

## A few words from the Vicar ....

*"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7*

Money is not something I like talking about but, as the Church Council has designated September as our 'gift month', I guess I'd better make an exception!

I take the view that the amount we each give to the work of the Church (and, for that matter, to charity generally) is a matter for prayerful consideration by each of us before God. God loves a cheerful giver and, therefore, I'm not a fan of 'in your face' demands for money from the pulpit.



So, why are we holding a gift month?

Well, Christ Church, like many other charities these days, is feeling the pinch financially.

And it's not difficult to understand the reasons for this, is it? As a parish, our financial commitments have increased yet times are tight and, generally, people these days have less money to spare.

Food and fuel prices are increasing at a time when wages are under pressure and some find themselves out of work.

Price increases (inflation is currently 5%) affect the Church as much as anyone else. Furthermore, now that I'm in post, the parish has to bear some of the direct costs of employing me (about £7,500). Added to which, this year the Diocese expects us to contribute £47,367 to diocesan funds (last year we paid £44,371).

Most of our income comes from the generous giving of members of the congregation, supplemented by a series of fund raising activities. Indeed, the trend so far this year (due to our fund raising efforts) suggests that we are heading for a slight increase in our income compared to last year.

This is commendable considering that many are under serious financial pressure!

Nonetheless, this year Christ Church is still heading for a shortfall of about £6,000. That's without taking into account the unexpected or the fact that the post of Verger remains vacant and, should we appoint someone, we will need to pay them a wage.

Hence the Church Council's decision to hold a gift month!

Whether you are able to attend church regularly or not, the gift month is an important opportunity for you to prayerfully and thoughtfully make a one-off gift to support the work of Christ Church.

If you are able to help us at this time, then just pop your gift into the envelope inside this magazine and either place it on the collection plate in Church or drop it off at the Vicarage.

Of course, there will be those who are already giving as much as they are able. Let me emphasise, if you are in this situation then please do not feel obliged to give any more than you are already doing.

Remember, none of us is under any compulsion but God loves a cheerful giver!

*Dave*