



# ST ANDREW'S, CHESTERTON

*A thriving, open and welcoming church community for all ages*

[www.standrews-chesterton.org.uk](http://www.standrews-chesterton.org.uk)

**To:** Members of the Church Electoral Roll (and others who may themselves members of St Andrew's)

## **Annual Review of Giving & Stewardship Sunday (24 January)**

You may remember that I now write to you each year to give an early report on the finances of the past year and the budget for the year just beginning. We allocate a Sunday on which to launch this and to encourage church members to review their giving for the year ahead.

This time last year the national (and international) financial mood was pretty bleak and so we decided that, on the biblical principle of years of famine and years of plenty, it was fair enough to budget for a small deficit; at the same time we still budgeted for an increase in pledged and other giving of 3.2%. The good news is that this target was reached; the bad news, however, is that unexpected expenditure left us with a rather larger deficit than anticipated.

In looking to this year, the PCC has decided that it would be right to produce a balanced budget. This is ambitious, not just because of last year's outcome but for the following two reasons. First, our ministry share to the diocese will be slightly above the norm – as we are aware that we are comparatively well off as a congregation and should be in a position to help those with fewer resources. Secondly, we have also committed ourselves in the coming years to taking on the burden of paying for our part-time pastoral co-ordinator, as funding for that post is only guaranteed for three years: so this year we have budgeted for a small proportion of that cost.

**All-in-all this means that we need to increase our planned and other giving from church members by 10% this year.** Now clearly not everyone will be able to afford this – indeed, some may need to reduce their giving this year because of their own financial circumstances. But I look at it this way: if on average we increase our giving by 5% as a congregation and, at the same time, our number of pledged givers increases by 5% (i.e. six more people or couples), then we should achieve our target.

Specifically can I ask that

- If you already give regularly to St Andrew's, would you please review how much you feel able to give?
- If you do not currently give regularly, would you consider doing so? St Andrew's flourishes because almost everyone contributes, rather than relying on a core few.
- If you do not currently give by standing order, would you consider doing so? This gives the church a steady, predictable income, and requires much less administration from our treasurer and collection counters.

Will you please prayerfully consider this? Please use the response form. I am very encouraged that the response to last year's letter was (bar £107!) bang on target. Thank you!

I am also writing to invite you to attend the church's annual meeting, which this year will follow the morning service (i.e. at about 11.30am) on **Sunday 25 April**, in the Hall. The service will include a slideshow looking back over 2009 and the meeting will be followed by a bring and share lunch. The annual report can be viewed on the website from 1 April (together with the minutes of last year's meeting) and copies will be also available at the back of church.

With my prayers and warmest Christian greetings

*Nick*

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