



**SUPPORTING THE MISSION AND WORK
OF**

YOUR CHURCH!

There are some that say that the Church is always asking for money.....

.....but it does a lot of other things too:

Celebrating baptisms and weddings, offering thanks for a person's life when they die and opening its doors for community events, but before you lose interest, **PLEASE** keep reading - there's something to make you smile at the end.

What is the Church?

Is it a building?



Or is it people?

The church is always asking for money because **IT SELDOM HAS ENOUGH** to do all its **needs** to do and **wants** to do. The cost of running the church increases each year, just as the cost of running our homes increases each year as well. There are buildings to maintain, paths to repair, light and heating to pay for, organs and pianos to tune and overhaul and staff to pay.

St. Paul refers to the Church as the body of Christ, with each member having a different, but important role within it, but St. Teresa of Avila made perhaps more sense of that by saying,

**'Christ has no body now on earth but yours,
no hands but yours,
no feet but yours,
yours are the eyes through which
Christ's compassion
is to look out to the earth,
yours are the feet by which He is to go
about doing good**



and yours are the hands by which He is to bless us now.'

We could also add,

'Christ has no purse but yours,

yours is the money that enables good works to happen.'

Although the Biblical guideline for giving is to tithe, that is, to give 10% of our income to the church's mission and maintenance, the question for today is whether this should be before or after tax, after all other necessary bills are paid, or what?

The important principal is that we each give a percentage of our income. Some will be in a position to give more than others and so instead the Church of England asks its members to give 5%.

During the next year, it's expected that it will cost £144,000 to run the United Parish of Chinnor, Aston Rowant, Sydenham and Crowell.

- **Currently each member of the electoral role gives an average amount of £500 a year.**
- **Obviously, some give more, and others, less, but in order to meet our costs, each member will need to give an average of £600.**
- **This means that an increase of 20% from each member is needed.**

Probably the most famous announcement on the London Underground is 'Mind the gap'. This is good advice for us to reconsider occasionally concerning our giving. Do you give to the church on a regular basis? (A big **THANK YOU** if you already do).

- Is your giving the same as it was last year? 10 years ago? 25 years ago?

If it is, maybe it's time for a rethink and ask yourself, is there a gap between what I give and the 5% that the church would like me to give?

Can I do something to **mend** the gap?

If you can, then what's the next step? You'll need to prayerfully consider what increase you'd like to make and set aside this new percentage each week, or month, before anything else.

Now maybe that's just too hard and you really can't afford to make a percentage increase right now, but perhaps reflecting on your lifestyle and casual spending could help the church? One of the major supermarkets uses the advertising slogan of 'every little helps' in order to encourage our spending in their shops, but it's true:

Every little DOES help, so can you give in the following way?

- A newspaper costs about £1.30. Could you forsake just one newspaper a week and give an extra £1.30 to the church?
- A bottle of wine costs on average about £8. Could you drink a little less and make that bottle last longer, giving the church an extra £4?
- If you're a smoker, it costs you 50p for each cigarette. Could you give just one up each day and give the church an extra £3.50 instead?
- If you eat out, how much do you tip the waiter? Do you give the church as much as this? Just think how strange it is that a £5 note seems a lot when we're about to put it in the offering, but how small it seems when we take it to the supermarket, but

.....by just making these small changes it could make a **BIG** difference to the church.



Thinking further ahead....

Christians believe that we are God's stewards, entrusted to use His gifts for the good of our family and our church family. **In thanksgiving, we should also take writing our wills seriously.** The New Testament teaches that we should give generously, freely and cheerfully and in accordance with our means. Once you have made provision for your loved ones, you have the opportunity to make a lasting gift to God-

.....by leaving a legacy to His church.

This is both one of the **most valuable and lasting** ways you can continue to support mission and ministry in your community and a way to

thank God for all the blessings you've received in your lifetime. **It can really help to keep the church alive.**

JOKE

The Vicar stood before the congregation and said, 'I have bad news, I have good news and I have more bad news.' The congregation got quiet. 'The bad news is that the church needs a new roof.' The congregation groaned. 'The good news is: we have enough money to pay for it.' A sigh of relief was heard rippling through the pews. 'The bad news is: it's still in your pockets.'

Please help as much as you can. Thank you. Every blessing,
Maggie

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The Rev'd Maggie Thorne Rector of the United Parish of Chinnor, Aston Rowant, Sydenham and Crowell