

## St Mary's Financial Update & Gift Days: 23 & 30 March 2025

Thank you for your generosity! We are so grateful for every gift given to St Mary's. Our church family has always been generous, and we truly appreciate your support.

### A Call to Prayer

Right from the start, before we focus on finances, we want to come before God in prayer. As disciples of Jesus, we trust Him as our **Provider** and seek His guidance. We invite you to join us for **Kingdom Come Prayer events** on **4 & 18 March (8-9pm at the Hope Centre)**. If you can't come in person, please join in prayer from home.

Some may also feel led to both **fast and pray**, asking God for financial breakthrough—not just for our church but for transformed lives through St Mary's ministry. We want to operate in **faith, not fear**, trusting that God will provide.

### Learning About Generosity

Handling money in a way that honours God is about more than just church finances—it transforms how we view all of our resources. In March, we'll be teaching on generosity, and we highly recommend **John Mark Comer's "Practicing the Way" series on YouTube**:

1. **There is more joy in giving than receiving** - <https://youtu.be/w61lP0Au2Y8?si=5NZtFLJ-5C-IW1kU>
2. **Watch out for greed** - <https://youtu.be/H-mF3mnUN4l?si=M40l9uBbK4JnxSXT>
3. **Everything belongs to God** - <https://youtu.be/uHjzyjs4J7M?si=da61dTLW6GTRk5H>
4. **Be generous to the poor** - [https://youtu.be/tUjeHvw7-Ws?si=clrj2h8rkQ\\_csWqz](https://youtu.be/tUjeHvw7-Ws?si=clrj2h8rkQ_csWqz)
5. **Best practices for generosity** - <https://youtu.be/RQQx21d-mXs?si=GUcgP6Xv0uSaDJjw>

These sessions are **biblical, practical, and eye-opening**, helping us connect giving to our spiritual formation as disciples of Jesus.

### St Mary's Financial Situation

We want to be transparent about our finances because a good understanding of our church's financial health is part of belonging to St Mary's. Our **PCC (church trustees)** oversee finances, ensuring we manage resources wisely. We also apply for grants and look for cost-saving measures where possible.

However, our current level of income is not sustainable in the medium and long term. Running St Mary's costs **£31,000 per month (£1,000 per day)**, covering:

- ✂ Diocese payments
- ✂ Staff salaries
- ✂ Outreach & ministry costs
- ✂ Utilities, insurance, maintenance & cleaning
- ✂ Missions support, evangelism & more

Unlike some may think, **we don't receive money from the Church of England**—in fact, we give to support other churches in our Diocese!

For 2025, we are facing a **£41,000 deficit**. To help close this gap and strengthen our reserves, we are holding **Gift Days on 23 & 30 March**, aiming to raise **£60,000**. This will allow us to:

- 📌 Cover the budget shortfall
- 📌 Build up our ever-decreasing reserves
- 📌 Fund future projects (such as installing LED lighting)

If you are able, we encourage **regular giving** through **Standing Order** and **Gift Aid**. For the Gift Days we also encourage giving whatever lump sum you prayerfully feel it right to give. However, if you're facing financial hardship, **please feel no pressure to give**—our heart is for generosity and empathy.

Attached below you will find a special leaflet explaining the Gift Days in March

[Click here to watch a video from Malcolm introducing the Gift Days.](#)

### Looking Ahead

We are also taking steps this year to encourage generosity and make financial updates clearer, including:

- 📌 Featuring the offering more visibly on Sundays
- 📌 Encouraging new giving and legacy giving
- 📌 Improving online and card payment options – such as the donation station in church.
- 📌 Using the news sheet to communicate financial needs as they arise
- 📌 Launching a **new “Gospel Partners” publication** for regular financial updates

### Trusting in God's Provision

These are challenging economic times, but **we serve a faithful God who provides**. In the past, we saw God move powerfully when we raised **£1.2 million** to build the Hope Centre. Now, we trust Him again to provide for the ministry and mission of St Mary's.

Let's step forward in **faith, generosity, and hope**—not just to meet financial needs, but to see lives changed for God's glory. Thank you, St Mary's family, for your continued love, support, and prayers.

Thank you amazing church family – this comes with heartfelt love and thanks

Malcolm Macdonald, Vicar  
Rich Milne, Treasurer