

SWINDON OLD TOWN PARTNERSHIP OF CHURCHES

Christ Church with St Mary's

The Reverend Simon Stevenette
Christ Church Vicarage
26 Cricklade Street
Swindon, Wiltshire
SN1 3HG

The Parish Office
36 Cricklade Street
Swindon
SN1 3HB

Study line & FAX: 01793 529166
Parish Office: 01793 522832
& FAX: 01793 617237
E-mail: parishoffice@christchurchswindon.co.uk

CHRISTMAS 2008 URGENT CALL FOR HELP PLEASE

Dear Fellow members of our congregation

Thank you for all the help and support you give towards our Christian mission and ministry flowing from Christ Church and St Mary's out into the local community, both practically, spiritually and financially.

We are excited to see the many ways in which, under God, we are growing as individual disciples of Jesus and as a Christian Community.

However we have a major problem which we must address; quite simply we are not paying our way financially. For many years we have survived on the generosity of the few, financial reserves and occasional legacies. This year we are projecting a deficit of £24,000.

For the first time ever, we have taken the very painful step of stopping, for the time being, our monthly standing order for our part of the parish share which goes towards the cost of running the Bristol Diocese. It is our intention to reinstate this as soon as possible.

Our parish share to the diocese is worked out on a membership of 197 adults with the potential to give £603 each a year. This works out at each person giving £11.59 a week.

Our expenditure is at a minimum. However we have the vision and plans to advance God's mission into the future, sharing the good news of Jesus and caring for our buildings which desperately need increased financial support. Therefore to cover all of our costs we need each member to give nearer on average £20 per week to ensure our long term viability.

At the moment our giving per head is at the very low end of the Swindon Deanery which is surprising considering we are being blessed by God in so many ways and we know you are generous hearted as people. On average this year, each of our members gave £7.33 per week compared to our potential assessment of £11.59 per week.

Please can you help us balance the books before the end of the calendar year?
Firstly with a one off donation as a Christmas present to Christ Church?
Secondly depending on your own individual circumstances could you pledge £5 a week, £10 a week, £15 a week or £20 a week. Or more throughout 2009 to help get our Church on a more solid financial footing longer term? Ideally by standing order and wherever possible through Gift Aid, (so we can reclaim the tax on your donation) which makes such a difference.

Please if you are already giving sacrificially and have recently responded, thank you and let others join with you in sharing the financial burden.

Money is part of God's gift to us all and how we spend it and share our God given resources are profoundly spiritual issues.
What does it mean for each one of us to be a member of the Christ Church family and play our part as wholeheartedly as possible?
The Church of England nationally recommends that each member gives 5% of their income to the Church which allows another 5% to be given to other worthwhile causes which inspire us.

We have plans to tackle our financial plight with the help of Bishop Mike's "Giving" Consultants from the Bristol Diocese in 2009 but it would be an enormous encouragement if we could make a major step forward financially at the end of 2008 - please send donations to the Parish Office 36 Cricklade Street, SN1 3HB, the contact details of our Gift Aid secretary Stephen Grosvenor and PCC Treasurer Ian Walters are in the weekly notice sheet and on our web site.
[www.christchurchswindon.co.uk]

Thank you for considering this request prayerfully.
Do speak to us at any time about the issues we have raised in this letter.
We are confident that God will guide us forward individually and together with our finances.
Let's be imaginative and have fun as we give back to God and his church from what we have, remembering how much he has given to us in Jesus Christ.

Every blessing over Christmas and into the New Year.

John and Pam
Churchwardens

Simon
Vicar