

Dear friend

Stewardship and Thanksgiving 2023 – Stewardship in a new season

We are writing to you as the Churchwardens of All Saints with Holy Trinity. As Churchwardens, we are responsible for our parish church, and will be working together with our clergy and church council (PCC), as we enter our period without a rector.

We are so grateful for the ministry and leadership of Revd. Wendy, who is now leaving us for Canterbury Cathedral. She has overseen a period of change and growth in our “sacred space”. This growth and change have been built on an unashamedly inclusive outlook, celebrating the diversity of our community and all God’s children, both in this place and further afield.

We are determined that this work and ministry will continue as we head into 2024. We are entering a new season, and it seems apt to reflect on this verse from Isaiah:

*“Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old.
Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; shall you not know it?
I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”*

We don’t know what the next stage in our Parish life together looks like, but we can be confident that God will “do a new thing” and continue working through our shared life together.

Every year, we look ahead to the next year considering what our financial needs will be as a church. The enclosed leaflet explains the budget we would like to commit to, and our current projected income. Over the last few years, even during this time of cost-of-living concerns, we have managed to break even. This has been because of your generosity, but also because of the growth in our congregation. However, as you can see, we need to find an extra £250 per week to maintain our ministry.

We are only able to maintain our ministry, because of the regular giving of church members and therefore we hope that the information attached will help to inform your response. As the leaflet explains, stewardship is not just about money, and everyone is a key part of our church community, whether you are able to give regularly or not. What is important, is giving with a cheerful heart – your gift may be of time or talents, rather than financial and we are reassured that God will use our gifts.

Like many of you, we know that our life together will feel uncertain next year – we know that the recruitment of a new Rector will not be a quick or straightforward process. It is our fervent desire that we maintain and grow our ministry, demonstrating to ourselves, the diocese and our wider community, the importance of an unashamedly inclusive and welcoming ministry in our town.

Yours in the love of Christ,

Gwyn Bates and Nicky Morgan

All Saints with Holy Trinity Church Churchwardens