

All Saints
LITTLE SHELFORD

Gift Day

Sunday 1st November



From Simon Scott

Rector of All Saints, Little Shelford

Dear friends,

How many times does the word 'saint' occur in the New Testament? The surprising answer is that 'saint' comes only once; but it's a trick question because the word nearly always comes in the plural form, 'saints' - 61 times in the New Testament. As John Wesley put it: 'there is no such thing as a solitary Christian'.



As sinners who have been forgiven and set apart by God from the world, **we belong together** - especially, in Little Shelford, given the name of our church. This year our main Gift Day will fall on Sunday 1st November - All Saints Day itself. And I would love the whole exercise of giving to be one we undertake **as** the saints, **for** all the saints.

We will pray on our own about what we should individually give or how we should be involved, because we each answer to God alone. But whatever follows should be an act of fellowship, where we come together as Team All Saints - in the wonderful joint undertakings of our church's vision statement, reaching out and growing together.

I want to encourage everyone to participate in the Gift Day this year as a fresh way of embracing those goals: **reaching out** with the good news of Jesus Christ and **growing together**, advancing in spiritual maturity. Never have those two objectives been more important than they are at the moment.

We read recently in our church's homegroups about how those who do not know Jesus Christ are 'without hope and without God in the world.' (Ephesians 2:12). How urgent it is to share our living hope now, when people are feeling their frailty more keenly. At the same time the current situation makes it harder to connect with people. I am thankful that we have been able to invest substantially and at some cost in our online ministry in recent months. But still the main bridge-building must be done in our relationships with the people we know.

To encourage us in that costly witness we need to be growing in deeper fellowship in our relationships with each other - again a challenge, when it is hard for us to meet up physically. But I hope that in aspiration and increasingly in reality we are committed to this. I want us to be the best multi-generational church family we can be, **growing together** so we can **reach out**.

Of course, this is not just a matter of money: volunteering to serve has become harder without regular meetings but there are plenty of

opportunities which we have discovered in recent months, such as recording a segment for an online service, helping with streaming of services from church, being an active host or participant on a "Zoom" meeting, contributing to online Scramblers, Climbers and Explorers. In what ways which you could serve the saints? It will take all of us, together, to make our vision a reality - and Gift Day is a part of the process.

Looking back on the last six months, I am amazed what God has enabled a smallish church like us to achieve. Just before the lockdown, we had a wonderful church weekend away - which equipped us more effectively than we could have hoped for what followed. Likewise, the revamped website was launched before lockdown - and became the vehicle for a greater online presence just when we needed it.

Since March we have had services online every week - with a bank of music which now contains nearly seventy songs and hymns, courtesy of Monica Cragg and her team of musicians; we have had families leading prayers; mission partners with us in interviews - and for all of the above, technical experts coaching individuals, so that all ages can access the services. We've piloted the Generosity Project in our midweek groups to help us grow in the character of our wonderfully generous God. We've retained Josh Cairns in his role as youth and families associate pastor - producing week after week of ASKtv episodes for our young people, and all the while pounding the streets tirelessly to see people face to face. And we have been joined by Edward Keene as our curate - he has done well to get to know us as effectively as he has, with church life so far from normal.

None of this would be possible without the regular giving of the congregation and the annual top-up which the Gift Day provides. In fact if you read on you will see that more than ever we need a team effort to secure what we have been equipped to do and to advance, especially with the additional expenses for our new live-streaming equipment. Even with a Gift Day raising £25,000 and a 5% increase in our year-round giving we still expect to steadily use up some of our reserves over the next two years if we continue to do all we are doing.

Is it too much to ask God to enable us to exceed those figures - maybe to reach £30k as a one-off and a 7.5% increase on pledged annual giving? Not all of us can supply the hard cash for that - but what if 'all the saints' at least get behind the situation in prayer as a joint undertaking? 'Is anything too hard for the Lord?' (Genesis 18:14).

With love from,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Simon East".

Miles Baillie writes:

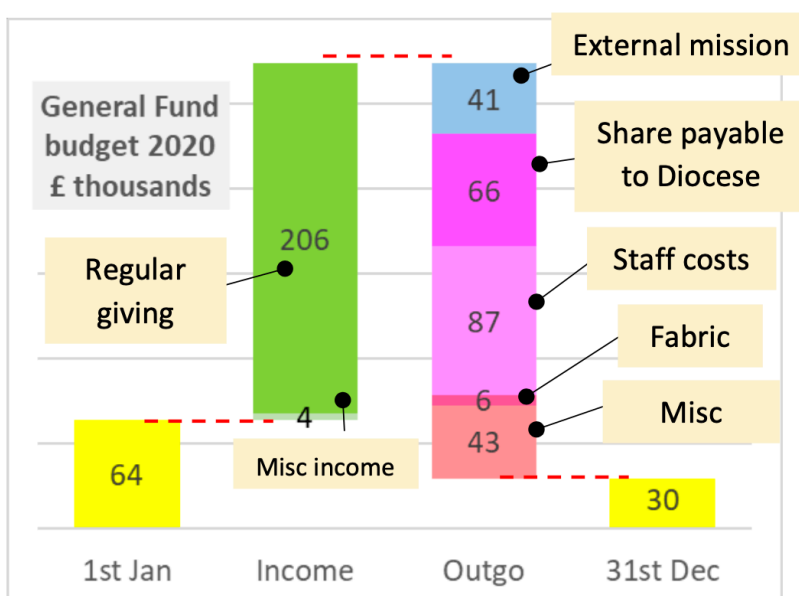
Thank you for your faith

When we had a Thanksgiving Sunday back in June, I asked you to send me your reasons for being thankful, and it was a joy to share so many responses. So, now I want to thank you for your faith, expressed in part by your commitment to giving money month after month. And that's shown even more sharply by what happened to giving after the pandemic hit our activities – there was no decline in regular giving and there have been a number of unsolicited one-off gifts.

I can only thank God that we have so many who are able to continue to give and I praise Him for His grace that encourages us to stick at it, even when services have been limited and some activities stopped for a time. We recognise that our staff continue to work, that the building and churchyard still need maintaining, the website and online services need resourcing. We have saved a little (for example, not hiring the village hall), so overall our finances are in a healthy state for now. But the demands are heavy, especially as we continue to develop a sustainable infrastructure to livestream services. So, as Simon has encouraged his on the preceding pages, we need to look to give even more if we want All Saints to continue to do all that we hope and pray it can do.

We don't receive any funding from the wider church (or anywhere else), so it is down to those of us who have made All Saints our home. 98% of our budgeted income comes from regular giving, and I really want to underline how important that is – with a stable predictable income, we can make plans to maintain and expand our work. This includes funding Simon Scott's post and paying the salaries of Alison Hynds, Josh Cairns, Monica Cragg and Edward Keene.

Finances in 2020



All giving goes into the General Fund, which tops up other funds with specified purposes (eg churchyard or external mission).

'Share payable to the Diocese' includes the cost of Simon Scott's pay and housing. Other staff pay and housing comes under 'Staff costs'.

The picture on the previous page shows the budget we set at the beginning of the year, a deficit budget, leaving only £30,000 in the fund by the end of 2020.

As mentioned above, giving so far has exceeded the budget, and expenditure has largely been a little below budget, although we are in the process of acquiring the equipment we need for a sustainable live-streaming capability and that will eat into a large part of the surplus. Overall, before considering Gift Day, the General Fund is on track to reach around £39,000 by the end of the year.

In many ways, our plans financially for the coming year are to continue what we are doing. Each of our staff contributes something vital, particularly picking up tasks that others cannot easily do as pandemic restrictions continue. Funding a curate on top of our other staff requires us to rely on boosts to our funds every Gift Day.

On top of that, we continue to commit to donate 20% of regular income to External Mission, recognising in our financial blessings the needs of the wider church. We want to continue that commitment, although it is one area that the PCC would consider adjusting in order to protect our core activities.

I would underline the point that even if we meet our targets of £25,000 in one-off donations and 5% increase in giving for the next two years, we would still expect to see a steady (but manageable) decline in our reserves. We also need to be cautious about the possibility of further building work being needed on the church building.

Put simply, every gift and every pledge to increase regular giving is vital. To echo Simon, please keep praying that this will come from all the saints for all the saints.

Gift Day 2020

In order to secure our plans for the next few years, we have two targets for Gift Day:

- £25,000 in one-off gifts
- 5% increase in regular giving

As the previous pages have shown, both of these targets are important: the first target giving us a firm footing for the year ahead; the second ensuring we can plan the next few years with greater confidence. Can we invite you to bring this to our Lord in prayer? We offer thanks and praise for all He has provided to build up a church of believers at All Saints. Let us consider carefully how we can give more and be joyful givers!

This is also a good time to reflect on what else we can give towards All Saints. When we can't always meet in person at the moment, volunteering is still vital – and there are some new needs. Could you give time, friendship, knowledge to....

- ... IT skills to enable admin and the website
- ... care for members who need support
- ... being trained to help livestream services
- ... practical assistance with repairs or maintenance
- ... helping with online children's work
- ... management experience to serve on the PCC
- ... willingness to "zoom" in to prayer meetings and talks
- ... producing material for the website ...?

We are thankful that through all these gifts, God is building us into a "spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5 NIV).

A response form is enclosed explaining how to give in more detail. **However, if you wish, rather than filling in the form, simply email the Treasurer stating your intended giving.**

If you do complete a form or have a cheque to enclose:

- With current restrictions in place, it would be ideal if you posted it directly to the Treasurer (Miles Baillie, Holybourne Brookfield Road, Sawston CB22 3EH)
- If you prefer, drop it in to the church office. (If you are making a cash donation, it would be better not to send it in the post).

On behalf of the Parochial Church Council:

Simon Scott (Rector), Miles Baillie (Treasurer), David Brock and Clive Ayling (Churchwardens)

Giving to All Saints

Regular giving (after adding Gift Aid) is running at around £16,950 per month.

That comes from around **three-quarters of homes** on the church address list giving an average of around **£230 per month** (or £190 + Gift Aid).

Some give more, some give less – we can all thank God for every gift. If you have a regular income, please prayerfully consider increasing (or starting) regular giving.



Remember: if you are a taxpayer, Gift Aid turns every £100 donated into £125.

It is exciting to be able to give away the money God has provided us in order to help in the work of his Kingdom.

One-off gifts

Please make one-off payments by (if possible) **18th December** to:

- Account name: Little Shelford Parochial Church Council
- Sort code: 20 17 19 | Account number 80811033

Target
£25,000

Target
+5%

Regular giving: the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS)

Thank you! Most donors are now signed up to give this way.

The PGS is a dedicated Church of England charity collecting your donations by direct debit on our behalf and handling Gift Aid.

To change your level of giving via the PGS, contact them directly:

- info@parishgivingscheme.org.uk 0333 002 1260
- Parish Giving Scheme, 76 Kingholm Road, Gloucester GL1 3BD

You will need to tell them:

- your reference number (**see Q&A on next page for information on how to find your reference**) OR your address
- your existing level of giving and what it is changing to
- date of change (must be 1st day of a month, with at least 10 working days' notice)

To start giving via the PGS, complete the separate form and send directly to the address on the form.

Questions and answers

What expenditure comes under 'Misc costs'?

This list is not exhaustive! Printing, hall hire, group materials, coffee, equipment, insurance, utilities, repairs, Weekend Away, flowers, cleaning, newsletter, software.

Does the church have a policy on reserves?

No, but the PCC regularly monitors fund levels and is kept aware whether reserves are sufficient to meet expenditure over the next twelve months or so.

We used to raise money on Gift Days for external mission as well as the General Fund. Why is external mission no longer included?

External mission is not missing out. From 2019, we increased its regular budget from 15% to 20% of giving. This means mission partners can be supported throughout the year. Any increases in regular giving will result in more going to mission.

What happens if we don't raise the targeted amount?

The PCC reviews its annual budget in the months following Gift Day, looking at what is affordable in the coming year and further ahead to likely expenditure. Plans for staffing and activities (eg the Weekend Away) are adapted accordingly.

What if I am unable to give financially? What if I need to decrease my giving?

We each have a responsibility to give according to our circumstances, and many find the tithing principle (10% of income) helpful, however small their income. But giving is not something to do out of guilt. If you can't give or need to decrease, then that's fine.

'Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.' (2 Corinthians 9:7)

I am a higher-rate taxpayer - how does that affect Gift Aid?

Please complete a Gift Aid form, so All Saints can claim £25 on every £100 you give. Higher-rate taxpayers can then claim back a further £25 through their tax return or by contacting HMRC. If you give via an employer giving scheme then you do not need to make a claim, as tax relief is credited directly.

I want to contact the Parish Giving Scheme - where's my reference number?

Your five-digit number is on any letters the scheme have sent you. Also, we printed it next to your address on the front of the envelope this booklet came in (eg "PGS 54321"), or ask the Treasurer.

Who sees information about individuals' giving?

Apart from the Treasurer, one other PCC member oversees the financial record-keeping and checks bank statements so may see names there.