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Charity Number 1131220

November 2022

Dear Friends

We would like to start by thanking everyone who gives to St Margaret's, whether financially or in their time and energy: all your giving is very much appreciated.

As you probably know, once a year we take a step back to look at the finances of St Margaret's, and ask our congregation to consider whether they could increase the amount they are giving on a regular basis, or start a regular donation if they are not already doing so.

We are conscious that this year's Stewardship Sunday on 6 November will take place against a background of challenging financial events which affect us all, with rising prices especially for gas and electricity, and for food and other basic essentials. Therefore when you consider whether you can help St Margaret's, please do also take into account your own needs. We know these are difficult times.

St Margaret's expenditure

We have set out below a simplified picture of the expenditure that we think St Margaret's will be making in 2023:

	£
Parish Share	65,000
Staff costs (not Fr Alex)	38,000
Utilities (inc gas/electricity)	22,000
Maintenance costs (inc insurance)	14,500
Other running costs (inc printing and office expenses)	15,500
Total	£155,000

- **Energy:** St Margaret's is classed as a business customer for gas and electricity, and the costs work differently than they do for domestic customers. Our new rate for gas is effective from 1 October 2022, and is about seven times higher than the previous rate, but the figures above assume that the Government's Energy Bill Relief Scheme will roughly halve this extra cost (to be confirmed when we know more details). Our electricity rate is fixed until 30 September 2023, but is likely to increase then - the budget figures include an allowance for this increase.
- **Parish Share:** this is the money that all Church of England churches pay to their diocese, for the provision of a priest in their parish and for wider costs in the diocese. In 2022 the amount of Parish Share requested of St Margaret's by the Diocese of Leeds is about £116,000. We will not be able to afford to pay this amount in full. In the past we have sought to pay the cost of our own priest plus the cost of another priest in a more needy parish, but this year our hopes must

be more modest, namely to pay the annual cost of our own Vicar. This is also likely to be the case in 2023. The cost of one priest is stated by the diocese to be around £60,000 a year (this is not the stipend received by the priest - it also includes the costs of housing, pensions etc). We are assuming the cost will be slightly higher in 2023.

If you are able to help

If you are able to increase your giving to St Margaret's, or start a new regular donation, it would make a real difference to our church and we would be very grateful.

Parish Giving Scheme

We would like to suggest that new regular donations are made through the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS), which is a national scheme operated for the Church of England. All payments to the PGS are made by direct debit, and there is the option to link regular giving amounts to inflation. The PGS pays 100% of all donations and any associated gift aid to individual churches like St Margaret's. All the costs are met by the national Church, so the PGS does not cost you or St Margaret's anything.

The PGS has an excellent website (www.parishgiving.org.uk) - you can click on "Find your parish" and then enter "Ilkley" to find St Margaret's. You can then set up your own account to manage your giving and set the level of your donation.

If you prefer to use a paper form - please contact Alison Stretton (our Stewardship Secretary) or Philip Tooke (our Treasurer) if you would like to do this and we will take you through the process.

Existing givers are welcome to continue making payments via standing order or weekly envelopes or, if you would prefer, you too can sign up to the PGS.

A form about the different methods of giving to St Margaret's is enclosed with this letter. Please complete this form and return it to Alison Stretton if you are changing your regular donation, switching to PGS, starting a new regular donation or need to update your contact details.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, and consider your giving to St Margaret's. The vast majority of the funding for the work of our church comes from the giving of our regular worshippers and visitors, and we are deeply appreciative of your generosity. Equally valuable is the time and energy given by so many volunteers, and we are grateful to all who contribute to our ministry in any way.

With my prayers and best wishes



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