

What is it worth? Money, us and St Mark's

This is the time of year when we have to look at our money. We have to ask how much do we need to enable St Mark's to function effectively and to do what we are being called to do in God's world.

This year the review is more urgent because we already expect a deficit of about £5,000 in 2023. However, next year, if we want to operate at the same level without making cuts, in particular having an associate vicar, we need £25,000 more. The current contract for the associate vicar ends in mid-2025. The reason the increase is so large is because we have been using legacy money to fund various projects, including the associate vicar role, but the legacies have now been used up.

That is a big jump, so we thought it essential not only to let you know that the money is needed but also to ask these questions, "Is it worth it? What do I value about St Mark's? What should we be resourcing?" And how much do we want to give to support the activities that make St Mark's so worthwhile?

We thought it was important to give ourselves the time to think this through together. So, we will be focusing on different aspects of this between October 13th and November 24th.

13 Oct	Michael Bayley exploring the ideas set out above.
20 Oct	Beth Keith and others on challenging poverty.
27 Oct	Boyd Morgan on diversity and inclusion.
3 Nov	All Age - Being a community of faith. Followed by a church lunch.
10 Nov	Jonathan Williamson. A wider view of Remembrance.
17 Nov	Janet Morley on living a questioning and liberal faith.
24 Nov	Beth Keith rounding it up and considering St Mark's as a safe church.

This cannot be a one-way process. We must know what you think and what your priorities are. Therefore, we are asking you to fill in an anonymous questionnaire. Please look on this as an opportunity and not a chore. We want this to be a process in which everyone has the chance to contribute.

A questionnaire may seem a solitary thing to do, so alongside that we hope that people will talk to one another about why we come to St Mark's and what we hope for. It will be very good if this happens after services. Why not come to the lunch on 3 Nov and chat then, but we also hope that it will happen on all sorts of other occasions as well. Try to have good conversations about this when you have the opportunity.

David Armstrong, our treasurer, has produced a list of financial Questions and Answers. These, and the church's full accounts, are available on the website. If you have questions or want to know more about our finances please talk to, or email, David.

By the end of this 'season' we hope we will be clearer collectively about why we come to St Mark's, what we value about it, and will be able to decide with confidence that, 'This is what I feel able to give over the next year as an expression of my commitment to God and the work of this Christian community of St Mark's.'

On behalf of the Stewardship Group of the PCC:

David Armstrong, Michael Bayley, Michael Hunt, Beth Keith, Amanda Pilkington, Anna Ryder, Chris Ware.