

Partnering in the Gospel

Giving Sunday 2023



In one of his letters Paul describes the way the Macedonian churches partnered financially with him. One of those church would have been the Thessalonians. Do you remember, Paul wrote about his delight in *sharing* with them 'not only the gospel of God but our lives as well' (1 Thess 2:8)? They seem to echo that delight as Paul says they 'pleaded with us for the privilege of *sharing* in this service to the Lord's people' (2 Cor 8:4). Paul sees this partnership as evidence of God's grace given to them. Our giving for God is always a response to God's giving to us. Over the past year God has enabled us to be generous – through serving and giving. You will see that in this booklet as well as some needs and prayerful hopes for us all in the year ahead. This Giving Sunday no one should feel pressure to give more; what we want is to grow in grace and to pray we can partner generously within the means God gives us.

Yours in Christ
David



David Todd
Vicar

It is beyond the realm of possibilities that one has the ability to out give God. Even if I give the whole of my worth to him, He will find a way to give back to me much more than I gave.

Charles Spurgeon

At a glance

Challenges

- The cost-of-living crisis continues to impact people's giving.
- Regular giving needs to increase to cover Niv's appointment.

Blessings

- The gap between ongoing income and costs has narrowed.
- New people joining us are seeking to give.
- We have reserves to cover the annual deficits for the next 2 years.

Sharing Life, Sharing Hope

Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.

1 Thessalonians 2:8

Financial Overview

The financial squeeze continues to be felt by many households in Christ Church. Sadly, several people have lost their jobs and we anticipate the cost-of-living pressures will be particularly hard for some over the winter months. Some households have been affected to a lesser extent and have wonderfully been able to support others financially, as well as increasing their giving to Christ Church to help cover the reductions others have needed to make.

We therefore want to be sensitive to the different financial situations people find themselves in, and help everyone to think prayerfully and wisely about their finances. The 'Money Matters' evening last October was appreciated by many, and we hope to build upon those conversations in a similar evening this autumn.

2023 income and expenditure

Last November the Parochial Church Council (PCC) approved a deficit budget for 2023 of £106k which included £37k of one-off capital expenditure for masonry repairs. They approved this in the knowledge that we had sufficient reserves to cover the deficit in full. We are likely to finish the year with a slightly larger deficit of £112k.

Thanks to God, the Giving Sunday in 2022 resulted in donation income increasing by nearly 8% in 2023. Frustratingly, expenditure has increased at a higher rate than anticipated, particularly utilities and pay inflation (salaries are linked to the Diocese of Ely scales). We are also anticipating repairs needed on a leak in the auditorium. Despite this, the gap between our ongoing income and expenditure is narrowing and we continue to pray that over the next couple of years we would return to a balanced budget.



£'000	'23 forecast	'24 budget	'25 budget	'26 budget
Income	705	736	745	773
Costs	817	785	792	823
	(112)	(49)	(47)	(50)

Investing in Evangelism

We have been increasingly convicted of the need to appoint a staff member gifted in evangelism to help envision and equip us all to confidently point others to Christ. God graciously answered our prayers through Niv's appointment in September and we are excited to see what opportunities the Lord will place before us to share our lives and our hope with others.

The shortfall in our budget for 2024, a deficit of £49k, is the cost of Niv's appointment (including his accommodation and employer's costs). This is the gap between our recurrent income and expenditure that we need to close. We do have reserves that will cover the shortfall in 2024, but by the end of 2025 we are edging very close to our emergency 'buffer' that we are required to maintain by the Charity Commission.

If able, would you be willing to start giving regularly to Christ Church (or increase your giving) to help cover the costs of Niv's appointment, so together we can be a church family with a heart for reaching people with the good news of Jesus?



Our forecast reserves at 31 December 2023:

General reserves £110k



Available for any purpose.

Repairs & Maintenance fund £0k



For one-off major works to the building.

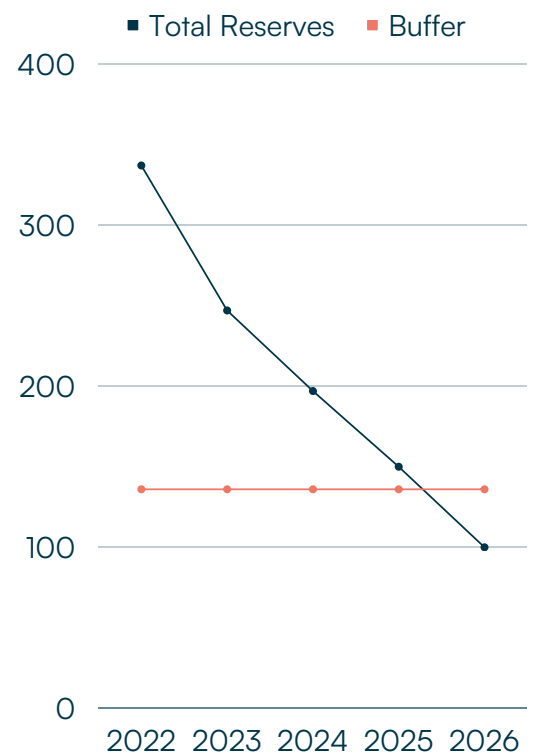
Emergency reserves £136k



This 'buffer' is calculated as two months' worth of expenditure.

Projected Reserves

(£'000)



Giving at Christ Church

Some frequently asked questions:

Where does our income come from?

Gifts from church members and associated Gift Aid are the greatest source of income. Many think the Church of England pays for our staff and activities but that isn't the case - we pay for everything and also make a contribution to the Church of England to help fund their central administration and funding of training institutions such as Oak Hill.

Who gives?

Out of 260 households, 75% give financially (73% in 2022). We are keen to encourage as many of the other 25% as are able to share in the blessing of giving financially to our church family's ministry.

Can I give a one-off donation rather than regular giving?

One-off donations are always very welcome. However, regular giving does help us plan for ongoing monthly costs, especially salaries.

I give my time rather than money - can the bible's teaching on 'giving' be interpreted more broadly to mean time and not just money?

We are very grateful to God for all those who give so generously of their time and gifts. We also know that some choose not to work full time (or at all) in order that they might have more time to serve. This obviously reduces the amount they can give financially, but even in this case it is good to be giving something regularly. Many use the principle of tithing (traditionally 10% of our income) as a guide, though some will give less and some more. Giving financially helps remind us everything we have comes from God.



£230

On average, households give around £230 per month. Many give more, many give less. All share in the joy of giving to God's ministry here.

What next?

- Pray
- Set up/revise your standing order with your bank.
- Complete a Gift Aid form (electronic version is on the Giving page of our website).
- Email our Finance Manager tarita@cccarn.org.uk with details of your giving, any Gift Aid form, and the month the giving will start to help us plan the finances accordingly.

We are encouraging people to respond by Friday 3 November.

Thank you so much.