



Giving money to support the mission and ministry of St Nicolas Newbury



St Nicolas Church Office, West Mills, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 5HG

Telephone: 01635 47018

Email: office@st-nics.org

Website: www.st-nics.org

Registered Charity No: 1128145

Every year at St Nic's we ask members of our church family to think again about what they are giving financially towards the mission and ministry of the church. Maybe you've joined us recently and haven't got around yet to thinking about this aspect of belonging to a church. Maybe you've been giving to St Nic's for many years (in which case, thank you for your generosity!). In either case we hope this booklet is helpful for you as you think about your giving for the year ahead.

The principles of Christian giving

In the Apostle Paul's letters to the Corinthian church he addresses the topic of giving several times, as he urges the church to give generously. Here are five pieces of helpful advice that we find from Paul. Christian giving should be:

- **Universal**

'Each one of you should set aside a sum of money' (1 Cor 16:2). Giving is not something reserved for just a few. It is for all God's people.

- **Regular**

'On the first day of every week....' (1 Cor 16:2). The Corinthians were instructed to set aside money on a regular basis. We should be thoughtful and committed in our giving not random and sporadic.

- **Proportional**

Paul told the Corinthians that each person should give *'according to your means'* (2 Cor 8:11) and *'in keeping with your income'* (1 Cor 16:2). We will not all be able to give equal amounts. What counts is not the size of the gift but the willingness with which it is given (2 Cor 8:12).

- **Sacrificial**

Giving is motivated by the grace and the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ – *'though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor'* (2 Cor 8:9). When we give sacrificially there will be things we will need to go without because of our giving.

- **Joyful**

'God loves a cheerful giver' (2 Cor 9:7). Giving shouldn't be guilt-ridden but rather a joyful response to God's loving generosity. It should spring from joy and lead to joy.

The costs of St Nic's Church

Per the categories below, our total budgeted routine expenditure for 2024 is just under £463,000 which works out at £1,264 per day.

- **Parish Share - £161,000**

This is the amount that we contribute towards the Oxford Diocese. Most of this covers the pay, housing, pension and associated costs of the three full-time paid clergy that we have at St Nic's (Rector, Associate Rector and Curate). Our Parish Share also goes towards the wider ministry of the Church of England and necessary administration such as Safeguarding and legal services.

- **Staff Costs - £112,000**

This covers the salaries of the administrative staff at St Nic's as well as our Youth Minister and Children's Ministry staff (but excluding the clergy – see 'Parish Share' above). It also includes training costs and other expenses for the whole staff team.

- **Church Buildings - £113,000**

Our church buildings are a wonderful resource for us. They cost a significant amount to run and maintain. In addition, we are always seeking to improve our buildings and facilities so that they are suitable for the expanding ministry of the church.

- **Ministry - £17,000**

This includes the running costs (materials, resources etc.) of the ministry areas within the church such as youth and children's ministry, evangelism and Sunday services.

- **Administration - £24,000**

This covers all office supplies, publicity, IT, phones, copying etc. It also includes fees for professional services such as our accountants.

- **Outreach giving - £36,000**

Each year we give 10% of our unrestricted income to mission and ministry outside our parish, both overseas and in the UK. This includes giving to our link missionaries from St Nic's. We believe that just as God has been generous to us through the giving of many people so we should be generous to others outside St Nic's.

In addition to the above, we'll continue to work on a number of projects related to our Vision including Prayer, Worship, Welcome and the development of our Church Building. We also look to continue to grow our three outreach projects: Hidden Treasures, Meet Monday and the CAP Debt Centre. Some of these projects will be funded either from legacy reserves or existing funds held specifically for these activities.

Thank you to our givers!

Over 80% of the income of St Nic's comes from the generous giving (including Gift Aid) of the congregation. We are totally reliant on each other's financial stewardship for the ongoing mission and ministry of our church.

Over 230 adults give regularly towards the ministry of St Nic's (this includes couples who give jointly through one regular payment). If you are one of these regular givers then thank you! You enable us to plan and to invest in ministry with confidence. And thank you to all those who have given in other ways such as through one-off gifts.

Our financial outlook for 2024

In 2024, we need to raise our congregational giving by £16,000.

After a few financially blessed years leading up to 2023, last year saw us needing to use some of our cash reserves to fund our ministries and the general running of the church. Due to ongoing financial challenges, we will initially need to use £41,000 of our cash reserves to deliver our budget in 2024. These reserves are there to be used in times of need, however this level of spend would all but exhaust our current free cash reserves.

We very much appreciate the ongoing impact of cost of living challenges, however we are appealing to the church family to increase giving by £16,000. With the associated Gift Aid of around £4,000, this will meet about half of the cash shortfall in the 2024 budget. This would then leave our free cash reserves in a significantly healthier position for 2025.

Your response

Reviewing our giving on a regular basis is a healthy habit to get into.

- If you don't currently give regularly, will you consider starting to give?
- If you do currently give, can you increase or do you need to decrease your giving?
- Could you consider making a one-off gift?

We are well aware that not everyone can increase their giving. Some people may need to decrease the amount that they give due to changing circumstances. We are extremely grateful for all gifts, whatever the size. And, whatever you give, please remember to give tax-efficiently wherever possible, through Gift Aid or payroll giving.

We believe that God has exciting plans for St Nic's church – he calls us to *be good news* and to *bring good news* in Newbury. As we seek to live out this calling and deliver our vision, we believe it is something worth supporting with our money.

If you have any questions about the church's finances contact our Treasurer, James Lancaster (treasurer@st-nics.org), or our Stewardship Secretary, Shalini Philip (stewardship@st-nics.org).