



Experience Hope



STEWARDSHIP SEASON

THE GENEROSITY PROJECT

GIFT DAY 9 OCTOBER



Our Vision

To be a loving and growing community released and empowered to join in God's work of proclaiming and demonstrating the good news to Egham and beyond

Thank you

I was really struck last year by the wonderful biblical legacy of generosity that St John's has when Phil Darby informed me that Planned Giving has been the bedrock of our stewardship since 1959. I have seen first-hand the outworking of this, as well as gifts of spontaneous generosity.

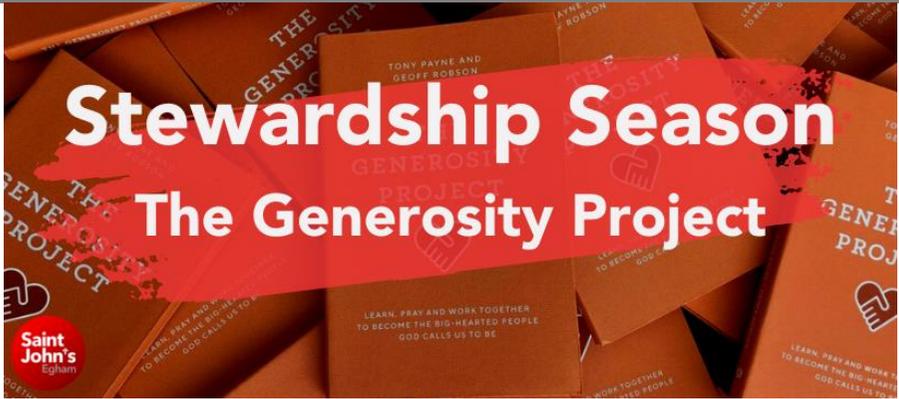
Last year's Stewardship Season had a recurring invitation: *'Will you excel in this gift of giving?'* I am thankful that many of you do excel in generosity. I am truly grateful for the continued financial support from our church congregation and others during a season of great uncertainty and growing need. This has enabled us to continue to minister to the church family and wider community. We have been able to continue to pursue our mission to love God, love one another and love our community.

Alongside our regular activities, we 'stepped up and out' this year with our Love Egham initiative – 9 days of loving service enabled by your generosity. Thank you...

Generous giving is always a sign of God's activity. So my gratitude to the generosity of members of our church family overflows to God.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing
in the heavenly places

Ephesians 1:3



In the rhythm of our life as a church, **the Autumn Term comes to us as a gift in the form of our Stewardship Season.** As challenging as it can be, I welcome it because it gives us an opportunity to regroup as disciples of Jesus and to have a kind of spiritual MOT. It affords us an opportunity to look at our lives and the gifts that we have been given. Please use this opportunity to offer yourself first to the Lord and then to us and very intentionally take time to pause and ask:

- Lord, what is your purpose for me now?
- What will you have me do with the time that I have?
- What will you have me to do with the gifts you've given me?
- What will you have me do with the money you've given me?
- What is it about my presence in this place that you want to use for the advancement of your Kingdom?

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. *(Ps 139:23-24)*

Resources

1. Sermon Series – The Generosity Project

The book we are studying for Stewardship season this year is meant for Life Groups too and would encourage those of you in Life Groups to use it. At least it looks like a book, and contains some sections of text to read, but it is not a 'book' in the normal sense of that word. It's not something for someone to pick up and read on their own. It is specifically designed as an interactive resource—something you work through with others.

It is a six-part teaching resource for use in small groups that stands at the centre of a larger strategy to shift the culture of generosity in our congregations. We've put together an integrated resource that prayerfully applies the word of God to people's hearts so that, by God's power and grace, they might arrive at:

- a powerful, clarified understanding of what generosity is and how it grows
- a renewed, generous heart that longs to give to others
- a fresh language for talking about generosity within their congregation
- a new resolve to put all this into practice in various areas of their lives.

2. Stewardship Videos

From 11 September, we will release a series of videos at our Services on Sunday, which will then be posted on our online Platforms.

3. APCM Page on our Website

Be inspired as you read and/or watch the accounts of how your giving has enabled Mission and Ministry over the last year. If you like detail, you will find our Audited Accounts on our Website

4. Letters

Look out for letters from our Partnership Secretary

partnership@stjohnsegham.com

Get Involved

1. Partnership

“On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with their income... 1 Cor 16.2

As I mentioned before, the bedrock of our stewardship is the biblical principle of planned giving. HUGE thanks to the 142 individuals or couples who have joined our partnership scheme. If you are not yet in the habit of ‘setting aside a sum of money’ in this way – please can I encourage you to do so?

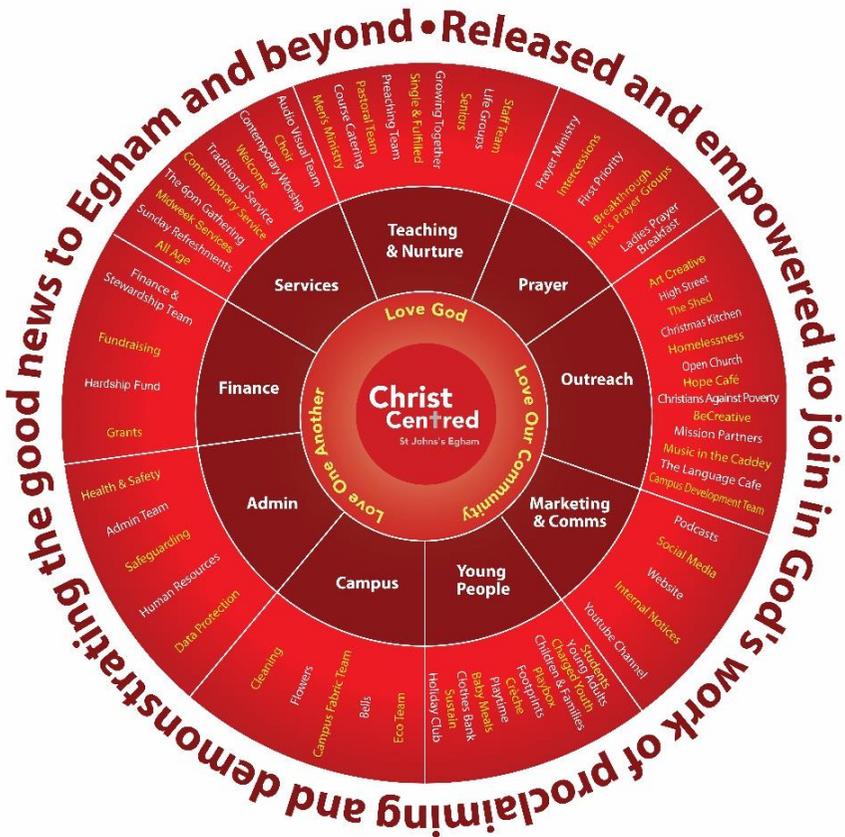
I love the phrase ‘in keeping with their income’. One of the most generous gifts I have treasured over the years was someone who set apart £2 a week and it was a big deal for her. Others have more and can set aside much more. The invitation is to respond to respond to this invitation to make your giving planned and regular.

You can become a Partner by joining the Parish Giving Scheme,

which enables you to safely and securely make a regular monthly, quarterly or annual donation. This our preferred approach, though, of course, we welcome other regular giving such payroll giving and regular direct giving. Please contact our Partnership Secretary for more information.

partnership@stjohnsegham.com

The Governance Circle below details the various ministries that are enabled by your generosity. Contact the office for a larger version or look on our website.



Many of you will be aware, but it's worth mentioning again, that the work of SJE is funded primarily by the congregation. Thank you for your gospel partnership and for enabling SJE to be a loving and growing community of disciples who are released and empowered to join in God's work of proclaiming and demonstrating the good news to Egham and beyond. We would love to see our gospel ministry continue to grow, and your financial support is a key element in enabling that to happen. We therefore invite you to prayerfully consider your planned and regular contribution to enable God's kingdom to be extended and the harvest of His blessing to our community to be enlarged.

Let us Pray

Father God, as you pour your generosity and love into our lives, help us to live out of that love and also be generous, help us commit to your work here in our own church remembering that all things come from you and of your own do we give you *Sue Naudi*

2. Easter Centre Debt

"Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver."

(2 Corinthians 9:7)

HUGE THANKS to everyone who has contributed towards the cost of our amazing building right from its conception. Through generous giving in past Gift Days, as well as some regular giving commitments, we continue to make significant repayments towards the £2.1M debt. As I write this, our outstanding debt stands at **One million 8 thousand pounds**. *If anyone wants to enable us to celebrate 'under a million' by our gift day on 25 September, please do get in touch.* Taking the whole cost into account (about £6M), this will mean we are 5/6 on the way to paying it off!

An Appeal: I have been clear in my own mind that this is my church family and the Easter Centre Debt is ‘our’ debt – even though I wasn’t here when the Easter Centre was built. Some who were here had reservations at the time, but all that is in the past. In the present, we have this need. I want to appeal to you, brothers and sisters, as you are able to help set us free from this debt; so we can direct all our resources to the work of the gospel. If you are yet to make a contribution to this – please would you consider doing so?

Help us to live out more fully the vision for the use of our facilities to intentionally foster community connections. We want the EC to be a blessing to the whole community - providing space to meet God, make friends and live life better. It would be wonderful to be free from the burden of debt as we continue to pursue our dream for the EC to be a vibrant building at the centre of our ambition to advance the kingdom in Egham, Runnymede and beyond.

Let us Pray

Thank you Father for blessing us and our community with our beautiful Easter centre. Lord let us persevere with hope in every kind of giving and fundraising so that the debt is cleared earlier than we could ever imagine.

Sue Naudi

3. Hardship Fund

Feed the hungry, and help those in trouble. Then your light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon.

Isaiah 58.10

As I’m writing this the news headlines focus on the announcement that the typical household energy bill will hit £3,549 a year from 1

October. I am in conversation about how we might respond to the coming fuel poverty.

As most of you know, during the pandemic we created an extra fund that could support people in need. I am grateful for those who saw the need and donated seed money to help us establish a fund for those in need. I imagine it shall be called upon more and more in the months to come.

Thank you to all who have made it possible for us to meet the material needs of many at a time of great financial pressure

Hardship Fund	
Total received	£51,007
Grants made	£27,079
Balance	£23,928

Let us Pray

Holy Spirit, fill us and all who need your touch. Show us who needs help, financially or spiritually and let us be generous in our giving so that by sharing like the early church there will be no needy people among us

Sue Naudi

4. Legacy

One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts. Psalm 145.4

Once you have made provision for your loved ones (whether family or friends), would you consider making a lasting gift to the advancement of God's kingdom by leaving a legacy to St John's? Such a gift can be an expression of your gratitude and thanksgiving towards God, and can help keep your local church alive, and help transform its future.

We gratefully receive all gifts in wills, no matter how large or small. Be assured that we will discuss the possible uses of your gift with your Executors when the time comes—bearing in mind your known areas of interest in the church as well as the priorities of the church at the time. You can be confident that your gift will be used to make a real difference to our ministry and mission.

We are very excited this year to be launching Choral Scholarships, as well as other Music grants – thanks to Malcolm Bateman’s legacy.



Let us Pray

Father help us look ahead to the generations who follow us. May your kingdom work among us go far beyond our earthly lives.

Sue Naudi

Uncertain Times

I am aware that you will be receiving this at a time of great financial uncertainty and maybe even strain for some of us. And yet I press on... Generosity is a spiritual discipline, a holy habit. Holy habits are commitments we make to align our actions with our faith commitments. As people made in the image of God, we reflect his generosity in our lives (according to what we have). So, in times of uncertainty and fear:

- Generosity teaches us that our security comes from God.
- Generosity connects us with the needs of others and our capacity to resolve those needs.
- Generosity squelches the knee jerk reaction to hold back and hold on.
- Generosity challenges us to place our security in eternal things.

Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.

Malachi 3.10

In my own response - I have clung to tithing (giving 10% to my local church) as the minimum call to generosity on my life. With the understanding that everything comes from God, I don't consider tithing as giving 10 percent; rather it's receiving 90 percent. Sometimes it has been a defiant act of faith.

God has been faithful through it all. I pray that we would not turn our eyes from God during the uncertain season ahead.

Let us Pray

Lord you know our needs. Help us to trust you with our whole lives giving generously no matter our own situations. We trust you to provide for us, help us provide for others.

Sue Naudi

Response

Pray

Pray and have conversations in your home (if applicable) about how you can continue or indeed begin to invest in the ongoing mission and ministry of God here at SJE

Review

- Use this time to conduct a spiritual MOT. Our attitude to money is a big part of our discipleship. No guilt, just asking God to show you what your next step should be.
- Some of you may want to review your giving and perhaps start tithing (the biblical principle of giving 10% of your income) for the first time.
- Some of you may want to join the Partnership Scheme and/or become an EC Debt Partner

Commit

Our Gift Day is on 9 October. Please fill in the Gift Day Response Form as directed by the Partnership Secretary. Upon receipt of your response form, Phil Johnson, will be in touch with you to provide further details, including Gift Aid information, if relevant.

partnership@stjohnsegham.com

*Yours in Faith, Hope and Love,
Esther*

