

# The Parish of Holy Trinity with St Columba



## GENEROSITY WEEK 2024



Generosity Week is an annual event where we are invited, with the whole of the Church of England, to explore God's generosity. Together we reflect on God's generosity to us and explore how we can grow generosity in our churches.

Developing a generous culture is essential for enabling our churches to have a sustainable and growing ministry and we hope that by the end of Generosity Week we'll all have a deeper understanding of God's generosity towards us and how we can live more generously in our daily lives.

While Generosity Week provides an opportunity for our churches to focus on our giving and generosity, we also have a particular financial challenge to meet this year- more on the fourth page.

Our 'week' will begin with a joint service at Holy Trinity on 29<sup>th</sup> September focusing on generosity and gratitude, followed by Harvest at both churches on 6<sup>th</sup> October and continue into October.

Holy Trinity and St Columba PCC



## Reflection from the Vicar

**Everything that it is to be us, God wants to put to use,**  
yet we constantly hold back from the one who has loved us  
into existence.

The following prayer, written by St Ignatius of Loyola, Founder  
of the Jesuits, helps us to reflect on what we give to God.  
Called *Suscipe*, (pronounced a bit like Sushi, the food),  
it is Latin for ***Take, Receive***:

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,  
my memory, my understanding,  
and my entire will,  
All I have and call my own.

You have given all to me.  
To you, Lord, I return it.

Everything is yours; do with it what you will.  
Give me only your love and your grace,  
that is enough for me.

*St Ignatius of Loyola*

It is above all else a prayer of letting go of everything and giving  
back to God what is God's in the first place. The *Suscipe* is a  
difficult prayer to pray because it's a meditation on what we  
ought to offer and give to God - all of our possessions and  
ourselves along with them. Therefore, we might say this prayer  
when we don't really mean it, or we say it when we don't really  
want to mean it!

As humans, we tend to hold back and so our whole life is a journey towards this prayer, a journey of an unfolding of God's grace in our lives.

What hopefully does happen over a lifetime is that we grow more and more in our ability to give of ourselves. We learn that the more we give, the more we know we can give. In this way we may eventually approach God with nothing holding us back. God continues to pour out grace and love, regardless.

During Generosity Week we can use the *Suscipe* to reflect on how much God has given, how much God is generous to us and how much we want to be generous in response. Who knows, what fruit that might bear...

*Yours in Christ,  
Sam*



'You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us.' 2 Corinthians 9:11

## **Current Financial Challenge**

We used to run a stewardship campaign every couple of years to ask you to think about your giving to the parish. We haven't done this for five years now, partly because of the disruption of COVID but also because we've been aware of the financial challenges facing us all. We thank you for all you have given to the parish.

However, our income is no longer enough to allow us to continue spending as we currently do. We've made a deficit for the last four years and last year there was a loss of £21,900 to the general fund. In spite of careful management of costs, we are likely to continue the trend this year with a further possible deficit of £25,000 leaving only a small reserve of £9,000 in the General Fund.

So despite the challenges of the current cost of living crisis, we are asking everyone to review their regular giving to our parish, and perhaps make an additional one off payment towards this year's projected deficit - not just to balance the books but more importantly to allow us to keep and grow our ministry to our community.

## **How Much Should I Give?**

The Christian vision is that we do not pay a flat rate subscription to our church but decide individually and prayerfully how much to give - and give cheerfully! What we give to God is between us and Him. He does expect that we will give to the best of our ability in recognition of His generosity to us but both He and we would hate for you to find yourself in financial difficulty as a result!

# What Your Generosity Could Achieve

Every additional donation will help with the costs of the mission of Holy Trinity and St Columba: maintaining our buildings, keeping them warm and safe and enabling the many services and activities that take place within the Parish to continue and grow.

For example:

£90 a month pays for the music licences needed to sing our hymns



£25 a week is needed for our printing and copying for services, news sheets etc.

£460 pays for the Churches heating, light and power for a week



£900 enables us to keep in touch by post and telephone each year



and some other costs...

This year we pay  
£106,500 in our  
Parish Share to the  
Diocese



£7000 is needed  
each year for annual  
maintenance of our  
roofs and gutters

£6800 is the annual  
cost of insuring our  
buildings



**Thank you** for all you give to the parish and for exploring  
with us God's generosity.

And now some practical bits

## Ways of Giving to the Parish

There are various ways to give, depending on your circumstances and preferences:

You can give through the **Parish Giving Scheme**. The PGS collects your gift by Direct Debit from your bank, claims the Gift Aid and pays it straight to the parish. It makes it easier for you to give as well as making it easier for us to administer. You can index link your donations if you wish and also give anonymously. You can set up **PGS** regular and one-off donations through our website [www.htscf.org.uk](http://www.htscf.org.uk).

If you're an occasional visitor or don't pay tax, then leave a **cash** donation in the bowl as you enter church or donate by card through the '**Collecting**' machines.

If you are a taxpayer but want direct control of when and how much you give, use the **yellow giving envelopes** in each church. When using these, you have to complete the Gift-Aid form on the front each time you give.

If you want to give regular amounts in cash each week, you can use our **annual giving envelopes**.

You can ask your bank to set up a **Standing Order**, to give fixed amounts regularly – normally monthly.

For annual envelopes or standing order, if you're a taxpayer, please complete one of our **Gift Aid forms**, so that we can claim Gift Aid from the tax man.

Have you considered leaving a legacy to the Church in your Will? We are greatly helped by the generosity of those in the past – what can we do for future generations.

If you have any questions, do please speak to your churchwardens.

***Thank you***

