

The Benefice of St. James with St. Michael and St. Augustine Beckenham



BENEFICE NEWS

JULY 2025

**The Benefice of St James with
St Michael and St Augustine Beckenham**
DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER
and a member of the Richborough Family



THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST JAMES

St James's Ave, Elmers End, Beckenham

 [StJamesElmersEnd](https://www.facebook.com/StJamesElmersEnd)

SUNDAY WORSHIP

9.15am
Sung Parish Mass
followed by refreshments

WEEKDAY WORSHIP

Tuesday- 7.00pm
Thursday -10.30am
followed by refreshments
Saturday - 9.30am

Confessions by appointment or after Mass on Saturday

**THE PARISH CHURCH OF
ST MICHAEL WITH ST AUGUSTINE**

Ravenscroft Road, Beckenham

 [stmichaelbeckenham](https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelbeckenham)



SUNDAY WORSHIP

11.00am
Sung Parish Mass
followed by refreshments

WEEKDAY WORSHIP

Wednesday- 10.00am
Friday - 7.00pm

Confessions by appointment or after Mass on Friday

For Solemnities and Major Feast Day see The Benefice Diary on page 8

www.stjamesandstmichael.org.uk

From the Vicarage



Dear Friends,

This month we look forward to celebrating one of our patronal festivals. On 27th July at 5.00pm we are keeping the Feast of St James with a Sung Mass. This is one of the key moments in our parish year. St James was among the first disciples called by Jesus. He left behind everything—his work, family, and security—to follow Christ. His boldness and readiness to act remind us of the cost and joy of discipleship.

It's easy to admire the saints from a distance, but St James challenges us to live out our faith today with the same courage. He reminds us that the Christian life is not about comfort but about walking with Christ, even when the road is hard.

We're delighted that Fr Andrew Davis will be joining us as our preacher for this special occasion. Many of you will know him from his past ministry as a curate at St James's, and we're looking forward to his words as we mark our patron's day together.

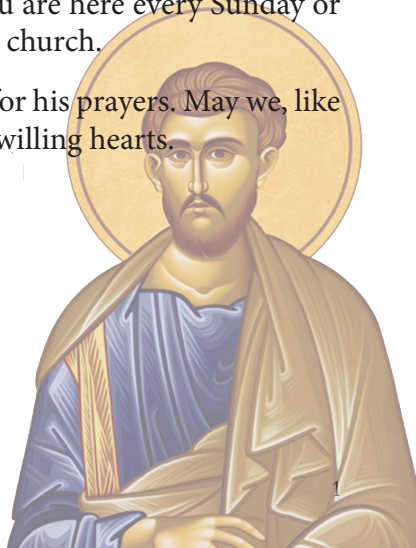
July also marks the heart of summer. Many will be taking time for rest, holidays, or time with family. I pray that this season offers space for renewal, prayer, and deeper trust in God's presence. As the earth rests and grows, so we too can make time for stillness and quiet growth in our hearts.

Our worship and service continue over the summer. Please keep in touch with what's happening in the parish. Whether you are here every Sunday or away for a time, you remain part of the life of our church.

Let's come together to celebrate St James and ask for his prayers. May we, like him, learn to follow Christ with open hands and willing hearts.

With my prayers and good wishes,

Fr Russell



Top Of The Pew Competition

It was a very comfortable evening in the hall at St. James's on 15 June for the first round of the competition. We were trying to remember when we last took part in this event, and it must be about 8 years ago. We welcomed our question master, Martin, from St. Joseph's Church, and the opposing team, Andrew, Ralph, John and Joan from Bromley Common Methodist Church, and the quiz started. Fr. Russell was the score keeper, and over the evening the home team, Alison, John, David and Gwen, put up a good fight and won the competition. The only drawback is that now the St. James's team needs to face another team in the next round. The date and venue will be advised as soon as it is known. During the evening a collection was made for this year's charity, Bromley Homeless, and a total of £54.20 was added. Thanks to all who came along to support us, set up and provided refreshments, and helped make the evening a success.

Smile Lines

The vicar
was ill in hospital and so the
churchwarden went to visit. Trying
to cheer him up, the churchwarden
said: "We missed you at PCC last night.
We even put forward a resolution to
wish you a speedy recovery. It was
passed by 14 votes to 12."

Confirmation

The Bishop of Richborough will be joining us for the first time in Benefice for St Michael's Day (Monday 29th September). During the Mass he will be administering the Rite of Confirmation. If you have not yet been Confirmed and would like to be please have a word with Fr Russell, who will then arrange for suitable instruction to be given.



Music for July



6th July – 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Introit	CHfE 233	Guide me O thou great Redeemer
Offertory:	CHfE 559	O worship the King
Communion:	CHfE 633	Seek ye first the kingdom of God
Final:	CHfE 227	God's Spirit is in my heart

13th July – 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Introit:	CHfE 303	In Christ there is no east or west
Offertory:	CHfE 813	Will you let me be your servant
Communion:	CHfE 40	Amazing Grace
Final:	CHfE 161	Father, Lord of all Creation

20th July – 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Introit:	CHfE 22	All people that on earth do dwell
Offertory:	CHfE 88	Blest are the pure in heart
Communion:	CHfE 570	Oh the love of my Lord
Final:	CHfE 386	Lord of all hopefulness

27th July – St James's Day (5pm Mass)

Introit:	NEH 197	For all the Saints
Offertory:	NEH 420	O Jesus I have promised
Communion:	NEH 295	Let all mortal flesh
Thanksgiving	NEH 208	In our day of Thanksgiving
Processional:	NEH 478	Ye watcher and ye holy ones

Hymns for August

Do you have a favourite hymn you would like to sing? August is your month to pick the hymns. There are slips of paper at the back of the church for you to suggest a hymn to sing. Just fill them in and place them in the box provided. It is hoped we will be able to sing as many of these hymns as possible.

St James's Fellowship

These meetings are open to all. We meet at 2 pm in the Guild Room. Our meetings all end with a cuppa and biscuits, and a natter, and is a very pleasant way of spending a Friday afternoon. We shall not be meeting in August. Please keep your eyes open for details of meetings in the autumn.

What an interesting meeting we had on 2 May, with a talk from a member of Bromley Council trading standards team who alerted us to the strategies used by seemingly well-meaning fraudsters. Anyone can be a victim of their sophisticated ploys which can cost dear, and line their pockets.

Never trust tradesmen who come to the door. If somebody tells you some work needs to be done ask them to call back when you have somebody with you, and don't feel pressurised into anything, especially if you're asked to pay up front. If you need a service ask around and get a recommendation. Bromley Trading Standards runs a fair-trader directory to help you find a trustworthy trader.

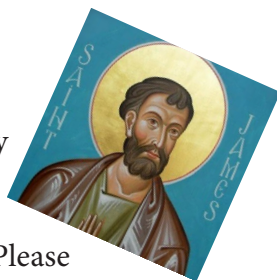
You may get a phone call from someone alleging to be from your bank. NEVER disclose your bank details. Say you'll call back. But beware, fraudsters can play with phone lines. You may think the line has been cleared, but in fact you're still connected. Try calling a friend first, and see if you get through. If you think you have been scammed ring 159. This is the equivalent of 999, and you will be put through to your own bank where you can report the situation.

On 6 June our organist, Andrew, treated us to a piano recital in church. This event was well supported. Thank you so much, Andrew, for a lovely relaxing time – just what the doctor ordered on an early summer afternoon.

Friday 4th July - we shall be having a talk from a representative from the Royal National Lifeboat Institute giving us some insight into their job of saving lives at sea. Although the RNLI provides an essential emergency service around the coasts, it is funded by charity and donations, and manned by volunteers, many of whom have lost their lives in the service. It received royal patronage in 1854, and this has continued up to the present day.

St James's Day

This year we will be celebrating St James's Day on Sunday 27th July with a special Mass at 5pm followed by a reception. It is a great pleasure that one of St James's former curates, Fr Andrew Davis, will be our preacher. Please put this date in your diary and invite friends and family to join us. If you can help with refreshments please, speak with Jan.



The Richborough Family News

Saturday 16th August

Assumptiontide Festival
Mass at 12noon
Portsmouth Cathedral

Saturday 30th August

Aylesford Day Pilgrimage
(11am - 4pm)

Saturday 13th September

Study Day
St George's Bickley (10am - 3pm)

Saturday 4th October

Quiz Night
7.00pm St George's Bickley



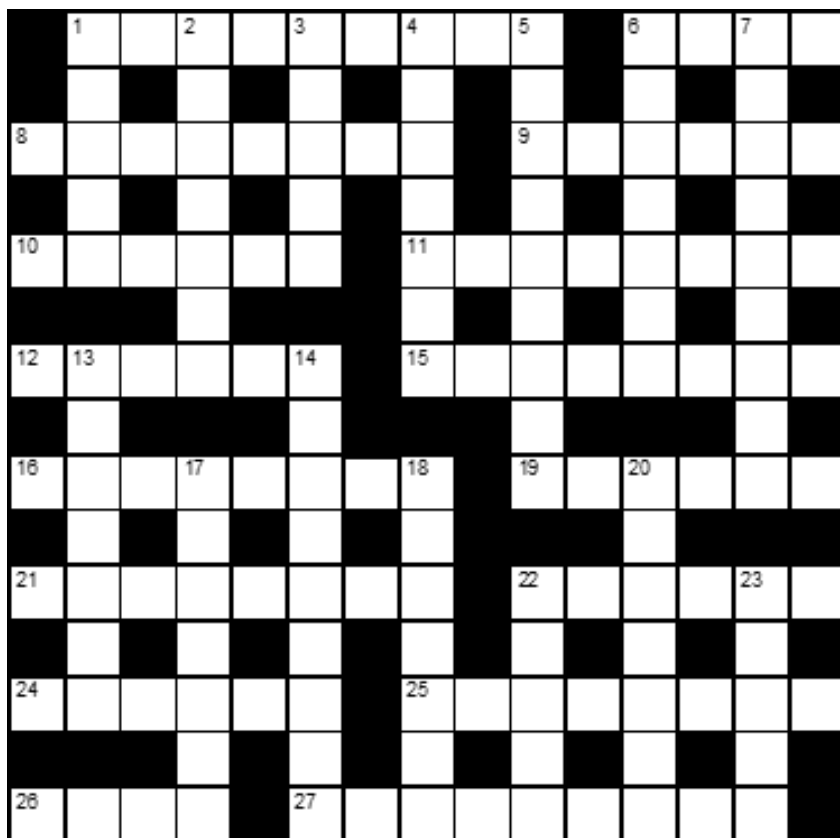
Solutions to June's Puzzles

Across: 1 Doubtful, 6 Sister, 9 Adjoin, 10 Area code, 11 Newsletter, 12 Even, 13 Utmost, 15 Stances, 17 No-hoper, 19 Thwart, 21 Your, 22 Post office, 24 Liniment, 25 Astute, 26 Impend, 27 Overseas.

Down: 2 Oddment, 3 Boots, 4 Fingertip, 5 Lean-tos, 6 Steer, 7 Sacred cow, 8 Endless, 14 Otherwise, 16 Astrolabe, 17 Niobium, 18 Risotto, 20 Ricotta, 22 Plead, 23 Fetes.

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

July Puzzles (Solutions next month)



Across

- 1 Palace, perhaps, showing signs of age, get relegated (9)
- 6 Stop the bribe! (4)
- 8 With every ray, I hesitate with deposit (8)
- 9 University appointment is new information (6)
- 10 Disconnect a French advert (6)
- 11 Men for eggs? (8)
- 12 Also-ran gains nothing and gets less uptight (6)
- 15 In south of France a hideout by the outskirts of Ledbury may be found without warning (8)
- 16 Doctor messes nicely with solid (8)
- 19 Father may dish out a fruit (6)
- 21 Exceptional oriental copper (8)
- 22 In tandem observer de-escalates war effort (6)
- 24 Somehow I say run without upstart countryman (6)

- 25 Intellectual is a bounder with strange mice (8)
- 26 See king sitting on the toilet (4)
- 27 Job location? (9)

Down

- 1 Hairdresser's in Pisa, London and Rome (5)
- 2 Doppelganger's drinks? (7)
- 3 Prone to telling tales (5)
- 4 Siemens could become an avenger (7)
- 5 Fraudulently excessive swim (6-3)
- 6 At the end of the day edit with honour somehow (7)
- 7 Have nasty turn with a friend of course (9)
- 13 Homer's work found during somebody's Seychelles trip (7)
- 14 Large Soviets in space (3,6)
- 17 Kir in Nice could be a place for slippers (3,4)
- 18 Trusty old car (7)
- 20 Grandeur takes energy at two in doomed city (7)
- 22 Tot has a show (5)
- 23 Man with developed brain (5)

Sudoku

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

Monthly Draw Winners for June

1st Pauline Luffingham

2nd Marion Stow

3rd Fern Mason

The Benefice Diary

Saturday 5th July	Barbecue at 2.00pm In St James's Garden if the weather is fine. Tickets £10.
Sunday 27th July	St James's Day Mass at 5pm Preacher - Fr Andrew Davis.
Saturday 16th August	Cream Tea at 3.00pm In St James's Garden if the weather is fine. Tickets £6.
Sunday 28th September	12.00noon Bring and Share lunch at St Michael's
Monday 29th September	7.30pm St Michael's Day Mass with Confirmation Celebrant and Preacher - Bishop Luke.
Saturday 11th October	St James's Harvest Supper at 6.00pm for 6.30pm
Saturday 8th November	St James's Autumn Fair
Saturday 29th November	St James's Quiz Night

Churches Together in Beckenham

The Lent events organised by CTiB were a great success. There were 4 courses held over 5 weeks during Lent at St. John's Church, Eden Park. Additionally the Good Friday Walk of Witness was well attended, and did what it set out to do, to let the people of Beckenham know that this wasn't just a day off work, an extension of Saturday, but a special day in the Church's calendar. What makes it so special is that churches of all traditions and denominations in Beckenham take part.

A date couldn't be arranged for the summer picnic this year. Suggestions did take it into late September, so it was decided to give this a miss in 2025.

We heard from churches as to their fund raising for Christian Aid Week. These initiatives are proving much more popular than doing the house to house collections, and encourage members of different churches to work together, as witnessed by teams from other churches at the St. James's quiz.

St Michael's PCC Round up

St Michael's Parochial Church Council (PCC) met on Sunday 1st June to review parish matters and make key decisions for the months ahead.

Fr Russell began the meeting by updating members on the progress of the Hall endowment scheme. A financial report was then received. While the parish remains in a healthy position overall, it was noted that general giving has fallen.

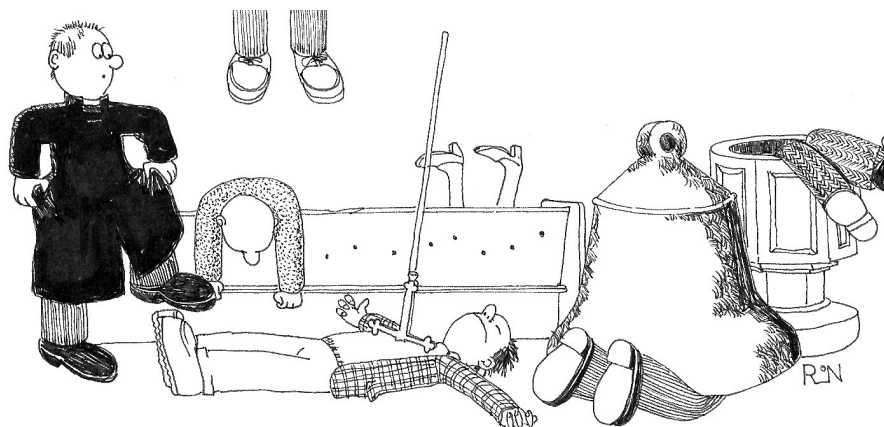
The PCC reviewed a recently commissioned fire safety report. It was agreed that an action plan would be drawn up to address the necessary works identified.

With the current waste disposal contract coming to an end, the PCC agreed to renew the agreement with the existing supplier for a further 36 months.

A working group will be set up to finalise decisions on proposed new signage and window graphics for the church.

Looking ahead to St Michael's Day, it was agreed to hold a "Bring and Share" lunch on the Sunday. Refreshments following the Confirmation service on the Monday will be arranged through external caterers.

Finally, the PCC discussed the future growth and mission of the parish. It was agreed to begin exploring the recruitment of an outreach and family worker to support this work.



It was a normal Sunday Morning in Midsomer Parish Church

Poetry Corner

New Friends and Old Friends

by Joseph Parry

Make new friends, but keep the old;
Those are silver, these are gold.
New-made friendships, like new wine,
Age will mellow and refine.
Friendships that have stood the test—
Time and change—are surely best;
Brow may wrinkle, hair grow gray,
Friendship never knows decay.
For 'mid old friends, tried and true,
Once more we our youth renew.
But old friends, alas! may die,
New friends must their place supply.
Cherish friendship in your breast—
New is good, but old is best;
Make new friends, but keep the old;
Those are silver, these are gold.



This year is the 80th anniversary of Christian Aid.

St James held a very successful fund raising quiz and gave envelopes to the congregation. The total paid in came to £938. A very big thank you to everyone who helped with the quiz, especially John Rowe who created it and was quiz master on the night.

Thanks also to everyone who gave so generously in the envelopes. Money raised this year will go towards helping families in developing countries cope with the devastating effects of climate change on their crops and livelihoods.

Julian Gibson

St James's PCC Round up

The PCC met on Wednesday 11 June at St James's Church. Eleven members attended, with apologies from one.

We began by approving the minutes of our April and May meetings. Several key appointments were then made:

Safeguarding Officer – Alison Mansfield

DBS Officers – Fr Russell and the Parish Administrator

Gift Aid Secretary – Parish Administrator

Collator and Archivist – Elizabeth Gibson

Our Treasurer gave an update on church finances. We discussed the VAT rebate on gas and the licence agreements for the Pre-School (using the Hall) and the Basic Skills Group (using the Servers' Vestry).

Committee reports followed. The Curate's House in Lloyds Way needs a new kitchen; three quotes were reviewed, and one was chosen. The Internal and Social Affairs Committee updated us on upcoming events including a summer BBQ, Afternoon Tea, and the Autumn Fair. The External Affairs Committee thanked everyone who supported the recent Christian Aid and Lent quizzes.

Our Deanery Synod reps reported they are enjoying the new Synod format, which includes worship. They warmly invite anyone interested to attend the next meeting, which will be held at St James's.

We also discussed church grounds and signage, following a request at the APCM. Fr Russell will be meeting a local sign maker and hopes to bring design proposals to our next meeting. A small team has cleared weeds from the churchyard, and an eco-friendly weed killer has been applied. Fr Russell is also looking into installing a CCTV camera to help with repeated problems at the Southwest Door.

After dealing with other formal matters and setting dates for future meetings, we closed with prayer.



From the Archives

Taken from St James's Parish Magazine, July 1954

The Reredos Painting of the “Resurrection” by A. K. Lawrence RA. *The Architect’s Impression*

Let me first remember that the primary object of a painting which is to form the centre piece of a Reredos is that it should have a great devotional value.

When it is viewed in the finest setting that any religious work could possibly have, it must quicken the spiritual senses of the observers to such an extent that they feel transported to the scene portrayed, and are therefore the greater comforted by their experience.

It is essential that the message be conveyed in the simplest and yet most powerful way in scale, composition and colour. This is particularly important where the setting is some distance from the congregation, as in this case.

To my mind it is also essential to obtain as great a sense of movement as possible, hence the fact that Our Lord is not on a pedestal, or something equivalent, as would have apparently been preferred by the art critic of “The Times.” This is not meant to be the painting of a stone statue, but something immortally alive; HE is meant to be rising from the grave in every sense of the words, and the artist shows it at that very moment.

Our Lord is being attended by two Archangels with delicate and loving care, which is well portrayed in their tender facial expressions and the manner in which the grave clothes are being held.

To maintain the sense of movement upwards there is the suggestion of Heaven in the small bright clouds in the extreme top centre of the picture, which gives the important sense of the unlimited.



Some critics have objected to the amount of blood on the cloth and from the wounded side, but much blood must have flowed, and by showing it the agony of the Crucifixion is brought more forcibly to the mind.

The Resurrection is commemorated in every part of the Christian world on Sunday mornings, and the Kent landscape in the background is meant to symbolize the local devotion to this universal event. How often have we seen the cold clear east light on the cliffs of Dover exactly as on this first morning. Mr. Lawrence has bathed the whole scene in this light in a most satisfying manner.

To the left of Our Lord, the fallen cross represents the victory over the evil things existing prior to the Resurrection, of which the system of crucifixion was the symbol. The Cross on the Altar in the foreground represents the new hope built up from the ruin of the old.

The trees to the right are a mixture of evergreen and the newly budding; the former depicts those things in the life which live on in an unchanged form, while the latter represents those things which have an annual cycle of re-birth which can be taken as representing the eternal miracle of Spring.

The two central figures kneeling in the foreground are Mr. and Mrs. Percy Jones, in whose memory the picture is given, and those on either side represent people taken from the various occupations that they were interested in. There is a factory worker, the doctor, the nurse, the Royal West Kent soldier, youth and aged, all kneeling in adoration.

Some critics have taken exception to modern figures in such a picture, but they seem conveniently to forget that all the great paintings of the past have figures dressed in the costume of the day. This painting represents our modern worship, in Kent, of the great event that took place nineteen hundred and twenty-two years ago.

In conclusion, there is no doubt in my mind that Mr. Lawrence has met all the essentials of a religious painting in full measure, and I feel that its devotional value to all who worship at St. James' will be immense and I trust that the finished work as a whole will amply justify my words.

August/September Newsletter

Items for inclusion in the next newsletter should be sent to Fr Russell no later than 15th July. vicar@stjamesandstmichael.org.uk

DIRECTORY

Vicar:	Fr. Russell Staggs SSC	020 8402 2712 07526 621232
	Email: vicar@stjamesandstmichael.org.uk	
Churchwardens:		
St. James's	Gwen Binnie	020 8650 0342
St. Michael's	Matthieu Philippault	07838 146467
	Email: office.stmichaelbeckenham@gmail.com	
Benefice Administrator	Jo Perry	07838 146467
	Email: office.stjamesbeckenham@gmail.com	
	Email: office.stmichaelbeckenham@gmail.com	
Hall bookings	Jo Perry	07838 146467
St. James's Fellowship	First Friday of each month Guild Room 2.00pm-3.30pm	
Brownie Guides	6th Beckenham Tuesday in the Hall 6.15pm-7.45pm Alison Mansfield	020 8658 1680
Guides	6th Beckenham Friday in the Hall 7pm-8.30pm Alison Mansfield	020 8658 1680
Beavers	Thursday in the Lecture Room 6.30pm-7.45pm Claudia Gotor-Pedrerros	claudiagotor@gmail.com
Cub Scouts	Thursday in the Hall 6.30pm-7.45pm Sue Guckian	sueguckian@gmail.com
Scouts	Thursday in the Hall 7.45pm-9.00pm Jaime Griffiths	jaimegriffiths@hotmail.co.uk
All Beaver/Cub/Scout enquiries to Group Scout Leader 9thpbnbeavers@gmail.com		
Pre-School	Jenny Strudwick	020 8249 8386