

Summary of the PowerPoint presentation made to Christ Church with St Mary's congregations on Sunday 10th September 2017

Summary

The PowerPoint presentation will be placed on the website www.christchurchswindon.co.uk and copies will be available electronically or in paper form from the Parish Office.

Thanks

Thanks are due to all those who give to Christ Church with St Mary's - not just for money, but for your time and talents.

Funding of recent large projects

The spire project (2005-06), the new Community Centre @ Christ Church (2013), and the recent extensive re-ordering works inside Christ Church (2017) were all financed by means of monies raised by the Skyline Appeal, legacies, grants, sale of the old Devizes Road Church Hall, reserves and, for the CC@CC, a Section 106 grant from the Swindon Borough Council, of £230,000 under the Town and Country Planning Act.

Incidentally, the total cost of these three projects was approximately £ 1.46 M, not far from the original scope of £1.5 M for the Skyline Appeal, launched in 2001, closed in 2011.

The successful completion of these three recent major capital projects means that Christ Church is now asset-rich with excellent facilities. We have been blessed by substantial windfalls (legacies, grants, property sales) that have enabled us to carry out these major buildings projects to ensure Christ Church can fulfil its role in the Gospel and within the local community.

Income sources

About 60% of our income is planned giving, and 40% is from other sources. The trend in planned giving is a gradual reduction, hopefully stabilised this year. We rely very much on other sources of income – property income, fees, car park - and fund raising – like the Beer Festival and the Autumn Fayre and the Christmas Market.

Legacies are not usually included when our revenue budgets are set each year. Legacy income has been put towards our large projects under D&R (Development and Renewal) – as summarised above.

In 2014, there was an increase in “other sources of income”. This was due to the £12,000 annual contribution from the new Community Centre.

However, from 2016, income dropped due to the loss of £15,000 rental income from 121 Victoria Road, Hickmans. We are trying to re-establish this income, but meanwhile the Christian charity Restore is about to move in - meaning we are freed from paying business rates on an empty building.

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Income distribution

A small number of givers contribute a large proportion of planned giving. In 2016, the top 12 givers - out of a total of 165 - gave 41% of the total. If the number of high giving individuals is quite small, then planned giving can be affected significantly if the circumstances of one or two individuals change.

Expenditure and Parish Share

Church running costs in 2013 and 2014 included contribution to a staff member's stipend. Running costs from 2015 have been fairly stable, with 2017 showing some increase in staff costs.

Our Parish Share is around 65% of expenditure, at the top end of what parishes give.

For 2017, PCC agreed to pay our 2017 Parish Share in full. Because of the loss of rental income, a non-balanced budget was set, but on condition that this level of giving would be reviewed in 2017. This review is underway and is part of the budget setting process.

We are all being asked to review our own giving – but we are also looking at other ways of generating income. For example, ways of charging appropriately for the new flexible space in the church - as we are doing at St Mary's. We are also looking at more efficient ways of collecting and managing our giving, for example by the new Parish Giving Scheme – to be launched later this month.

All mission monies received on gift days is passed on to our designated charities, including Gift Aid.

Parish Share

Parish Share is our financial contribution to Bristol Diocese. It is the main way that ministry is funded – to growing the Kingdom of God and make Jesus known. It pays for clergy stipends, pastoral support, housing and training - including for children's and young peoples' ministry.

Education - this year Bristol Diocese Academies' Trust is building the first Anglican Secondary School in Swindon 'The Deanery' in Wichelstowe. Bristol Diocese supports this and 70 other unique schools working together to offer children education with a distinctive Christian ethos.

As a large (relative to others) well-endowed parish, we should give generously, graciously and equitably.

Our Parish Share should be:

- appropriate: proportionately more than others
- affordable: as part of a balanced annual budget
- sustainable: affordable in future years

However, the Diocese suggests we pay more in 2018 than we are likely to be able to afford. We need to look at this in the context of St Paul's teaching and in the light of

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Bishop Mike's farewell letter – where he argues for more clergy, and for then to be adequately resourced.

2 Corinthians 8 and 9

St Paul's teaching in the New Testament (2 Corinthians 8 and 9) is summarised that "We each give all that we can, so that we can all receive what we need". (As quoted in the Diocese of Bristol Creating Connections Parish Share leaflet.)

We will need to reconcile the need to balance the budget with the needs of the Kingdom.

Budget process

A draft budget is being prepared by Finance and Governance during September. This will be subject to PCC agreement at the budget meeting planned for 29th October. The budget will include our agreed Parish Share contribution.

Parish Giving Scheme

Bristol Diocese are about to launch a new way of giving, the Parish Giving scheme. This is intended to help parishes to administer their stewardship activities.

- It's a nationwide scheme to encourage and assist parishes to administer their stewardship activities. Administered by the Diocese on behalf of the parish but all income comes directly to Christ Church with St Mary's.
- Reduces parish administration time and frees up our volunteers to concentrate on mission.
- Has been shown to improve parish income by up to 20% where it has been trialled.
- Allows improved planning of finances by giving better visibility of giving.

It is hoped that as many as possible will subscribe to this scheme. This scheme is being launched this September and we plan to adopt the scheme and we will shortly be making the details known.

Standing Order

Meanwhile, we are encouraging giving to be made via standing order, and a standing order mandate form is included in the stewardship pack.

Conclusions – see over

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Conclusions and summary

1. The context of our giving can be summarised under five "Cs":

Financial **circumstances** of Christ Church with St Mary's: asset-rich, but regular income is precarious.

Budgetary **challenge** for the PCC: balancing expenditure and income to reconcile our own needs with our responsibility to the diocese.

Biblical **context** of our giving: giving is born of grace and is our response to God's own gift to us in Jesus.

Individual **commitment** to Christ: how might each of us respond personally?

Stewardship is about **choices**: choices for the PCC and choices for us individually about how we use our resources.

2. On behalf of Christ Church with St Mary's, grateful thanks are expressed, not only for money, but also for your talents and time.
3. In 2017, we were able to pay the requested Parish Share only by setting a deficit budget; 2018 is likely to be no better.
4. We are trying to secure the financial future of the church. For our running costs, we rely on the generosity of previous generations; the wider community for much of our income (rentals, statutory fees, beer festival etc); and our regular givers. This is why we are being asked to review our giving.
5. As a relatively wealthy parish, we should be gracefully supporting others less fortunate, through Parish Share. But we need to develop our own mission, particularly to young people and families with children. Without additional income, we will struggle to reconcile the needs for mission in our own parish with our wider responsibility to the Diocese.
6. The most efficient way to give, in terms of minimising administrative effort, is if possible, by means of a standing order.
7. A new scheme, called Parish Giving, is soon to be introduced. We will contact individuals with details of this when the scheme is launched.
8. Finally, Bishop Mike says in his farewell letter:

"Put simply, parishes need more financial resources and to give more of them to Parish Share to invest in the ministry we need..."