

The Parish of Peterborough

St John the Baptist and St Luke



Grace, Gratitude & Generosity

From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

John 1:16

Dear

Stewardship Review 2023

In the Church's Season of Creationtide each September we give thanks for the gift of God to us in creation and remember our responsibility to care for all that God has made and entrusted to us. This year, we are especially aware of how we are damaging the earth, the impact we are having on the climate, and how much this is beginning to affect us now, let alone future generations. As one human family under God we share the pain of our brothers and sisters across the world, as well as realising the terrible loss of species of plants and animals with whom we co-exist.

Part of recognising our interconnectedness is about our shared responsibility as part of the life of the Church. As Christians, we are called to speak out into the world about injustice and unfairness, and also to live as generously as we can within our church life too. Across the Church of England as a whole, Generosity Week (26th September – 1st October) takes place in the Harvest season, so that as we thank God for his generosity to us, we also have the opportunity to think about how we might respond to that generosity.

We live in challenging times when all our reserves and resources can feel overstretched. But we also know how blessed we are in our faith, in our God and in our church family life together. It's been many years since we last held a Stewardship Campaign so it's timely to review why, what, and how we give, especially as we seek to grow in love and faith and good works in our city and community.

While we are blessed to have the stewardship of some historic reserves, we are already calling upon them to manage our day-to-day costs. We need to begin to address this now before it becomes difficult further on, and we also want to answer God's abundant generosity to us in the best way we can.

Before anything else I want to say a huge thank you for all that you already give, financially, and in so many other wonderful ways too – gifts in kind, to support our ongoing mission and ministry, gifts of yourselves as volunteers to support a plethora of activities, including of course the work of the Hub at St John's. In all these ways we are blessed and able to be a blessing to others. Thank you!

All this is fantastic, but the reality is that we currently have an annual financial shortfall. As with all parishes, we would aim for planned giving to cover our outgoings so that any fundraising and reserves can be used for developing mission and ministry more widely and creatively, so that both our churches can continue to be significant places in the heart of our city and parish community.

It's never easy talking about money and I don't want anyone to feel uncomfortable – but giving is part of God's call to us as Christians. For this Stewardship Review the message is very simple –

- **We need to find £127,816 per year to keep on being the heart of our city and community.**

That means being a worshipping community, sharing the joy of the Gospel in our services and in our living. Our regular giving enables us to:

- Express our thanks to God for all he has blessed us with, in our homes and families.
- Give glory to God in our worship.
- Sustain our activities for our existing church family, extend our care for the wider community, the bereaved and the sick and our welcome to those coming for baptisms and weddings, for those we meet in local outreach and to help those in need, both home and abroad by giving to mission.
- Pay our bills, for gas and electricity, insurance, and for our clergy through the parish share – our contribution to the cost of our clergy.

This leaflet gives more details of our financial situation, and also how you can respond. During September, please consider all this prayerfully and ask God to show us individually and together how we can share in his work more fully through our church.

Vernon Bull who is currently acting as our Treasurer, as well as Churchwarden, would be delighted to help you or answer any practical questions you may have. His contact details are on the leaflet.

Thank you so much for all you already do and for whatever you are able to do in response to this Review.

May you know the gifts of the Spirit this Creationtide – love, joy and peace!

The Revd Michelle Dalliston *Vicar*

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*Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. **Luke 6:38***

Do you know what it costs to run our church each week?

£1356 for our Vicar, housing, pension, training and travelling expenses.

£325 on utilities and insurances,

£164 on our building and maintenance

£ 69 on weekly worship and ministry costs

£458 on salaries and administration

£ 86 on other expenditure

£2458 **Total weekly expenditure**

Do you know what our income is each week?

£579 from direct or planned giving

£194 from tax on Gift Aided donations

£141 from weekly collections & donations

£ 70 from wedding & funeral fees

£131 from fundraising activities

£305 from Church & hall income

£210 from investment income

£1630 **Total weekly income**

Which means £828 a week shortfall!



However, the PCC have agreed to invest £596 per week (or £31,000 a year) from our reserves, to support church growth, until our reserves are no longer required

This means our actual shortfall now is £232 a week or £33 a day.

Some of our Ministry to our City and Community



St John's is a great venue for special events such as our Flower Festival in 2022, our weekly Tuesdays Till Two Concerts and exhibitions such as the recent Peterborough Art Society exhibition.



Our Saturday café is a wonderful place for people to stop in for tea, coffee and a good chat!

St Luke's hosts a friendly weekly drop in for a cuppa and a chat



and since November 2022 St John's has been a Community Support Hub helping those most in need in our City.

We hold activities for families and children such as Piccolo music concerts,



and free holiday Family Fun Days including this summer's 'out of this world' Galaxy Window Wednesdays!



We host times of community celebration and support people during times of sorrow and remembrance.



Our outside space also provides a great venue for live music like the recent Summer Sunday afternoons in St John's Square.



What Can I do?

We give in response to the God who is so generous to us but how much are we to give? The decision will be yours alone, but here are some guiding principles:

Give to God first. God honours us when we carefully plan our giving rather than give what is left once all other needs are met.

Give generously! The Church of England suggests we aim to give 5% of our income, after tax, to our church. The bible encourages us to give 10%. That's a challenge!

Giving is good. Jesus said "it is more blessed to give than to receive." As we give, we are blessed, our church is blessed and our community is blessed – and God is honoured!

Many regular givers use the Parish Giving Scheme. We have enclosed a gift form which enables you to amend existing giving or start giving for the first time.

You can also ring PGS on 0333 002 1271 and they will help you to set up your giving or scan this QR code, which will help you to set up your giving online.



If you can, please make your response by Sunday 1st October when we will celebrate Harvest Festival at both St Luke's and St John's. A good day to give thanks for God's goodness and blessings to us!

For all things come from you, O Lord, and of your own have we given you.
Chronicles 1: 29:14



If you would like to support your church by reviewing your giving, setting up a new direct debit, standing order or a one-off donation please contact our Treasurer or Churchwardens. You can of course also give cash in the collection during services.

*If 58 people were able to give an extra £4 a week
we would make up our weekly shortfall!*

If you are able to Gift Aid your giving to maximise your gift, the best way to do this is to join the Parish Giving Scheme. Another way to give is through legacies and if you would like to know more about this, please do ask for further details.

Churchwarden and Acting Treasurer

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Churchwardens

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Visit our website: www.peterborough-stjohns.org.uk

Visit our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/stjohnspeterborough/

