

Building for the Future:



Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Phone: _____

Please complete one or more of the three boxes below, and remember that this is in addition to your current giving to the ongoing work of St John's and Christ Church.

1. One off gifts

I am enclosing a one-off gift of £ _____ to be used towards the building project.

Please tick only **one** of the following boxes:

- I am not a UK tax payer or do not wish Gift Aid to be reclaimed from my donation.
 I am a UK tax payer and I want the Church to reclaim tax on this donation. I note that I must have paid an amount of tax which at least equals tax deducted from this donation.

If you have ticked the second box, please sign here: _____

Date: ____/____/____.

2. Regular giving to the project

Please tick only **one** of the following boxes:

- I am already giving regularly to the project and want to change the level of my giving to £ _____ per month / year*. This will replace any previous pledge I have made.
 I am already giving regularly to the project and do not want to change the level of my gift.
 I am not yet giving regularly to the project and pledge to give £ _____ per month / year*

for the next five years towards it. This will replace any previous pledge I have made. *This pledge is not legally binding but we hope you will make the decision carefully and prayerfully. We will contact you with details of how to fulfil the pledge by standing order from your bank account, or, if you prefer, in some other way.*

***Please delete.**

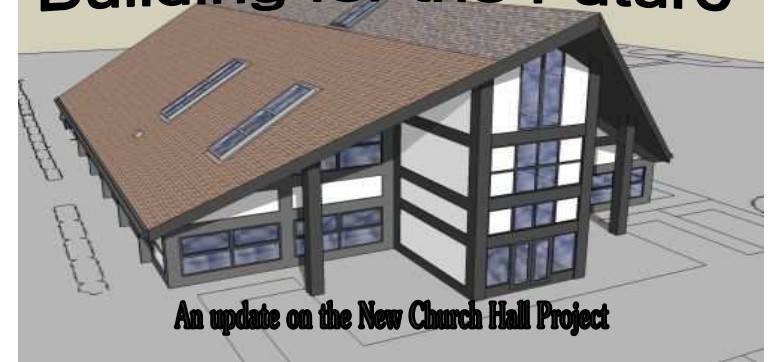
3. Interest-free loan to the project

I am able to offer an interest-free loan of £ _____ to be used for the building project.

Loans like this (minimum £100) greatly help the church to minimise the cost of any commercial loan that is needed. We will contact you to discuss details. If you have offered a loan at a previous Gift Day, your response here will replace your earlier commitment.

Foreword: Rev Mike Smith

Building for the Future



In medieval times, it would often take more than a century to build a grand cathedral. I hope it won't take us that long to build our new church hall – but I am learning that such projects are rarely speedy affairs! Two years have passed since we started planning our major project to rebuild the church hall. It is a good time to remember why we started. We are not *just* doing this because the old hall is beginning to fall down – though that is certainly spurring us on.

Obviously, we want to see a new hall that will serve the purposes of the many ministries that run at St John's – but we are also committed to putting facilities at the heart of our community which will benefit every resident of Hartford. At the top of the list of reasons for the new hall is the provision of safe, flexible, useful and welcoming facilities for our youth and children's ministries – see the interview with Rob Payne for one example of how important this is.

As we build for the future, many things have happened during the last two years which we see as the Lord's gracious hand upon us. The church has embarked on the project with unity and enthusiasm. The parish council have been very helpful in their support. Our neighbours have almost all been supportive. The borough council gave its unanimous approval for the plans just a few months ago. We need to remind ourselves of prayers answered!

Financially, if gifts, pledges and the nest-egg from the sale of the old school are added together, we are around halfway towards our working cost of £1 million – do read David Richard's article, "How do we climb the mountain" – and give thanks. As a project of the church family at St John's, it will be – by God's grace – up to us to raise the bulk of the funding. It is a daunting task! But we trust in the same merciful and wise Saviour as the apostle Paul. He encouraged the Philippians in the light of their costly giving to his gospel ministry: "my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus." My prayer in this project is that we will share that experience: that as the Lord leads us to costly generosity, we will see his faithful supply of all our needs. We serve a munificent Lord!

Thank you for your generosity.

Mike Smith

An Interview with...



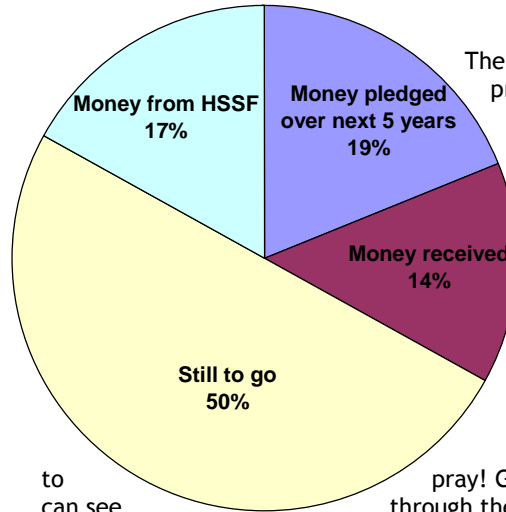
I'm Rob Payne. I spend my weekdays working for Scottish Power in Liverpool. When I have some spare time I like to play the piano or listen to classical music, play board games or go for walks. In church I play the piano in the Sunday evening service and sometimes help to lead the singing in the morning service. I am also a member of the PCC. My main Sunday morning job is to lead the Climbers Sunday School group (ages 5-8). I have been involved with the group since April 2005, when it was led by Chris and Clare Coney. When they left Climbers to have a baby, Carla Cook started and we now lead the group together, with regular help from our teenage helpers, Miriam Fawcett, Alex Blayney and Tom Jeffery.

We currently meet in the old hall, at the more decrepit end of the building. Although it's a good size, it is often unsuitable for our children to run around in after heavy rain, due to the slippery wet patches and, occasionally, puddles that appear on the far end of the wooden floor of the hall. It isn't a particularly helpful learning environment due to the distractions of the stage which we need to keep the children away from - it is now little more than a junk storage area, and doesn't even perform that job very well now that the roof leaks! The room's general state of repair is far from ideal, making it a rather uninviting space. It is not merely superficial deterioration - let us not forget the ceiling beam that fell down some time ago!

I look forward to the new church hall, in which Climbers will have a teaching room with our own display space on the wall, including a whiteboard or similar. We badly need this at the moment, both as an aid to clear teaching and to give the group a sense of ownership of the room. It will be very helpful for all the groups to have access to a separate, larger hall - I feel particularly sorry for Explorers, bouncing around in room 3 with nowhere to let out their energy. It will also help Climbers to be able to distinguish "game time" in the hall from "learning time" in the teaching room. This has caused us problems in the past, with some children not knowing when to stop running around and start listening! I hope and pray that with a new church hall we will be able more effectively to teach our children and young people the good news about Jesus and how to live for Him every day.

"How do we Climb the Mountain?"

There is always only one answer to that:
ONE STEP AT A TIME!



The working cost estimate that we have for the project (£1,000,000) is daunting. But, in one sense, we are already half way there: so far £140,000 has been given or is due in recovered tax; the Hartford Sunday School Fund has promised £170,000; we have interest-free loans of £140,000 promised and these are more than covered by the £190,000 which has been pledged over the next 5 years. But that means we do not have cash in hand NOW to go to a builder. We can get to base camp and can even see our way to the half-way refuge - but we cannot yet see the summit.

So what do we need to do? Firstly, we need to pray! God is sovereign and has led us to this point; He can see through the cloud to the top and he knows the best time to start the final assault. Secondly, we all need to examine our hearts and our own financial position to test whether we, are doing all that we could. On a similar project the vicar announced to his congregation "Great news! We have all the money we need! Now the bad news - it's still in your pockets!"

The Pareto Principle - or '80/20' rule - is universal; it even applies to congregations and church hall projects! In the giving received so far from 127 family groups, 20% of the donors have contributed 80% of the funds. If we look at what the other 80% of donors have given, 54% have given amounts up to £250; 16% have given £250-500; 11% from £500-1000. So you can see that 80% of our current income has come from just 25 donors giving over £1000 each, some of them considerably so.

To change my metaphorical question: "how do you eat an elephant?" You make it into "elephant burgers!" If every adult on our electoral roll gave £25 per month for the next 5 years we would generate the remaining £500,000 and have the 10% we have promised to give to an overseas capital project! I know that not everyone in our congregation can manage this amount- but many already do and many more can. Many could manage more. What, prayerfully, can you afford?

Now for the even better news! For every £25 you give, that nice tax man will give us an additional £7.05 if you are a tax payer. And if you are a higher rate taxpayer, you benefit as well since your standard rate band will increase by the gross amount that you give. That sounds like "win-win" to me - and God gets the glory!

David Richards