

St. Mary the Virgin, Bletchingley

Giving for God's purposes



Do you love this beautiful ancient church
at the heart of our village?

Then, this is how you can help preserve it!
2026-7

Giving for God's Purposes

We have been blessed as we engaged in mission in this parish and continue to look after our beautiful church each year. Missional growth is achieved when we offer our time, talent and finances to encourage the next generation of worshippers at St. Mary's. We have utilised our volunteers' talents and encouraged growth in that area. It is a blessing of time and talents, for which we thank God.

It is very healthy for a church to speak about money and to share with clarity about our needs and how you can help. This leaflet outlines our figures and the challenge to meet our financial needs. As your priest, I am responsible for matching our financial needs with our spiritual growth and mission activity.

First, I want to set out the spiritual foundation of why we ask for generosity and how we continually give thanks for God's blessing. I believe there are seven components to our giving in our time and talents:

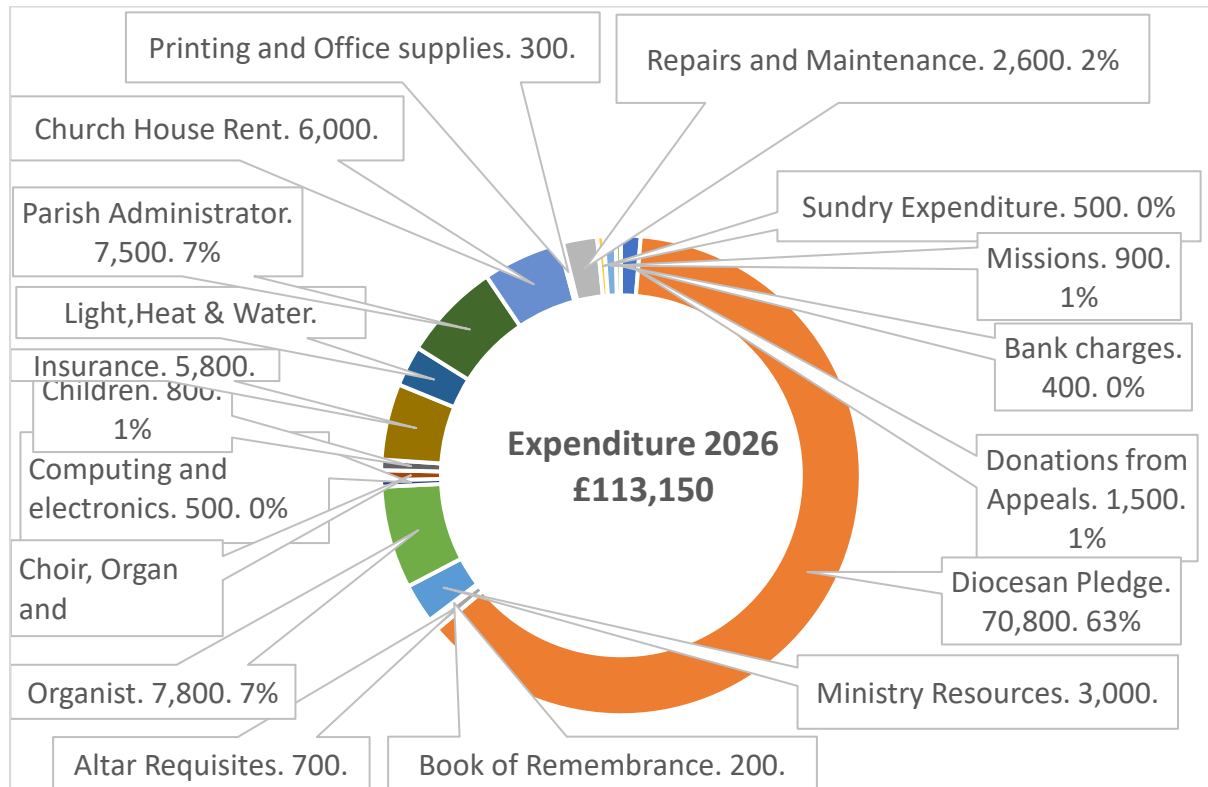
1. **To Give regularly:** The Bible tells us to give "on the first day of every week". While money may be tight during some periods of our lives, the failure to give is a spiritual problem for the most part. It is hard to imagine God accepting excuses for not honouring him with treasures (1 Cor 16:2 & 2 Cor. 9:8).
2. **Give cheerfully:** Receiving is lovely, but the joy is more remarkable when you can give to another person. The Holy Spirit uses your giving of time, talent and finances to deepen your faith in Christ (2 Cor. 9:7).
3. **Give proportionately** to your income, not a specific amount. Likewise, with your time, offer freely what you have available. Proportionate giving challenges people, irrespective of their financial or time situations.

4. **Give first fruits:** Give God the first portions of your income and your talents. By doing that, you constantly remember God's ownership (Proverbs 3:9). God has blessed our income, too.
5. **Give by faith:** Faith is an outward expression of your priorities and heart. If you put God first in your life, your talent, time, and finances will be open to him. The miracle of stewardship is that the more you give, the more you receive. You won't always receive in kind, but what you receive is more precious than what you offer because God's gift to you is greater than your gifts to him.
6. **Tithe:** Tithing is the practice of honouring God with one-tenth (10%) of your income. The size of your gift is not a concern by God but the motive for it (Gen.28:10-22). My only interpretation of tithing is giving God a portion of your best, not your leftovers. This is the only way I know how to give across all of my giving to Christian causes. I heard the call to come and serve among you; I feel blessed to give generously each month to both parishes of this benefice.
7. **Give sacrificially:** Sometimes, God asks you to give until you genuinely feel the giving. Giving sacrificially may include rearranging your priorities, changing your lifestyle, or forfeiting something of great value. When you give sacrificially, you give your best (2 Corinthians 8:2-3).

As you consider our needs below, I encourage you to reflect upon your generosity and how you directly contribute towards our mission here in Bletchingley.

God's blessings upon you.
Father Paul - Priest-in-Charge
March 2026

Keeping St Mary's going costs a lot of money, which means we need to raise a lot of money. Let's look at where the money goes first. The chart below shows a breakdown of our expenditure costs.



Expenses			
Donations from Appeals	1,500	Insurance	5,800
Diocesan Pledge	70,800	Light, Heat & Water	3,100
Altar Requisites	700	Parish Administrator	7,500
Book of Remembrance	200	Church House Rent	6,000
Ministry Resources	3,000	Printing and Office supplies	300
Organist	7,800	Repairs and Maintenance	2,600
Computing and electronics	500	Sundry Expenditure	500
Choir, Organ and Music	750	Missions	900
Children	800	Bank charges	400
		Total Expense	113,150

COST OF A PRIEST

The highest cost for any Church of England church is usually the financial commitment of having a priest.

The indicative costs for a full-time priest for the United Benefice is £94,400 in 2026. Each parish pledges to pay it through the diocesan scheme [Parish Support Fund](#). These costs are explained in the summary below and in the booklet published by Southwark Diocese, which is available online.

In 2026, the indicative costs for the benefice are £94,400; St. Mary's element is £70,800, and we have pledged towards these costs for things such as a Stipend for our priest, National Insurance, and also diocesan overheads such as training and safeguarding. The details of the breakdown can be found on this link: [Parish Support Fund](#).

Those costs are split according to Father Paul's time: Currently, 75% for St. Mary's and 25% for St. Peter and St. Paul. In 2026, we are reviewing the time split.

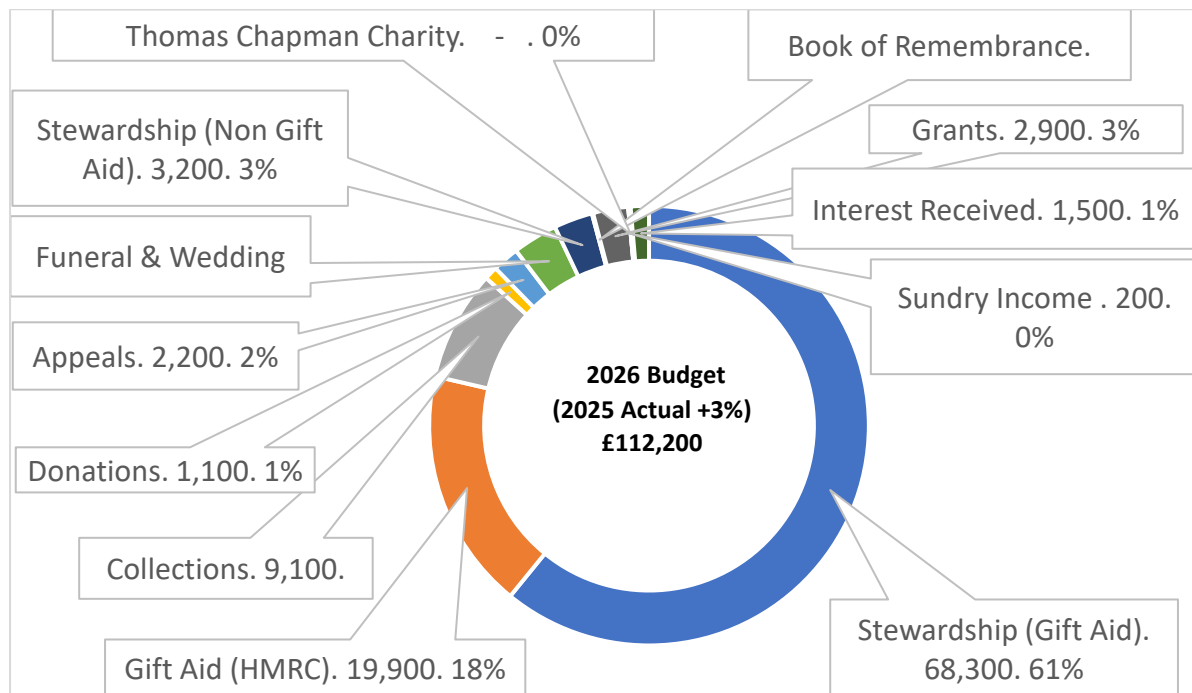
OUR EVERYDAY COSTS

In addition, we face several very high other costs, including our organist (£7,800), administrator (£7,500), our rental for Church House (£6,000), insurance (£5,800), and utilities (£3,100).

We factor in a small amount for repairs and maintenance. However, significant repairs are usually made from a specific appeal or our reserves. These and all the other miscellaneous costs in the chart above bring the total to £113,150.

And how is all this paid for?

This chart shows the breakdown of our sources of income. As a worshipping community, each has responded generously to our needs according to their ability. Below is our budgeted income, based on what was received in 2025 and a 3% increase in giving 2026.



Income	2026 Budget (2025 Actual +3%)
Stewardship (Gift Aid)	68,300
Gift Aid (HMRC)	19,900
Collections	9,100
Donations	1,100
Appeals	2,200
Funeral & Wedding Fees	3,700
Stewardship (Non Gift Aid)	3,200
Book of Remembrance	100
Grants	2,900
Thomas Chapman Charity	-
Sundry Income	200
Interest Received	1,500
Total Income	112,200

GIVING THANKS FOR GIFTS RECEIVED

Far and above, the most significant source is you; we thank you for your generosity, plus some well-wishers who do not attend church regularly; you contribute some £71,500 a year in regular giving, which is very impressive. Gift Aid significantly augments this at £19,900, where we can claim the tax back you originally paid before you made the donations. Other sources of cash are collections in church, fees for weddings and funerals and interest received, bringing the total to some £20,800.

But if we compare our costs with our income, we can see it is not sufficient to cover them, as shown by the hatched area at the top of the right-hand column below:

This amounts to an annual deficit of £950

So, what do we need?

Well, one-off gifts are much appreciated, but we need regular, committed giving. This could come from increases from those who already give regularly; quite a number of you responded to our last appeal in 2024, and our thanks to all those people.

Quite a few people come to church regularly, and I am sure they contribute to the collection taken in church, but are not members of our Stewardship programme. **Would you like to join?** If so, have a chat with the Treasurer.

So, how can individuals help? I stress that there is no set sum, and you must decide what is right for you. For example, if ten new members joined up and contributed an average of £30 a month, that would be £3,600 per annum, which could increase to £4,500 with gift aid.

Also, if those who already contributed increased their giving by at least 3% per cent. The two together would then get us into positive territory where we were paying our way, but we realise

this is a big ask and stress that there is no set sum, and it is entirely up to you as individuals.

So please set up a standing order if you would like to help. Our details are:

Bletchingley Parochial Church Council

60-16-09

71583467

If you pay income tax, please also fill in the attached form for Gift Aid. If you already have a standing order, perhaps you could consider increasing it?

Thank you for your generosity in time and finances.

Confidential Response Form – Please return to the Treasurer

Giving thanks to God for all that God has given me and recognising my responsibility to share in the life, mission and upkeep of Bletchingley Parish Church

I wish to start giving on a regular basis £..... each week / month / year from(date)

or

I wish to increase my giving to £..... each week / month / year from(date)

or

I will continue my present giving of £..... each week/month/year.

Please arrange these regular payments online.

Alternatively, you can give using cash using Giving Envelopes (please ask the Treasurer).

Full name

Address

..... Postcode

e-mail

Telephone

I have some questions about giving and would like to discuss them further.

Return to the treasurer – Geoff Stone gstone39@gmail.com

Gift Aid Form – Please return to the Treasurer

Charity Gift Aid Declaration – multiple donation. Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer. In order to Gift Aid your donation, you must tick the box below:

I want to Gift Aid my donation of £_____ and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past four years to Bletchingley Parochial Church Council.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year, it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

My Details

Title _____ First name or initial(s) _____ Surname _____

Full Home Address

_____ Postcode _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Please notify the charity if you:

- want to cancel this declaration
- change your name or home address
- no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

Return to the treasurer – Geoff Stone gstone39@gmail.com

Rev 2026

