

St ANDREW'S CHURCH HAMPTON, EVESHAM



Treasurer's Mid-Term Statement

At the end of the third quarter in each church financial year, the treasurer's thoughts turn to generating a budget for the following year. It sounds easy - just look at the last twelve months and add a percentage to cover for rises in inflation etc: sadly that's not the whole matter. The treasurer has to try to understand why each specific amount of money was spent, whether the church will require that item again during the coming year and if so, will it be the same, more or (hopefully) less. Trying to calculate how much money will be donated during the next year is even harder – will the congregation be prepared to give a little extra, will congregation numbers grow to generate the additional cash required or will they diminish taking away any gains that have been made in other areas.

However a budget for 2013 has been generated but, as has happened over the last few years, it can only be balanced by drawing down yet more money from our running account. If all of the predicted elements in the calculations are correct and everything else stays as they are then the indications are that St Andrew's Church will run out of funds part way through 2014. It will, of course, be possible to hold off this situation for a couple more years or so by collapsing the account that had been set aside to help fund necessary improvements within the church but this course of action will only create a delay.

To add to the treasurer's many problems, St Andrew's church has just undergone its Quinquennial Inspection/Survey and although a reasonable value for the surveyor's professional fee and for the repairs to the known problem areas has been indicated within the budget, the survey may have discovered additional weaknesses or problems in other areas of the fabric: they too will require remedial action to halt any additional degradation. This will necessitate the drawing down of even more money from our over-stretched resources.

OK - so now you know the worst case scenario. **DON'T PANIC** – it's not a done deal yet and hopefully things can be turned round. It will mean changes, it will require a great deal of effort from all of us and it will be easy. No, the John Martin Charity can't pull us out of this one – we have to do the job ourselves.

So just how can we generate additional money to meet the indicated shortfall? In theory it's simple: -

- 1 Take a look at the actual amount you currently donate, in terms of hard cash, to St Andrew's Church – please ignore what you give to other charities or the value of the unpaid church work that you undertake as neither of these, worthy as they may be, contributes towards our working funds.
- 2 Now the hard bit – can you afford to give a little more each week? If the answer is no then the second question to ask yourself is – do you pay tax?
- 3 If the answer is yes to this then, with your written permission, it might just be possible for us to squeeze the tax you pay on your donation out of the Inland Revenue – it's called Gift Aiding your donation: it is simple and you won't feel a thing. If you like to help us by Gift Aiding your donation please contact Shirley Lynch or Roy Buffery.
- 4 Now - what if you really can't donate anymore and please don't worry if you really can't as you can still help us by arranging for your donation to be paid direct through your bank in equivalent amounts each month or each quarter. This way you won't have to worry if you miss church a few times as your donation will still be paid. If you would like to try this method contact Roy Buffery.
- 5 If you are able to increase your donation then that would be wonderful - even small increases add up over the year and every penny received could and will make a difference. If you are also a tax payer and you don't do so already you could make your all or part of your donation go even further by Gift Aiding it (as indicated above) and/or making your donation direct from your bank.

However just to pay the anticipated Parish Share valuation for 2013 we would have to increase the income that comes from you, the congregation, by around £11,500.00 based upon the anticipated returns for 2012. Put slightly differently - the necessary increase to the income we receive from all donations coupled with the tax returned to us by the Inland Revenue under the Gift Aid scheme will be required to increase by around 50% – this is just too great an increase for you to meet - you could, of course, prove me wrong.

There are other ways of generating additional revenue using the tried and trusted methods such as tombola's, fêtes, raffles, coffee mornings, bring and buys etc. – all these require the one thing we are short of – people who are willing to come forward, get into action and make them work, time after time after time!

Alongside the generation of additional income we will have to introduce a full economy plan. Work in this area has already begun and we are reducing our stock-holding of consumables, trying to make all purchases at the most competitive rates possible. We already purchase our gas and electricity at *low* rates through an industrial group scheme but, as energy costs are beginning to rise countrywide, these savings are expected to be reduced and the budget has been adjusted accordingly.

This is fine but all of us must be prepared to buy into this action and yes I do mean **ALL** of us – there can be no exceptions if we are to survive. We are, compared to most other churches, able to keep our church at a reasonable temperature which, in turn, helps keep the fabric stable and helps drive down the number of fabric repairs needed. However additional but small savings could be made by turning down the thermostat a notch or two and by reducing the number of lights on at any one time. This will reduce our *comfort* level but it will have a long term effect on the fabric of the church – a choice that your treasurer would like to delay if at all possible.

We are also looking at ways to generate future income through bequests and wills but this, by its very nature, is strictly a long term approach and we still need to generate money now to survive.

Action is being considered to institute a number of upgrades to make our church building more 'user' friendly and hopefully, by allowing other groups to use it for exhibitions, plays, concerts etc we may we may be able to generate funds thus far not available to us.

It is also hoped that our new 'Amenity Area' (largely to be funded through the generosity of the John Martin Charity) will be completed within the next few months and will work as we have envisaged generating additional funds.

With prayer, hard work and no small measure of God's help we will overcome our current difficulties and be empowered to take forward the mission of St Andrew's church and its congregation for many years to come.

Roy Buffery

Treasurer