

## **October 2018**

Dear members and friends of St Giles,

I am writing to you as part of our 2018 Giving focus for October.

### **Our theme this year is 'Generous God - Generous Giving'**

For Christians, we give because God has first given to us, the most well known verse in the Bible speaks of God's generous self giving - *'for God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him might not perish but have eternal life'* (John 3:16).

Thank you for all that you give and have given to St Giles over the years - Christian ministry is a partnership and I thank you for partnering with St Giles in supporting other churches in the diocese, and in supporting the ministry and witness of St Giles in West Bridgford. We have so much to be thankful for as a church, God has been generous to us, over the last few years we have seen our church community grow as more people have come to faith or moved to West Bridgford and joined us at St Giles. We've also seen church members move away - some for health or family reasons, some to support new churches in the diocese, a few to be ordained.

Our last focus upon giving as a church was in 2015. Then we were seeking to appoint a Children and Families worker to co-ordinate our work with young families and reach out to new families. Due to the increase in giving that came as a response to our campaign we were able to appoint Ellen Dann to that role in January 2016. Since then the work that she has led has blossomed and borne fruit.

Once again thank you for your support.

### **A brief overview of our church finances**

A full financial report was presented at our AGM in April and is available from St Giles church office and our Annual report is available to download from our website [www.stgilesparish.com](http://www.stgilesparish.com) so I am just going to give a brief overview here.

As a church each year we receive around £230,000 through planned giving, collections, rentals and church and hall hires. We also tend to receive some 'one off donations', bequests and legacies. We always try and maintain a balanced budget with reasonable reserves. In St Giles' last financial year, ending December 2017, our total expenditure was £242,000 - £15,000 more than the previous year due to increases in our parish share and an increase in the hours of Andy our Youthworker. In addition we funded the new doors and renovation of the porch and upgraded the sound and A/V Systems.

## What do we do with the money entrusted to us as a church?

### 1. We support the mission and vision of the Diocese

Our diocesan vision is to grow disciples wider, younger, and deeper. We seek to maintain a Christian witness in every community: areas of deprivation, suburbs, outer estates, chaplaincies, rural communities. Not every church is self supporting. St Giles' greater expenditure is our parish share. Each year we give around £120,000 to the diocese to support the wider ministry of the Church of England including clergy stipends.

To learn more about this a booklet is available at: <https://stgil.es/ministrycosts>

### 2. We invest in being a community of disciples seeking to witness to Jesus and serve him in West Bridgford and beyond

After parish share, our second largest expenditure is on staffing costs, including the salaries, and other associated costs of our Families worker, Youthworker, Administrator, Worship Co-ordinator and Musical director - Ellen, Andy, Claire, Hannah and Paul - these all work passionately to enable us to go deeper in our discipleship as a church and deeper in our worship of the Lord Jesus Christ. Without sustained giving and an increase in the level of giving we will not be able to continue to develop these ministries.

At a recent PCC meeting we made a commitment to plan our giving to our church mission partners. Rather than rely upon fundraising events we felt it was important to model as a church planned generous giving and so we agreed that from 2019 we would give 10% of our unrestricted income to our mission partners. This is a generous commitment and requires an increase in our regular giving to be achievable.

### 3. We seek to cover our running costs and maintain St Giles in good order

Thirdly, St Giles is a family and families have bills to pay, shopping to do and homes to look after. Churches are no different. Each year the running costs for the home increase - just as they do for our domestic households. We seek to be prudent in our expenditure and believe we are good stewards of the funds that are entrusted to us. However, one reality of church life is that though running costs increase year on year, giving tends to remain at the same level, or even drop as people move away or pass on, and new people take some time to become integrated fully into the church community.

## What can I do?

I am writing to you as a member of our church family and am asking you to do one of two things please.

### (1) Please consider giving regular to St Giles if you do not already do so

Perhaps you are new and have not yet felt ready to commit financially to St Giles?  
Perhaps you would like to give but have not known how?  
Perhaps your circumstances have made this a difficult consideration for you?

If you do not already support the work and ministry of St Giles, please consider doing so. We each need to play our part and the Lord invites us to trust him with our finances as with every other area of our lives. As our Archdeacon encouraged us recently - *'my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.'* (Philippians 4 v19)

## (2) If you do already give to St Giles please have a fresh look at your giving

St Paul wrote to the Corinthians:

*“On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.” (1 Corinthians 16:1- 2)*

Paul tells the church to think out the proportion of their income they are giving away (“a sum ... in keeping with your income”) and then to lay some aside regularly.

The Church of England’s suggestion for all who attend church regularly is that 5% of one’s income is a reasonable figure to begin with when considering giving to your church. I am aware too that there are some in our church who are able to give in excess of this guide and do so cheerfully and sacrificially and we as a church are grateful for that.

### How do I give to St Giles?

The best and easiest way for us as a church to handle regular planned giving is through a standing order. With online banking these are easy to set up.

Our church account for giving is:

<b>Account Name</b>	<b>St Giles</b>
<b>Sort code</b>	<b>77-22-43</b>
<b>Account Number</b>	<b>04096168</b>
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Your name</b>

We are in the process of moving our church bank accounts from Natwest to TSB and any standing orders currently with Natwest will be transferred automatically. Once you have set up your Standing order please email Chris Lane our church treasurer at [treasurer@stgilesparish.com](mailto:treasurer@stgilesparish.com) All correspondence is treated in strictest confidence.

If you are a UK taxpayer and your donation is eligible for Gift Aid, please also ensure that you have completed a Gift Aid declaration form (attached) and return this to Chris Lane our Treasurer. This will enable to St Giles to reclaim an additional 25p for every £1 donated.

Once again, thank you for the ways you already give to St Giles, if you have any questions or concerns please don’t hesitate to get in touch with me.

Yours in Christ,



Rector – St Giles