

St Mary's & ChristChurch Ely Finances 2021

1. **Thank you** to all of you, our donors. It takes over £200,000 a year to run these churches, and without your regular financial support for the everyday budget there in the background, the church couldn't function. **Thank you all!**

2. **Thank you for your response to this year's situation.** The 2021 budget was always going to be very challenging indeed. Our costs were rising by £15,000, at just the point when it seemed likely that our regular income would fall by about £15,000 a year as well. These two together show the size of the challenge we faced this year. The added costs have mostly materialised, and so have the expected falls in regular income, however, amazingly, at the end of August we are still just breaking even. How has this happened? Thanks to a number of new people joining our '**Parish Giving Scheme (PGS)**' and 44 existing donors increasing their commitments, our regular monthly income is almost back up to last year's level. We have also received far more in one-off general gifts than expected. Things are still tight, but the progress so far this year has been extraordinary. **To join the PGS go to www.parishgiving.org.uk/ Church Ref: Ely St Mary 140614251**

3. What about the **Building Transformation Project?** The good news is that we have sufficient funds to pay for most of the project, contractors have been appointed, and we hope work will start within the next few weeks. So how has this money been raised?

£293,000	Historic funds
£371,000	Church members
£245,000	Grants
£25,000	Interest and other sources
£934,000	Total

We are very grateful to so many people for this support. We do still need donations:

- We are currently expecting that one aspect of the project – the extended meeting space and gallery at the rear of the church – will need to be postponed until we can afford it, but it would be great if we could complete this at the same time.
- We will also need to pay for redecoration, chairs and fittings once the work is done.

A big '**thank you**' to all of you for your support. The bank details for further gifts are:

Name: PCC of Ely Parish St Mary's Church; Sort 30-93-05; a/c 00153625 (ref BTP)

4. **Mission and charity causes.** We aim to give 10% of our income (this year around £20,000) to causes other than ourselves. Half of this amount is in our regular budget, coming from your general donations, and this is paid each month to these 4 causes. The other 50% of this money comes (we hope) from donations made to these causes and from the various fundraising events. Our fundraising target for 2020 is £10,000, much of it for our 2021 link project Bin Twinning. Lockdowns this year have meant we haven't held any fundraising events, and this has left us well behind on this target, with under £2,000 given so far. It costs £45.00 to twin each bin. Bank details for gifts:

Name: PCC of Ely Parish St Mary's Church; Sort 30-93-05; a/c 00153625 (ref Twin)

But most of all, thank you!

Some FAQs and practical guidelines on giving

1. **It's voluntary!** The number 1 principle is (in St Paul's words): *Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion. (2 Cor 9 v 7)*. It's between you and God, and it's nobody else's business.
2. **It's related to income!** How much anyone gives has of course to be related to their ability to pay. Remember how Jesus praised a widow for giving just a couple of coppers, as she gave what she had.
3. **The tithe (10%)** What about the tithe, the 10% principle? Although it's an OT concept, there's nothing wrong with it as a starting point. I'm really glad that Katy and I were taught it when we were new Christians. It meant that our budget, including our mortgage, was based on 90% of our income, so that our giving wasn't too much of a strain. However if someone comes to faith having already got a big mortgage and a family budget that only just works as it is, then giving 10% would be much harder – indeed impossible, at least at first. Sometimes you have to work towards things.
4. **To church, other charities, or both?** Should our giving go all to the church, or should we split it between church and other good causes? It's up to you! Some teachers say one, some the other. Katy and I split ours, but with the majority going to Church.
5. **What if my partner doesn't share my faith?** Katy and I are fortunate in that we're both Christians, but what if your partner isn't? Should you try to insist on giving a substantial amount? My advice would be, 'not if you want your relationship to last!' As with all relationship stuff, financial things need to be worked through together, not unilaterally.
6. **What if you're really short of money?** If you couldn't possibly afford to give 10%, will God condemn you for that? What do you think? No – of course not! It's for you to work out together with your loving heavenly father.
7. **What if you're pretty rich?** Can you stop giving at 10%, sit back and relax? No; it doesn't work like that. 10% is just a starting point, a guideline for beginners.
If you've been blessed with riches – good! Enjoy them, and enjoy being more generous. As St Paul said to those whom God had blessed with wealth, it is *'so that you can be generous on every occasion, and your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.'* (2 Cor 9 v 11b)

It all comes down to this: God is generous to us, and wants us to be generous in our turn, because he wants us to become like him. Neither I nor anyone else can tell you what you should do. It's up to each of us to decide, within our own families, between us and God.

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For other gifts see bank details below (please specify reason – General gift or BTP or Twin):
A/C name PCC of Ely Parish St Mary's Church; Sort Code 30-93-05; a/c number 00153625

Piers Coutts Treasurer