams. The PCC continued to meet with Fr Simon temporarily taking over secretarial duties. We followed the pattern of agendas previously set by Shirley and hope that she would approve of how we carried on with her format and organization. Towards the end of the year Terri Wadden offered her services as Secretary and with grateful thanks we look forward to working with her in 2026.

Fr Simon
April 2026

e) Deanery Synod

Accrington Deanery Synod met three times during 2025.

The first meeting was held in January at All Saints, Clayton le Moors which unfortunately I was unable to attend. It was led by Bishop Joe and Carolyn Barton (a representative from the Diocese Special Vision Team) looking at the impact of Vision 2026 and the future launch of Vision 2033 later this year.

The Deanery Synod AGM was held on 29 May 2025 at St Andrew's, Accrington following the Deanery Ascension Day Service. All the officers were re-elected for coming year and no reports were received on the night.

The third meeting was held on 11th September at St. Peter's Laneside, Haslingden. This was an open meeting where a presentation was given on the 2026 Diocesan Centenary Mission Weekend on 11th- 13th September 2026. Although there will be various Diocese led events throughout the year, the Bishops would like all parishes to hold events during the Mission Weekend focusing on outreach. It is hoped that the churches of Haslingden & Helmshore will be able to hold a joint event as well as others events in the individual churches.

M Charnley

f) **Fabric**

If I can start with a positive comment there has been no major issues with the building this year in terms of bricks and mortar.

It has been primarily a year of frustration attempting to get quotes for the projects we are attempting to complete.

The next major project highlighted in the quinquennial is the redecoration of the West Wall and the Stairs down to the entrance porch which has a lot of unsightly peeling paint. This requires a specialist decorating company and finally in August 2025 we got a Company(Heritage Property Repairs) to do a site visit. We actually received the quote in February 2026 to redecorate the whole interior of the Church in stages. This will be discussed at the next PCC meeting with a view to starting the work as soon as possible.

The other issue was an infestation of Pigeons in our roof space. Again someone coming to visit (October 2025) was then followed by a long period of chasing and another site visit which eventually meant the work was completed in March 2026 by Rentokil.

The maintenance of the Churchyard continues to be a problem with Rossendale Council still being unreliable or unwilling to cut the grass. The gardener from last year quoted again however the cost was prohibitive. Fortunately Eileen Read's Son has taken on the task at much more reasonable cost. Thank you to him for this.

In conclusion the work achieved this year has been less than we would like however we have the quotes in place to continue with in 2026.

All contributions to this work gratefully received!

Gary Taylor April 2026

g) **Vision 2026**

Making disciples, Being Witness, Growing Leaders, Inspiring children & young people

Making Disciples.

The emphasis on preaching during 2025 was whether being a follower of Jesus made any difference to how we live. To deepen our commitment as disciples of Jesus a number of well attended discipleship courses were run throughout the year, each provoking good theological discussion and debate. We continue to offer a welcome to new attenders at church, holding out the hope of Jesus to them. Our messy Church events, food ministry and the presence and engagement of clergy in the parish are all intended to lay the groundwork for new disciples to come to Jesus.

Being Witnesses

As we deepen our discipleship and learn to order our lives in accordance with the teachings of Jesus then we become witnesses to the love he holds for us and the people around us. One major aspect to our witness involves engagement with our local schools. We continue to have good relationships with both our church schools, St James, Haslingden and St John Stonefold. We have a presence on both Governing bodies through our supportive Foundation Governors. Rev Judith continues to be the main link for worship at St James, and Fr Simon is now installed as a Governor there following his installation in April 2025. Fr Simon is the main link for worship at St John Stonefold and is present at least once each week and presides over termly Eucharistic services.

We witness also through our food ministry.

This continues to form a significant part of our ministry and outreach, jointly with St Thomas'. The wider community benefits from receiving gifts of food where it is badly needed and from being able to engage socially through the provision and sharing of food. The wider community also sees the church responding to the call from our Saviour to care for the vulnerable and needy. Faith in action!

This ministry is able to happen only through the many volunteers who continue to help prepare and serve at our scheduled events. Similarly, gifts of money, food and toiletries from members of the church community, including children from our schools, has meant we have been able to continue supporting the most vulnerable in our parishes.

During 2025 our food ministry included:

- St James' Eat & Meet Tuesday Lunch
- Thursday Friends & Food at St Thomas' Hall
- Refectory Café at St Thomas'
- Food deliveries to those needing urgent help across the whole Haslingden and Helmshore area and, on occasion, beyond
- Offering free food events, including Messy Church
- Continuing to liaise with Raft and the Haslingden Community Link
- Providing volunteers for the Halo project.

Beyond providing food, we have also been able to support individuals and families with top-ups on energy, provided basic kitchen equipment and signposted people to other service and agencies to support and help them.

In 2025, our outreach into the local community provided food assistance to over 30 individuals and families. Our help was called upon over a hundred and fifty times.

Growing Leaders

New leaders were perhaps a little sparse in 2025 but our lay leadership remain committed and growing disciples of Jesus, deepening faith and being examples of the Christian faith to all who come in contact with the church.

Children and Young People

2025 enabled us to honour the work of our Sunday school leaders, Margaret and Anne, and the 50 year long commitment to children in this parish. Sadly they decided that 2025 was the year to stand down but their contribution will be appreciated and fondly remembered for many a year. A plaque in their honour has been placed in the Hall next to the area where they so faithfully lead Sunday School for so long.

New arrangements in the form of a Children's Ministry Group were made and their report follows.

St James Children's Ministry

In the spring of 2025, our two long standing Sunday School teachers, Margaret Heald and Anne Hilton, retired from their roles. The congregation of St James thanked them for their many years of dedicated service. A new working party was formed who met regularly throughout the year to discuss the development of Children's Ministry at St James. The same team of volunteers also began leading our Sunday group on a rota basis.

From Summer 2025, children attending St James on a Sunday morning were encouraged to worship with their families until the end of the Gospel reading and then gather at the back of Church to explore the passage at an appropriate level. There were 8 children who attended our Sunday group on at least a semi-regular basis, and several more who attended less frequently. The children and their families voted to name the group 'St James Sunday Stars'. At Christmas, the children's commitment to Sunday worship was acknowledged when they received a book chosen to encourage their spiritual development.

In addition to our Sunday group, several 'Messy Church' events were planned throughout the year. The venue alternated between St James and St Thomas. Themes included Lent, Remembrance Sunday and Christingle. Attendance at these events varied but were always well received by those in attendance.

Emily Westlake on behalf of the Children's Ministry Group

As can be seen, we continue to do our best to commit to the values of Vision 2026 and look forward to the replacement vision to follow.

Fr Simon

(3h MU on separate sheet)

4. Safeguarding

Safeguarding Report APCCM 26 April 2026

St. James' have a Parish Safeguarding Team of 3 (PST). Following the death of PSO Shirley Adams in summer 2025 a vacancy was published on the weekly Notice sheet and John Macholc has joined the Team, alongside Parish Safeguarding Officer Suzanne Dixon and supported by the incumbent Fr. Simon Lloyd. John now undertakes a period of induction and training on using the Diocesan Hub and Dashboard as well as a pattern of quarterly team meetings.

In compliance with safeguarding guidelines the PCC have received written (or verbal) reports at each meeting; main noticeboards and websites (including A Church Near You national CofE website) contain all PCC adopted all Policies, Statements and Procedures for reporting Safeguarding concerns.

No incidents have been reported for the 2025 period.

The Team's on-going challenge is ensuring Church Officers and volunteers have completed DBS checks and related Training in line with safeguarding guidelines.

Suzanne Dixon PSO

5. Vicar's Report

We began 2025 officially with the Parish "in vacancy" although I was in place as 'Curate in Charge'. Following an appointments process to fill the vacancy I was installed as Vicar of St Thomas' and also of St James Haslingden with the parishes being held in plurality.

It was with great joy and a feeling of privilege that I was installed on 3rd April 2025.

In 2024 I set out the four areas in which I believe we need to be strong in order to be a successful parish. These areas are Worship of Jesus, Discipleship, Fellowship and Mission. We remain strong in those areas.

Worship

We have maintained our worship pattern, despite the reduction in clergy numbers that came with Fr David's departure in 2024 and the reduced involvement of Revs Judith and David, and we have maintained congregation numbers. Our main diet is Eucharistic services from Common Worship, both said and sung. Christmas Carol and Crib services continue to be well attended and an opportunity to connect with people from the Parish who might not usually attend church.

During the year we set up our Children's Ministry Group in order to find ways in which we can attract children and families to church. We have amended our Sunday School procedures and there have been some encouraging signs of growth. The use of the Hall by local Brownie and Guide troops has offered us an opportunity to reach out to more young people.

Our public presence as ambassadors for Jesus was an important part of our parish life during the year and must continue to be.

Discipleship

There has been a renewed focus on discipleship during the year. For our parish to flourish, the main focus for our worshipping community must be Jesus and our relationship with him. The discipleship courses held jointly with St. Thomas' and offered over the year, have been very well attended and led to in depth, lively and fruitful discussion on many and varied aspects of our faith, drawing us deeper into faith in the process. The challenge for us is to remain deeply focussed on our own discipleship so that we live our lives for Jesus and reflect his glory in the world around us. We ran two courses during the year based on popular films. In Advent the film was "Chocolat" and in Advent "Miracle on 34th Street". Each course was well attended and produced lively and in-depth theological discussion.

Fellowship

Parish life is made stronger when we fellowship together. Our eat and Meet events is always well attended and received and social events such as our Lancashire Night went down a storm.

Mission

How we reach out with the good news of Jesus to the world around us is a vital part of parish life. If our lives are transformed by the knowledge of the love that Jesus holds for us, then we must surely feel the need to share that with others.

In order to boost our efforts we joined the Diocesan Renewal Programme during the year. This will continue to run into 2026. As part of the programme, Fr Simon and Linden Charnley (along with a representative from St Thomas) attended the LyCiG conference (Leading Your Church into Growth) and the principles covered in that course have since begun to be shared at PCC and put into practice.

We have a dedicated band of people who welcome those who attend church and help make them feel at home.

We have continued our association with Inclusive church to help refine our welcome to all who come to us seeking Jesus. Our close involvement in our schools and Messy Church events is referred to elsewhere in this report.

We continue to have a presence on the home communion rota run from St Peter's providing holy communion to local care and nursing homes, the majority of which lie within St Peter's parish boundary.

Generous gifts of food and money have enabled Fr Simon to assist others who were struggling to feed themselves and their families

All of these things, which are driven by our faith in Jesus Christ, help to make Christ known in the world within our sphere of influence and help to show that our faith makes a difference to us and brings meaning.

Other events during the year fall into a number of the above categories. I think of the walking pilgrimage to Blackburn Cathedral. These were times of worship, discipleship, fellowship and mission held jointly with our friends at St James' church.

Challenges during 2025

We continue to run with only one stipendiary clergy person whilst maintaining the level of service as in previous years. During the year Rev Judith retired although she continues to assist with the provision of services from time to time. Revd David Allsop has also continued to provide invaluable cover despite his retirement. I am hugely grateful to Judith and David and also to all of you for the support that I have received throughout my time here, but particularly during this period where support from clergy has reduced.

Finances generally are under pressure and although we meet our parish share, we need the use of our reserves. Stewardship is an issue to be addressed and a Stewardship campaign is anticipated for 2026.

There have been sadnesses during the year with the loss of our much loved and depended upon PCC Secretary Shirley Adams. Her loss is keenly felt.

Parish life is maintained, not by clergy, but by the hardcore of volunteers who, as ever, have worked tirelessly over the last year. The churchwarden team of, Miriam, Gary, Kaye and Bryn, supported by the PCC, and many others, have given much of themselves in enthusiasm, ideas, encouragement and, it must be said, hard work. I am so very grateful to the Wardens in particular and give thanks for them.

May I offer my heartfelt thanks to everybody who gives so much to the life of the church and for the support offered to me as I have begun life as your incumbent, having joined you in April 2023, become your Curate in Charge in April 2024 and then your Incumbent in April 2025! I could not do my job without your help and support. Much of what is done often goes unnoticed and possibly unthanked, but please know that I am grateful beyond words.

I repeat words from Psalm 27 used in last year's report, "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain". For our future to be one where the church thrives we must put our trust in Jesus and we must renew our prayerful efforts as nothing of any lasting worth is achieved without prayer.

The last year has confirmed that there is much to be hopeful and thankful for in the life of faith of this parish. As we look to the future we place it into the hands of the Lord and trust that he "builds this house" with a life of vibrant and sincere worship, meaningful discipleship bringing us closer to God in Jesus, good fellowship holding us together and fruitful mission to all ages swelling the numbers of those who claim Jesus as Lord.

With my love and prayers: Fr Simon

6. Elections

- a) PCC – three *vacancies*

7. Appointment of Independent Examiner

8. Any Other Business

9. Closing Prayer & The Grace

N.B. The Secretary and Treasurer will be appointed at the first meeting of the new PCC. Welcomers will also be appointed at the same meeting.

Appendix I

Minutes of APCM held 18th May 2025

Appendix 2

Treasurer's Report