

February 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. Ephesians 1:3.

I am writing to say thank you to you and encourage us all to give thanks to God for his extraordinary kindness and goodness to us, and to encourage you to continue to pray.

I wrote to you in November last year to give thanks for all that we had together achieved in mission and ministry as God's church through challenging times. But also, to call us to pray, and, where appropriate, act in response to the challenges we faced.

One of these immediate challenges was the predicted shortfall in money. We started the year with some funds over our reserve policy, but the forecast was that our spending would overtake income – our regular income has been falling – and begin to eat into these reserves. As we approached the close of the year, in view of the concerns our PCC took the sad step of suspending our tithe (our direct support to external missions) and I wrote to us all.

Before this letter reached one individual in our church, God prompted them to give a substantial gift which met the immediate need completely! And added to this miracle, others felt prompted to review their giving, some responding with one-off gifts, which resulted in us completing the year with £400 more than we started it! Thanks be to our faithful God who provides our daily bread and thank you also to you, his people, for responding to his call.

Give thanks to the Lord because he is good, because his faithful love lasts forever! Psalm 107:1 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our 'God is a consuming fire.' Hebrews 12:28-29

Our PCC starts the New Year, with the joyful challenge of how to use wisely the funds we still have over reserves.

Please continue to pray:

1. There are still challenges with regular giving, and our best forecast for this year is again, less income than expenditure. Please pray for our PCC as we seek to walk obediently forwards in faith being good stewards of the resources God gives to us through us all.
2. This year becomes more complicated by our proposed merger with Medstead. Both churches are bringing healthy resources into the relationship but how these are brought together needs wisdom and grace.
3. Additionally, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to David Craigen who serves us as acting treasurer. David stepped into the breach to temporarily cover the vacancy but is approaching his fourth year in post! David will be stepping down in April at our APCM and we urgently need to identify his replacement. Please do consider if you are able to assist in this role and speak to David for more information.

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ... Colossians 4:2-3

With thanks and prayers,

Yours Howard, for and on behalf of our PCC.