

Firstfruits2010



st Nic's
church Nottingham

www.stnics.org

Making the vision happen

Our Rector, Steve Silvester, sets Firstfruits in the context of our emerging vision.

Firstfruits is our annual opportunity for us all to review our giving in the light of the church's vision and mission.

So what is the vision? In different ways we have explored this question over the past 18 months. Here is the picture that I see emerging:

I see a church that lives out authentic Christian community, welcoming others to share the journey; transformational encounters with Jesus in prayer, worship and mission; people without any Christian background being reached for Christ and trained to be disciples of Jesus in our contemporary culture. I find this exciting and challenging because life around us is moving so quickly.

A few years ago, on holiday in France,

I see a church that lives out authentic Christian community, welcoming others to participate; transformational encounters with Jesus in prayer, worship and mission...

my family stayed overnight in a beautiful lighthouse. It was a work of art, and the most memorable B&B I've visited. The lighthouse had been built on the banks of the River Seine to guide ships to port. Over the years the river had moved, so the lighthouse was now several kilometres from the river. It remained a fully functional lighthouse, but obsolete because it had not been able to move with the river.

Churches can be like this. Cities and cultures change course. Our mission is unchanged: to be a light in the city and to reach people for Jesus Christ. However, the way we do this has to involve engagement with contemporary culture.

The Church Leadership Team has spent time reflecting on what lies at the core of St. Nic's and have identified the following:

- Our passion: *transforming encounters with Jesus.*
- Our aspiration: *to be an authentic Christian community.*

The 'Four Rs' arise out of Jesus' Great Commission at the end of Matthew's Gospel. This diagram attempts to show how these help us clarify our vision.

RESPONDING

Our passion:
transforming encounters with Jesus.

Our mission:
making disciples of Jesus Christ.

REACHING

Our aspiration:
to be an authentic Christian community.

Our engine for growth:
equipping new disciples to grow.

RELATING RESOURCING

- Our mission: *to make disciples of Jesus Christ.*
- Our engine for growth: *equipping new disciples to grow.*

We believe that these things have been central to the identity of St. Nic's for some time, and will continue into the future. They seem to find an echo within the fellowship of the church.

But the cultural river has moved, and the 4Rs (see above) enable us to move with it.

So what is today's mission for the historic church of St. Nicholas and how might this be worked out in a society in which people are cynical about clever arguments for faith, but open to

spiritual encounters?

We will explore this together after Easter when we look at the third of our 4Rs - Reaching. But one thing, I think, is for sure: 'Transforming encounters with Jesus' will come about within 'authentic Christian community'.

I would like to think that the School for Disciples that we will start later this year will be a model for this type of community in mission.

God is at work. It will be an exciting year. Continue in your prayers and thank you for being involved in making vision a reality.

Steve Silvester
(Rector)

How to give

There are several methods used by church members to financially support the work of St Nic's in a planned way.

■ **Bank Standing Order** is the most convenient method of supporting the church. Complete a Standing Order form and your donations are transferred automatically from your bank account to the church's account. You may give monthly, quarterly or annually. Standing orders can be reviewed regularly and amended as instructed by you. (Standing orders can be created or revised online. If you choose to do this please don't forget to let the church office know.) If you are a UK tax-payer please consider giving through Gift Aid (see note).

■ **Charity vouchers** from the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) or Stewardship can make giving to charities easier. Find out about how these work on these services' websites (www.cafonline.org & www.stewardship.org.uk).

■ Some companies are registered with the Inland Revenue to allow employees to give to charitable organisations via

Gift Aid

If you are a UK tax payer you can increase the value of donations made by standing order, cheque or cash by 25 pence for every pound given. You will need to have completed a Gift Aid Declaration, copies of which are available at the back of the church or from our website. Donations made in cash should be in an envelope marked with your name.

their payroll in a scheme known as **Give as You Earn** (GAYE). This can result in tax-efficient giving to the church. Please check with your employer's payroll department to enquire if they participate in this initiative.

■ **Gift Aided 'one-off' donations** may be made to the church through cash or by a cheque payable to "St Nicholas' Church PCC". Please place your gift with the offering in an envelope (available at the back of church) and enclose a Gift Aid declaration.

Firstfruits Sunday is on 21 February. Please complete the form on the inside back page and bring it to church with you on that day, or return it to the church office. Copies of Gift Aid and Standing Order forms are available from the back of church and from our website (www.stnics.org/documents).

PLEASE NOTE that the information on this form will only be seen by the church treasurer, the stewardship secretary and the operations manager.

Our financial position

During 2009 our income increased by 2% (£6,000). We are grateful to God and to our faithful members, who have continued to give sacrificially, despite the difficult economic conditions. Many charitable organisations have seen reductions in their income levels.

As we look ahead to the challenges of 2010, the PCC has approved a budget for an increase in expenditure of £46,000. The pie chart at the end of this section shows the main areas where our money is spent. As well as general increases in our operating costs, this includes the following significant items:

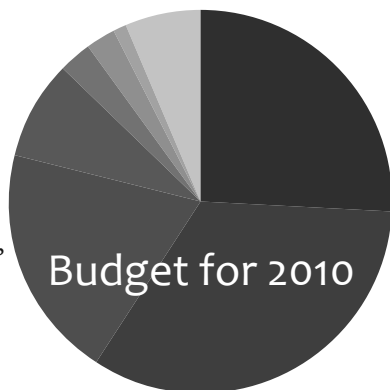
- Increase in our parish share of £5,700, which we have supported in the light of negotiations for an additional ordained person
- Increase in staffing costs of £12,500, as we have our youth & student leader in post for the whole of this year.
- Increase of £9,500 in support of our mission partners, following a review of their

financial needs and including some provision for pension planning for those serving longer term

- Increase of £6,700 in support for social concern projects including Sunday Night Food and £3,000 for The Malt Cross
- £3,500 estimate for establishing the School for Disciples

It would not be realistic to expect an increase in giving of this magnitude. We have worked on a modest estimate of an increase in giving of 2.5% (£8,000). This would mean that we would be able to put less aside to meet major future costs eg building repairs and capital projects that we have in recent years.

Chris Nurden
(Treasurer)



- parish share (£84,504)
- staff (£108,839)
- outreach (£64,150)
- administration (£27,800)
- pastoral (£8,650)
- young people (£8,100)
- worship (£4,100)
- funds allocation (£20,000)

The basis of giving

Christian giving is an expression of trust in God. He supplies our needs, so we are no poorer through giving generously. 'Everything comes from you and we have given you only what comes from your hand.' (2 Chron. 29.14) Our giving may come from what we earn. But the health and abilities that enable us to earn are also gifts from God. When we give we are trusting God to continue to meet our needs.

Christian giving is both planned and spontaneous. The Bible talks about 'tithes and offerings' (Malachi 3.8). Tithing (usually giving 10% of our income) is taken as 'normal' and so can be planned (see 1 Cor.16.2). The best way to do this is to set up standing orders so that this money never finds its way into our wallet. Although this is the biblical norm, 'Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion.' (2 Cor.9.7) Over and above tithing, other offerings for specific causes can be spontaneous.

Christian giving sets us free. In a global context we all know that we are rich, simply by virtue of living in the UK. However, it is so easy to become resentful, envious, greedy and anxious. Giving sets us

free from these things. It puts the power of money in its rightful place. The inability to do this made it impossible for the rich man to follow Jesus (Matthew 19) and he 'went away sad'. By contrast, 'God loves a cheerful giver' (2 Cor.9.7).

Christian giving is not just about money. Jesus was very critical of people who gave a lot, and praised a woman who gave very little (Mark 12.41–44). The small amount given by the woman represented a huge proportion of what she had. Similarly, Paul talks about financial giving as an expression of offering ourselves to the Lord (2 Cor. 8.5). So our attitude is as important as the amount we give. Having said that, sometimes our actions can help our attitudes to fall in step.

Christian giving expresses our solidarity with one another. In an age when self-sufficiency is valued, we choose to live a life of interdependence. A large proportion of our church income is given to support mission locally and overseas. We are part of a global family. Locally, our giving to the church is an expression of being family, sharing a common goal, serving our Lord together, and sharing in joy and fulfilment when we see his kingdom advance.

Firstfruits2010



details

full name(s)

address

postcode

landline and/or

mobile

email

We are also using this form as a means to update our database and the church address book. We will print the information in the details box to the left and the names of any children provided below.

children's names

commitment

As I am/we are able, I/we plan to give £

- weekly ⁽¹⁾ quarterly
 monthly annually

giving method

I /we choose to give by:

- Bank Standing Order ⁽²⁾
 Regular cheques ⁽³⁾
 CAF or Stewardship vouchers
 Give as You Earn (GAYE)

Gift Aid

- I/we have an active Gift Aid declaration with St Nic's
 I/we enclose a Gift Aid declaration ⁽⁴⁾

one-off gift

In response to God's goodness, I/we enclose a gift of

£

NOTES

This form is a statement of intent. If for any reason you find that you cannot give as you had intended it would help if you could let the church office know.

1. Please tick one box
2. Bank Standing Order forms are available from the back of church or from the church's website.
3. Cheques should be payable to "St Nicholas' Church PCC"
4. Gift Aid Declaration forms are available from the back of church or from the church's website.



Firstfruits Sunday is on 21 February. Please complete the form overleaf and bring it to church with you on that day, or returned to the church office, either by post to St Nicholas Church Centre, 79 Maid Marian Way, Nottingham NG1 6AE or via the Firstfruits' pigeon-hole in the tower area at the back of church.

Copies of Bank Standing Order and Gift Aid forms are available from the back of church or from the church's website: www.stnics.org/documents

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Responding to Christ • Relating together • Reaching the world • Resourcing disciples