

February 2019

Dear Member of the Holy Trinity Church Family,

I am writing to you as part of our annual Commitment review.



The next Commitment Sunday will be the 17th February 2019. This year we are looking at our Time, Talents, Money and Giving on the Sunday's between 27th January and the end of February 2019. We do both individually and collectively have so much to give thanks for! As 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 Holy Trinity over the years - Christian ministry is a partnership and I would like to thank you for partnering with Holy Trinity in supporting other churches in the diocese of Leeds, and in supporting the ministry and witness of Holy Trinity in Ripon and the surrounding area. We have so much to be thankful for as a church, God has been generous to us, to be a part of such a vibrant church is a real blessing which I am sure we all appreciate. We have as a church family seen people come and go over the last few years and I am genuinely excited that we currently have 2 Alpha courses running at the start of this year after seeing so many people from the wider community attend our different Christmas services. None of this would have been possible without the input of all those who supported, helped and took part in these services. Thank you.

Last year we launched the Arches Refurbishment Project and we have already seen and now benefiting from the completion of the refurbishment of the main toilets in the Arches. This year if all goes according to plan the kitchen will be fully refurbished, it is in almost daily use and has served Holy Trinity and other users so well over the last 15 years, this would not be possible without individuals' financial commitment to pay for the cost of this work. Thank you for your generosity in enabling this work to take place.

A brief overview of our church finances

A full financial report will be presented at our Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 15th April (paper copies will be available) and on the 17th February at both of our Morning Services a presentation will be given, so I am just going to give a brief overview here.

As a church each year we receive around £220,000 though planned giving, collections, church and arches hires. We also tend to receive some 'one off donations', in the last year we have also received a substantial gift in the form of a bequest. We always try and maintain a balanced budget and as a PCC have decided to build up a modest reserve.

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

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

"Our diocesan vision is to equip confident clergy to enable confident Christians to live and tell the good news of Jesus Christ across our young Diocese."

This makes it clear that the vision is for every corner of the diocese seeking to maintain a Christian witness in every community: areas of deprivation, suburbs, outer estates, chaplaincies, rural communities. Not every church is self supporting. Holy Trinity greatest expenditure is our parish share. This has seen significant increases in the requests we have received over the last 3 years, in line with a redistribution of costs across the whole of the diocese; in 2017 we were able to fulfil the Share request in full, in 2018 despite increasing our giving to the diocesan budget we were unable to pay all that was requested. After being discussed at length by the PCC, the PCC have committed to try to pay £118,500, this will be a rise on 2018 but less than what has been requested, the level of our financial commitment has been communicated to the Diocesan Secretary & Bishop. The diocesan share goes to support the wider ministry of the Church of England including clergy stipends. To learn more about this a booklet is available at: <https://www.leeds.anglican.org/finance/parish-share>

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

After parish share, our second largest expenditure is on staffing costs, including the salaries, and other associated costs of our, Young Peoples worker, Administrators, Cleaner & IT Support - Matt, John, Alison, Ruth and John - 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 develop these ministries further. At Holy Trinity we are also committed to giving away 10% of our income to support other Christian Missions and Organisations - our church mission partners. These organisations and individuals rely on this support and we have just reviewed who our Mission Partners are for the next 3 years. For more details please see the MPG Letter on pink paper or the display board in the Arches. This is only achievable through the generous commitment of the whole Holy Trinity family through regular giving.

3. We seek to cover our running costs and maintain Holy Trinity in good order

Holy Trinity 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 Holy Trinity if you do not already do so

Perhaps you are new and have not yet felt ready to commit financially to Holy Trinity? 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 Holy Trinity, 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. Paul writing to the church in Philippi stated – *'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 Holy Trinity 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 Corinth 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 that there are many 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.

Once you have set up your standing order please email our church treasurer at finance@holytrinityripon.org.uk All correspondence is treated in strictest confidence.

If you are a basic rate UK taxpayer and your donation is eligible for Gift Aid, please also ensure that you have completed a Gift Aid declaration form and return this to the Church Office marked for the 'Treasurer'. This will enable to Holy Trinity to reclaim an additional 25p for every £1 donated.

To enable Holy Trinity to budget for the coming year please would you fill out a 'Commitment Sunday Form' (blue paper) these are available from church. The form should also be used to commit to practical ways of serving in the many different ministries at Holy Trinity.

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

Christopher Butler

Yours in Christ, Vicar Holy Trinity Ripon

Holy Trinity Ripon

Rev Chris Butler Holy Trinity Church, Kirkby Road, Ripon HG4 2EY

01765 690930 office@holytrinityripon.org.uk holytrinityripon.org.uk