

St James Faculty Application: Church Extension and Seating Project

How the church is used currently - How the church, in part, needs to be used in the future

[29/3/23]

The table below details our exploration of the space required at St James for the building to be used to participate more fully in God's mission. In particular, it evidences the need for pew removal in the nave of the church to fulfil the purpose of the community. To glorify God and serve the common good.

Activity	Details	Space Required	Pew Removal Scale ¹	Activity Status ²	Activity Viability ³	Activity classification ⁴	Applicable Marks of Mission ⁵
Parish Eucharist	A traditional Eucharist celebration	c. 75	N	T		W	1, 2
Service of the Word	Service of the word aimed at all ages which requires, e.g., ability to move around the church in groups and adaptable seating configurations.	c. 75	F	T		W	1, 2
Stations of the Cross	Stations would be set up about nave	Need c. 12-25 people to be	F	T		W	1, 2

1 F=Full, P=Partial, N=none

2 T= Tried, U=Untested

3 Red=Not viable, Amber=Partial viability, Green = viable

4 W=Worship, C=Community; noting we believe this is a false dichotomy

5 The marks of mission are as follows: 1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom: 2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers: 3. To respond to human need by loving service: 4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation: 5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth

	columns. Journey starts @ door, and runs down S aisle, across to N aisle, back up, and then into main body of nave where cross will be standing. Near more space to adore Cross at front.	able to move freely around nave as detailed.					
Prayer Stations	At various time of the year, prayer stations are useful to assemble and leave in situ. The numbers can vary. In the past, we have been limited to 2 because of space available.	We would like to be able to set up between 6 and 12 stations, with the facility for small groups of c. 6 people to gather around.	P; could probably use both aisles.	T		W	1, 2
Art and Flower Exhibitions	8 art pieces in main nave, since the lighting and ability to mingle and move is best. These would be from local artists and schools, e.g.. The lack of space in the nave had a direct impact on the	The village show would require c. 20 tables and c. 75 people minimum.	F	U		C	4, 5

	<p>hosting of prior flower festivals, and eventually led to them being stopped since the number of stands/stalls and people could not be accommodated in the central region. We would like to host the present village show.</p>						
<p>Worship festivals, e.g., Maundy Thursday, Harvest, Ascension, and Christmas, and uncommon worship configurations [1][2]</p>	<p>We need to, e.g., be able to set up a long, thin section of tables in the body of the church, with altar in prime view or moved into the centre from the Lady Chapel. Then, have seating about this. To enable food to be shared, and worship to be done about the tables. When we have tried this, having tables down the centre aisle we have not been able to worship effectively.</p>	<p>Need c. 5 tables for c. 25 people for some of these events; more likely for Harvest.</p>	F	T		W	1, 2

Hospitality/ Worship Events: Parish Breakfast, Churchyard Working Party, Churches Together Prayers, 9 Lessons and Carols, Carols Around Tree	We have been unable to host our 9 lessons and carols hospitality effectively in the church in its current configuration; we could likely do this if the 2 aisles were cleared. We would like to offer hospitality after our Carols around the tree service which attracts hundreds of people. To do this we would need to clear the side aisles, and likely some space in the central nave.	We need to host c. 12-18 people around tables for many of these events. For the Christmas events the numbers may be c. 100 who stay for hospitality.	P; could likely do in 1 or 2 aisles.	T		W	2, 3
Cafe/Messy/ Youth Worship	A type of fresh expression where families, e.g., grab a simple breakfast, gather around tables, and engage in a form of worship. Would need to see main AV screen. A similar format would be useful for youth	c. 8 tables in the middle of the church for c. 30 people - Messy. Larger numbers of people and tables for Cafe, < 100	F	U		W	1, 2

	gatherings, and for hosting messy church events.						
Senior/Youth Ministry	Host gatherings for this demographic to watch a film, playing of games, engage in physical exercise class (a couple of hours a day); access to main screen required.	c. < 50 people.	F	U		C/W	3
Nurture Courses, e.g., Alpha, Lent courses	Requires hosting a simple meal in the centre of the church, watching a video, and then discussing it.	c. 20-40 people	F	T		W	2
Homeless Shelter/Advent Sleep Out for young people in church to raise awareness and funds	We would like to be able to use the church to host vulnerable people during winter. We envisage, 'Nightingale' cubicles, through the church.	c. 30 people for Advent Sleep out	F	U		C	3, 4
Enhanced wheelchair access for	Currently, we struggle with more than c. 3.	c. 6	P	T		W	4

services	We have a requirement to increase this, since we have people from Birch Heath Lodge who would like to attend. Often, 3 have to line up at the front of the church.						
Midweek Communion hospitality	Host coffee and cake	c. 12	P; do in the aisles	T		W	2, 3
Worship/Music Group	We have hosted one in the last year with great difficulty, since there has been insufficient space at the front of the church	c. 6-8	P; accommodate down aisles.	T		W	1, 2
Concerts	We would like to host worship and other concerts for youths in the centre of the church.	c. 50-100	F	T		C/W	3, 4
Drama Activities	Present dramatised readings/plays of the bible during Sunday services, youth gatherings, school	c. 12	P; likely requires removal of front 4 rows of	T		W	1, 2

	(Nativity, Harvest), and Christmas (Crib) services. We have found our attempts to do this limited by lack of space		pews.				
Hosting large meetings, e.g., PCC, APCM, Parish Council	Currently not possible in Lady Chapel. Need prime access to screen	c. 20-40 people, with tables.	F/P; maybe could get away with c. front 8 rows of pews removed?	T		C/W	4, 3, 5
Community Vegetable market/ Resource/Recycling Exhibitions	Need, as a minimum, a series of tables down the nave sides to host stall holders.	c. < 75 people	F/P; better with central nave area	U		C	4, 5
Godly Play Sessions/Parent and Toddler Group Sessions	Need space at the front to sing, dance, and play with younger people.	c. < 20	P; likely need space where front 4 pews are.	U		W	1, 2
Baptism/ Remembrance Services	There is a requirement to create more space around the font (the position of which we would like to keep) for families to gather	c. 50 for stand-alone baptisms. c. extra 2m width channel for	P	T		W	2, 4

	around. Clearing, some pews from the rear centre is also desirable to allow the standard bearers (on Remembrance Sunday) to form inside the church, near the font, and still allow good access; currently it is very cramped at the back, and this causes a significant delay to the start of the service. The warden and verger pews are obstructive for these services.	Remembrance , with space for c.6 standard bearers.					
Community/ Dementia Cafe	Provide a cafe for the community which can also provide targetted welcome	c. 20-30 people	P; could work with north aisle pews removed	U		C	3
Community Cinema	Host film evenings for the community and church	c. 25-75 people	P; require central space	U		C/W	3
Youth space	Provide a safe space for young people to gather and co-create life together	c. 12-25 people	P; require central space	T		W	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Computer Classes	Provide computer and related classes for the community	c. 20 people	P; require central space	T		C/W	3, 1, 2
------------------	--	--------------	--------------------------	---	--	-----	---------

Summary:

We can't meet our needs without providing flexible space in the nave for the variety of activities currently undertaken and proposed. An analysis of these needs allows us to make the following comments.

- Two thirds of the 21 activities or needs which embody our strategic priorities relate solely to worship. Of the remaining third, 60% relates to worship & community purposes and 40% to community purposes only. In essence over 85% are connected to delivering worship . The church would contend this dichotomy presented may be unhelpful1.
- Of the 21 activities, around 70% are or have been undertaken, and 30% are yet to be implemented. Over 40% of these activities are currently considered completely non-viable on account of the constraints imposed by the pews, whilst a further 50% are of restricted viability for the same reason.
- In essence 95% of the needs require a degree of pew removal.
- The removal of all the pews in the nave (aside from the churchwarden/verger pews on the west wall) permits 100% of the needs both current and anticipated in the future.
- We have explored partial removal of the pews in both the central nave and also in the side aisles. The partial removal in the central nave enabled about 20% of the needs to be met with a similar outcome if pews were partially removed in both side aisles. Hence, in both cases the vast majority of the needs of the church, around 80%, remain unmet by these options.
- We also looked at removing all the pews in the central area and this would enable around 70% of the activities, although the reduction in flexible space may limit the size of the congregation that can be accommodated in these new forms of worship.
- This option risks creating two dead spaces in the north and south aisles, with secondary visibility and comfort. It may also lead to a further reduction in the potential size of actual congregations as people may only want to sit in the middle which would effectively shrink the size of the church further.

- Furthermore, we see removal of the pews in the North aisle as critical in creating a café space for near continuous hospitality , which would provide a hub for people to meet in a safe environment and thereby combat social issues of loneliness and isolation. It would also provide an opportunity for family friendly seating during worship & social events.
- To leave pews only in the South aisle is probably the least impactful as it delivers close to 90% of our mission , however, it would arguably render this area defunct and impact congregation sizes. Hence, why the proposal advocates to have flexible space in the whole of the nave across the central, north and south aisles .
- We considered whether placing the current pews on castors would meet the needs of the church outlined above. This idea was rejected, since it would not provide the space required for the uses of the church both current and projected. At the same time, they would be more difficult to move around, remain uncomfortable, potentially damage the flooring, potentially introduce distracting noise while in use, and require maintenance.