



## CLOSING THE GAP

### To all parishioners of Christ the King Church

#### **Our finances**

Christ the King Church's finances have remained reasonably stable for some time but by the end of 2025, we faced a gap between what we received (primarily from collections) and what we spent of around £10k. We have had to use some of our reserves to fund this gap but this is not sustainable over the longer or even medium term particularly with major upcoming projects such as repairing the Porch House roof.

#### ***So why are we in this position?***

The primary reason is that collections overall have not risen in line with our increasing costs.

Most of our collections come from those with standing orders but unfortunately the number of parishioners contributing by standing order is gradually reducing and the amount being donated is falling, too.

Over the past three years, for example, the number of standing orders has fallen from 91 to 84.

As for the amount donated by standing orders, (disregarding the Covid years), 2025 saw the lowest amount donated since 2015 – even allowing for those donating via the Dona system. Cash donations fared no better. In fact 2025 saw the lowest amount of cash donated since 2007 – 19 years ago.

All parishioners will know from their own experiences that costs are rising. The overall economic situation is not improving sufficiently to notice any improvements and so it is with our individual households. And our costs in running the church, presbytery and Porch House are all on the increase, too. We have tried hard to keep our finances in check but many of those costs are not so easy to control – electricity, gas, insurances and council tax continue to rise each year, for example.

#### ***So what do we need to do?***

It is important to take steps now to address this gap both through managing our costs but also by looking to increase our income.

We have already reviewed other sources of income such as room rentals and these were all increased across the board at the beginning of the year.

Now we need to explore our collections. If parishioners haven't individually reviewed their donations since Covid, say, then now's the time to do it. If, for example, every standing order was increased by £5 per month then, allowing for those who gift-aid, we'd see an annual increase in collections of around £6k which helps reduce the gap. But we need more than this. Now we do recognise that some may not be able to manage contributing any more than they already do, particularly in the present climate. But others may be able to give more and so the finance committee is asking parishioners to look at their contributions now and see what they can do to help us close the gap of £10k.

For those who usually donate by cash then we would ask if you can switch to contributing by standing order. This will give us more certainty over the regular receipt of funds. And, if you're a tax payer then perhaps you could gift aid your contribution and let us collect an extra 25% from the tax authorities with no cost to yourselves?

### ***What of the Porch House roof?***

The Porch House roof repairs are currently estimated to cost around £60k.

Fortunately, thanks to the past generosity of parishioners, we have managed to build up strong reserves. But unfortunately, we have already had to call on those reserves to help meet our day-to-day finances and now our reserves have reduced from £120k to £100k. While our reserves may look healthy at the moment, we have many other renovation and repair jobs that we need to do over the next few years so we cannot use all our reserves on the Porch House roof project.

We are exploring a number of options – looking for more potential contractors; deciding whether to phase the roof repairs over 2/3 years; and identifying charities that give grants towards the costs of repairs to heritage buildings such as our 15<sup>th</sup> century Porch House.

This takes time and we'll come back in a while and outline what we think is the best approach.

### ***How do I increase or set up a standing order***

If you're able to increase your existing standing order then you can probably do it online through your own bank/building society and if you gift-aid, please remember to add your gift aid number in the reference field so we can readily identify your donations to claim tax relief.

If you want to set up a new standing order and can gift-aid your donations then you'll need to complete a Gift Aid Declaration form. Go to the church website at <https://ctkandholycross.org.uk/Donations> where you will find information about setting up a new standing order. It also explains how to gift aid your standing order donation if you're a taxpayer.

If you can't gift aid but would like to donate by standing order then you can do it online or by contacting your bank. The church's account number is 68497342, the sort code is 52-10-03 and the account name is "Parish of Christ the King, Thornbury". Please add "Donation" to the reference field.

If you need any help then do please get in touch with me at [treasurer.thornbury.christtheking@cliftondiocese.com](mailto:treasurer.thornbury.christtheking@cliftondiocese.com) or write to me c/o the church office at Christ the King Church, 11 Castle Street, Thornbury, BS35 1HA; or

leave a message and your contact details at the office at 01454 412223 and I'll get in touch with you.

### ***Finally***

In summary, we need parishioners to help close the gap and to keep our finances on a secure footing so do please look at what you currently give and consider increasing your offertory donation. We are very dependent upon your continued generosity to support our parish.

Thank you

Chris Hurford

Treasurer Christ the King Church

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