**Charities and Links through the years**

The giving of charity was one of the most important functions of the church before the advent of the Welfare State. St James’s maintained several alms houses for the poor in the parish and cared for the old and sick. It supported the Provident Club to encourage a habit of thrift in poorer parishioners, and the early vicars gave generously out of their own pockets to support those in need. The Reverend Fitz Wygram also organised some work for the men who were out of work, arranging for them to lay the path running from the ‘kissing gates’ by Burton’s Road railway bridge, alongside the railway line.

Beyond the needs of the parish, St James’s contributed generously to the wider work of the church represented by the Home and Foreign Missions and other charities. The first meeting was held at the vicarage in October 1884. St James's formed a Missionary Working Party, which was reorganised in 1923 and renamed the Parochial Working Party, with the object of helping the work of the church overseas and raising money for different projects.

In the 1920s, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (S.P.G.), the Church Missionary Society, and the Colonial and Continental Church Society were the main societies supported.

Following the Second World War, there was concern for the needs of the parish’s older residents and the Hampton Hill Old Peoples’ Welfare Committee was formed in 1953. This proved of great benefit in augmenting the work of the already existing 'Darby and Joan Club' and the lapsed 'Three Rs Club'.

The Wayside Monday Centre was set up in 1975 to be a *"listening post for the anxious, lonely and those under stress"*. It consisted of a team of helpers who welcomed those who were experiencing any of the many and varied difficulties of modern living.

Since the early 1980s St James has supported St Luke’s Mission Hospital in Milo, south west Tanzania. It funded a motorbike for their clinical officer Benaiah Kilwale, who visited St James in 1987 when he came to the UK to study for a Certificate in Tropical Community Health in Liverpool. Hannah Stanton kept in contact with Benaiah until she died. Ann Peterken took on the letter writing and visited Milo in 2009, two years before Benaiah died. With support from one of our supported charities, Ann was able to return to Milo in 2011 to pay respects to the Kilwale family, a gesture that was much appreciated.

In April 1997 the Jubilee 2000 campaign was launched, proposing a one-off cancellation of the backlog of unpayable debt by the world's poorest countries by the year 2000.  Giving our time and voices, many parishioners supported Jubilee 2000 and the follow-on Jubilee Debt Campaign (JDC) that continued the unfinished business of sustainable debt relief. St James also supported Make Poverty History (MPH), a powerful coalition against world poverty that called for urgent and meaningful policy change on three critical and inextricably linked areas: trade, debt and aid. MPH culminated at the 2005 G8 Summit, hosted by the British government at Gleneagles.

The £2000 in 2000 appeal sought to welcome the new millennium with a gift to both Milo hospital and to Christian Aid for its work in that part of Tanzania. The appeal far exceeded its aim, raising £10,000. The parish gave £1000 to Milo hospital to build a relative’s hostel and £9000 to Christian Aid for two projects in the region around Milo – one to provide water in Kyombe village, the other to provide training in primary health care.

By 2010 St James's was supporting seventeen charities. It has never left its charitable giving to chance and had a policy of aiming to give 10% of its annual income to charitable donations at that time. The Charities and Links committee managed the sum of money allocated in each year’s budget, giving half to charities in the UK and half to charities overseas.

Non-monetary collections included the Harvest collection of non-perishable items, including basic toiletries, for The Upper Room in Hammersmith and parishioners were encouraged to donate unwanted tools and equipment to Tools with a Mission. Gifts of food were sent on to the Food Bank and other non-monetary collections have been taken over the years.

In 2012 St James was awarded a Fairtrade church certificate within the Fairtrade Diocese of London. From 2007 through to the Covid pandemic, the parish sold fairly traded goods once a month and at various events. Fairtrade goods are used for refreshments after Sunday services and other times.

St James’s has always been a faithful supporter of Christian Aid, a charity that works with people, of all faiths and none, to combat poverty and injustice across the world. Special collections are still taken during the year for various charities or emergency appeals, either as part of a fund-raising event or simply a plate collection during church services.