



Experience Hope



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

'10 000 reasons for my heart to find...'

My heart is overflowing with thankfulness to God for:

1. People coming to faith and being baptised
2. New people of all ages making St John's their home
3. New ministries as people follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit
4. Mission Week with the wonderful blessing that was the Brazil Team

I could go on - '10 000 reasons for my heart to find...'

My heart is overflowing with thankfulness to God for your overflowing generosity:

1. Faithful members of our partnership scheme, with new people joining
2. Generous givers towards the Easter Centre debt, with new people joining
3. Your generosity helped us to 'lengthen our stride and widen our embrace' at a time of great uncertainty in our nation and in the world
4. Generosity in the face of a year of almost unrelenting requests for support. I think all were appropriate and correct – but I am just noting there were a fair few.

I could go on - '10 000 reasons for my heart to find...'

In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now

Philippians 1.3-5



Many of you would have heard me say this 😊 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 after the summer scattering. 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?

*Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness,
and all these things will be given to you as well.*

(Ps 139:23-24)

Resources

1. Sermon Series – Take my life and let it be...

I had been praying for a couple of months about how to approach Stewardship season this year when we sang the hymn ‘Take my Life’ at the 9am Service in July. It settled in my Spirit as the path to walk on this autumn. I love the focus, not so much on us *giving* ourselves to God (there is some of this and rightly so - especially in the second half of the hymn), but on us asking God to *take* us.

The song enables us to ask God to take possession of a different part of our lives, either physical or spiritual. At the heart of Stewardship is a desire to allow God to take full possession of our lives - conforming us to his character, and thereby revealing his glory ever more clearly through us. We will explore how this might look like in our everyday lives. May God ‘take our lives’ this Stewardship Season.

2. Stewardship Videos

From 10 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

<https://stjohnsegham.com/apcm2023/>

4. Letters

Look out for letters from our Partnership Secretary

partnership@stjohnsegham.com

Get Involved: Partnership

As I mentioned before, the bedrock of our stewardship is the biblical principle of planned giving. HUGE thanks to the 141 individuals or couples who are part our partnership scheme. Some for many decades. Thank you for your faithfulness and your gospel partnership.

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?

"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

I love the phrase 'in keeping with their income'. For some of us – what we set aside will resemble the Widow's mite, but it will represent great generosity, while others can set aside so much more. The invitation is 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 is our preferred approach, though, of course, we welcome other regular giving such as payroll giving and regular direct giving. Please contact our Partnership Secretary for more information.

partnership@stjohnsegham.com

Get Involved: Easter Centre Debt

I am always really struck by what a wonderful resource we have in the Easter Centre when we have events that make one think 'for this the EC was built.' Or when I have the privilege of showing people round for the first time. Their awe becomes mine. **HUGE THANKS to everyone who has contributed towards the cost of our amazing building right from its conception.**

**So far we have paid about £5 089 000 towards its building costs.
We have £911 000 to go...**

We have done brilliantly – but we still have some way to go. The hope is to be debt free as soon as possible so that all our resources can be poured into ministry and mission – here and abroad.

You can get involved by:

- giving regularly towards the Debt repayment
- giving a one off gift or a loan to reduce our interest payments to the bank.

We see this as something that runs alongside our regular giving for the ministry and mission of the church.

Please contact our Partnership Secretary for more information.

partnership@stjohnsegham.com

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

2 Corinthians 9.6-8

Get Involved: Hardship & Wellbeing Fund

The purpose of the Hardship and Wellbeing Fund is to provide financial support to local people in need. The fund was established at the start of the pandemic and through the generous giving of more than 60 donors over that time, has been able to provide support to a large number of individuals either directly or through support to groups who are working to help those in need.

In the last year we have been working to help those in financial need specifically from high energy prices, as well as those who find themselves in a crisis from a repair or other exceptional bill which they just don't have the extra funds to pay. We also provide small amounts to a number of individuals and families which provide a boost to them and show them that we at St John's care for them.

This year we have made grants to 13 individuals for amounts over £250, while making smaller grants to over 50 individuals and families. In total we have made payments of over £16,000. At the start of the year our balance was more than £27,000, while it is currently around £13,000.

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. You can get involved by giving regularly towards the HF, or by giving a one off gift. We see this as something that runs alongside our regular giving for the ministry and mission of the church.

For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore, I command you, saying, 'You shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy, in your land.'

Deuteronomy 15-11

Get Involved: Legacy

I am turning 50 in a few weeks and my daughter pointed out that I have most likely passed the halfway point of my life! She is probably right. I most likely have less years ahead of me than behind me. You will be pleased to know that this isn't a morbid conversation in our household! But it is a conversation that concentrates the mind about living well and preparing to die well.

A friend of mine was reflecting on how Moses handled legacy conversations well as he prepared Joshua for his death. More recently, the American Pastor Tim Keller inspired many as he prepared for his death and was intentional about passing on his legacy. I love that he prepared his order of Service and explained his choices – passing on his faith. Even beyond the grave. At the moment I have 10 thousand songs on my funeral list – I have set myself the task of opening a working document. I will see it as a legacy document for my children and beyond.

Alongside this is thinking more broadly about how our resources can continue to be a blessing to the local church. **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?** Your church can be your chosen charity – in this and other fundraising initiatives. Such gifts can be an expression of your gratitude and thanksgiving towards God, and can help keep your local church alive, and help transform its future. If you are thinking about making a legacy gift to SJE, please speak to the Treasurer or Partnership Secretary for guidance or support.

One generation shall commend your works to another,

and shall declare your mighty acts. Psalm 145.4

How much should I give?

If I had a Frequently Asked Questions list about giving, it would include these two:

1. How much should I give?
2. Should I split my donation between multiple charities or choose just one?

With Jesus telling the rich young ruler to sell everything and give his money to the poor and this being mirrored in the lives of the new believers in Acts – the answer to how much should I give, seems to be ‘everything’! With that lens and through teaching that I received as a new Christian, **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. Giving beyond the Church comes from the 90%. As a church, we in turn tithe 10% of our partnership giving to our mission partners.

A tithe is a specific amount (10% of your income) that you give first, and in my understanding – to your local church. An offering is anything extra that you give beyond that. This understanding has simplified my approach to giving and has been a real blessing in my life for over 25 years.

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.

How should I Respond?

Malachi 3:10

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 St John's Church.

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

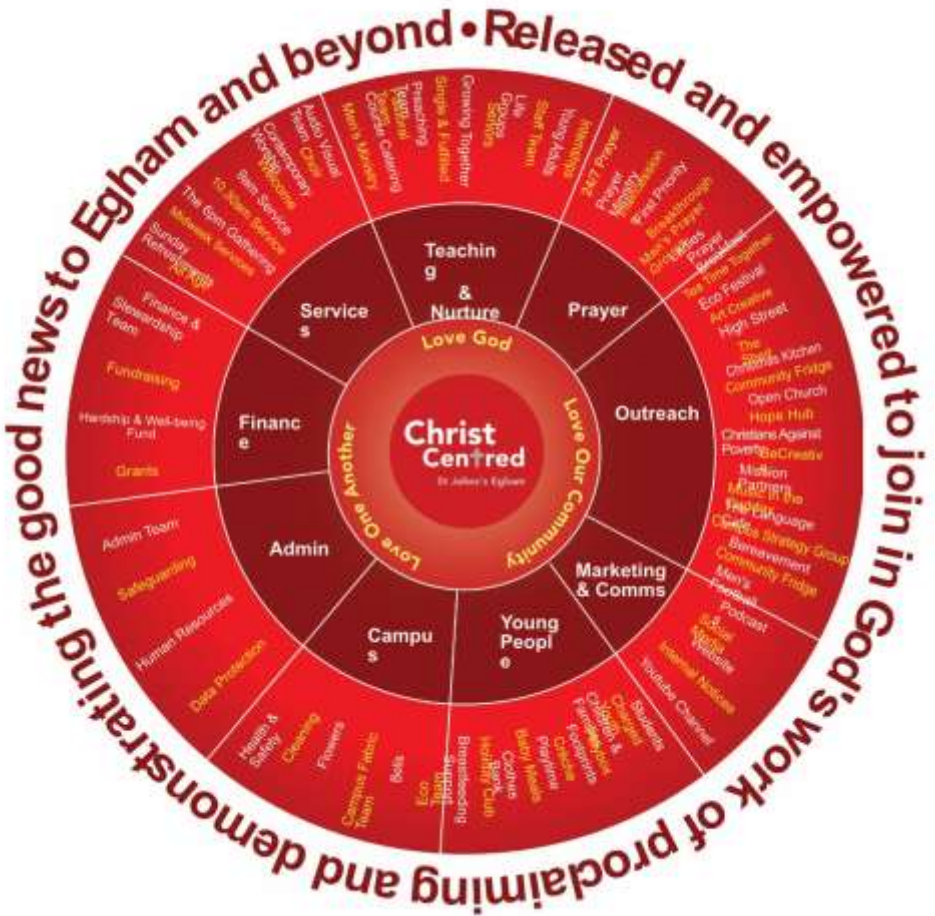
Our Gift Day is on 8 October. Please fill in the Gift Day Response Form as directed by the Partnership Secretary. Upon receipt of your response form, Phil Johnson, will be in touch with you to provide further details, including Gift Aid information, if relevant.

partnership@stjohnsegham.com

*Yours in Gospel Partnership
Esther*

Take a look at our Governance Circle below, which details the various ministries that are enabled by your generosity. Thank God for each person that each segment represents.

Spot the difference from last year
 Can you see what's new and what is no longer there?



Contact the office for a larger version or look on our website.

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

2 Corinthians 9.6-8

