

An update from Clive & Russ, on behalf of the ECC, July 2020

Dear Christchurch family,

At the start of this year we put out a big appeal across the church. Our accounts at the end of 2019 were showing a £20k deficit, but we were determined not to be held back in seeking to build, grow and reach out. So, through January and February we devoted our Sunday teaching series to the subject of giving, with a Gift Week as we entered Lent at the beginning of March.

A huge thanks for an amazing response

We prayed, the Holy Spirit prompted, and the response was amazing. Over £6,500 in donations were received during Gift Week, and our regular giving has now increased by £1000 per month as people have increased their monthly Standing Orders or set them up for the first time. Many have been truly sacrificial. On behalf of the church family, we want to say an enormous thank you to everyone who has responded so generously.

The impact of Covid

March came along, and with it, Covid and Lockdown. Besides the grief and pain of the virus itself, the impact of this period socially and economically has been devastating for so many. It is appreciated that some of our church family have reduced income as a result of coronavirus. We want you to know that our prayers are with you and we are here to support you – please do get in touch if you want to talk.

We are so grateful for the way in which people have maintained their church giving during this time. We have furloughed staff where this was appropriate. But where we have been able to continue to find ways of engaging the community, we have. For example, we have continued to fund the oversight of our TLG coaching with young people in vulnerable families. This has been carried on remotely. It's proved to be a lifeline, and it's just one of the ways we have adapted so that we can continue to be church, even when we cannot gather physically.

The biggest financial impact for us as a church has been that our revenue from lettings has completely stopped over these months. Jess, our bookings manager has been growing this significantly as key part of our financial strategy. None of us could have predicted the situation, but it has left us with a significant gap.

Our vision as we look ahead

While there continues to be a global lack of uncertainty with regard to the coronavirus, it is clear that the consequences of what has happened so far will be around for years to come. As a church we are gearing up to be ready to engage our community more than ever before. Specifically, we are putting plans into place that will enable us to provide mentoring, practical help and mental health support for children, teenagers and adults of all ages. Here's just a snapshot of what that looks like:

- Growing the Early Intervention mentoring with vulnerable children in local schools through the ongoing employment of a co-ordinator for this work;
- As Will moves to train for ordained ministry, appointing a new youth worker who will be specifically tasked to support teenagers and develop Early Intervention mentoring and mental health engagement, including in our secondary school;
- Launching a Christian-based mental health support program which draws on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. We are piloting this in the autumn for a larger scale launch in January 2021;
- Growing our work with Christians Against Poverty so that we can help provide training and resource for individuals with debt and money management;
- Continuing to grow the Make Lunch project to reach and engage even more families;
- Increasing our outreach among older people in our community encouraged by Suzy our new Pioneer curate;
- Starting this autumn, a year of teaching, on Sundays and for midweek groups, which equips the church for the vision of reaching out and engaging with our local community.

Our conviction is that this is where God is calling us – and we need you.

Our current financial position is this:

- We currently need £16k per month. This covers:
 - our contributions to the Anglican and Methodist denominations who provide our clergy
 - our staff costs
 - our building upkeep
 - our ministry resources

Lockdown has resulted in a monthly loss of £2,800 of lettings income and approximately £1000 per month from Sunday plate offerings. We currently estimate an end of year shortfall of approximately £25k;

- Of our current church membership, just over half give by standing order. We give thanks for this. And we're praying that those who don't, will.

So here's the big ask. Can you help?

We are calling upon the whole church family to prayerfully consider...

- Increasing your monthly contribution by Standing Order
- Or start giving monthly by Standing Order
- Or make a one-off financial gift to His ministry here at Christchurch

See below for the details for doing this

In addition

Please consider a legacy in your will to ensure that this ministry continues to grow and thrive long after we have gone to join the Lord.

I want to help....

A financial contribution can be made in the following ways:

- By our website - <https://www.christchurch-clevedon.org.uk/giving/>
- By bank transfer using the following bank account details (for one off gifts as well as standing orders):

**Ecumenical Church Council of Christchurch, Clevedon at
HSBC Bank Plc, Triangle Branch, 6 Old Church Road, Clevedon, BS21 6NA.
Sort Code: 40-17-50 Account number: 51317776**

Any questions, or for confirmation of receipt, please contact the Christchurch Finance Team c/o John de Borde: finance@christchurch-clevedon.org.uk

Contributions by through our website will provide facilities for gift aiding your donation, but if you contribute by other means we would ask if you would consider filling out this gift aid declaration.

Gift Aid Declaration

“I wish Gift Aid to apply to my donations to Christchurch and I confirm I will pay in this tax year an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the amount that all charities and Community Amateur Sport Clubs to which I give will reclaim for this year (25p for each £1 given). I understand that other taxes such as Council Tax and VAT do not qualify”.

If Gift Aid can be applied to your giving/ gift, please fill in your details below:

Date:..... Signature (if possible):.....

Name:.....

Address:.....

..... Postcode:.....

Please email this form to Christchurch Finance Team c/o John de Borde:

finance@christchurch-clevedon.org.uk

If you have any questions, John will be happy to answer them.

Heavenly Father,
you invite us into a kingdom
in which hope is re-born
and lives are changed.
Pour out the gift of your Spirit
to stir our imagination,
enlarge our vision,
and renew our energy.
Open our eyes to new possibilities
that we may be transformed,
together with the world you came to save
In your son, Jesus Christ.