

What we would like to do in 2024 and beyond

- Continue to support leaders of toddler, children's and young people's groups
- Reach out to all users of our church and halls to help and support them
- Enhance our relationship with St Mary's School
- Increase our financial support for Christian missions and other charities
- Continue to provide housing for Francesco our curate
- Become a church which uses its buildings as much as possible, but in a greener way
- Provide worship, and study and prayer facilities for all our congregation
- Continue a tradition of nearly 20 years of hosting homeless people over the winter, as part of an area-wide Winter Shelter Scheme.

Apart from all this, we have our Church and Churchyard Project. This not only needs to be funded, by quite separate funding donations, but it needs to be sustained by many people in the church who must focus away from worrying about the day-to-day finances. These finances need to be met whatever we do with that Project.

The mind of Christ

How do we approach our daily living with its many decisions big and small? St Paul writing to the Philippians advises them to "let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2.5).

I enjoy magic and one strand in magic shows is "mind-reading". Of course we know that we cannot actually read someone else's mind, certainly not what number they are thinking of, but it is intriguing to wonder how the effect is brought about.

We cannot read minds, so St Paul is not asking us to do the impossible and think the thoughts of Jesus. Instead having the mind of Christ is about our outlook and way of living. Christ, St Paul goes on, did not seek equality with God but started by emptying himself. Jesus begins with giving and as a result, "therefore", God also highly exalted him. Giving and receiving are inextricably linked.

So, having the mind of Christ, living in the life-giving relationship he has with the Father, sets giving as a priority. This gives us an insight into our stewardship giving at St Mary's. Our life, both individually and together, is built upon giving and receiving, and giving always comes first. It is not some calculation about our benefit as if it were some sort of investment. Jesus does not give in order to receive back. He simply gives.

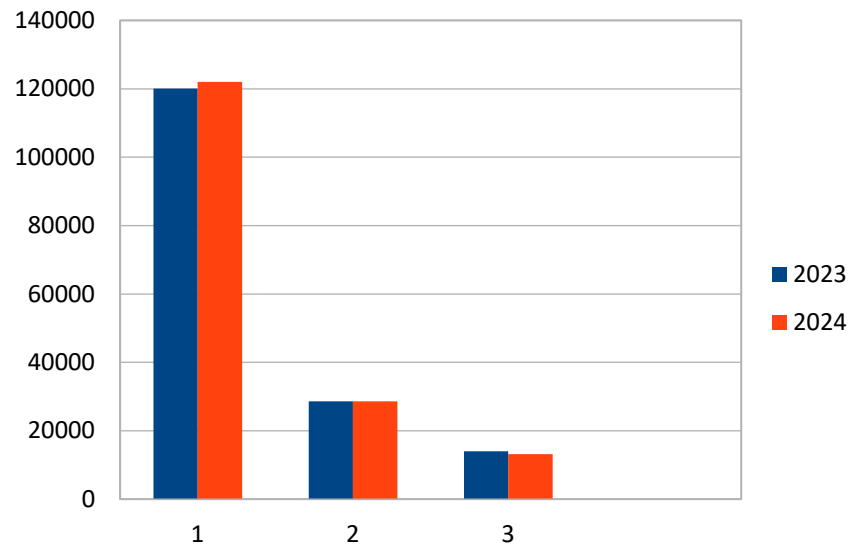
We are all able to give in differing degrees and none of us gives to the extent to that Jesus did, but as we consider our stewardship we need to let the mind of Christ Jesus be in us. This brings life to us, our church and our world. There is no magic involved. Everything begins with generous giving.

The Rector

WHAT WE RECEIVE

Our anticipated income for 2023 is £162,674

Our forecast income for 2024 is £163,862

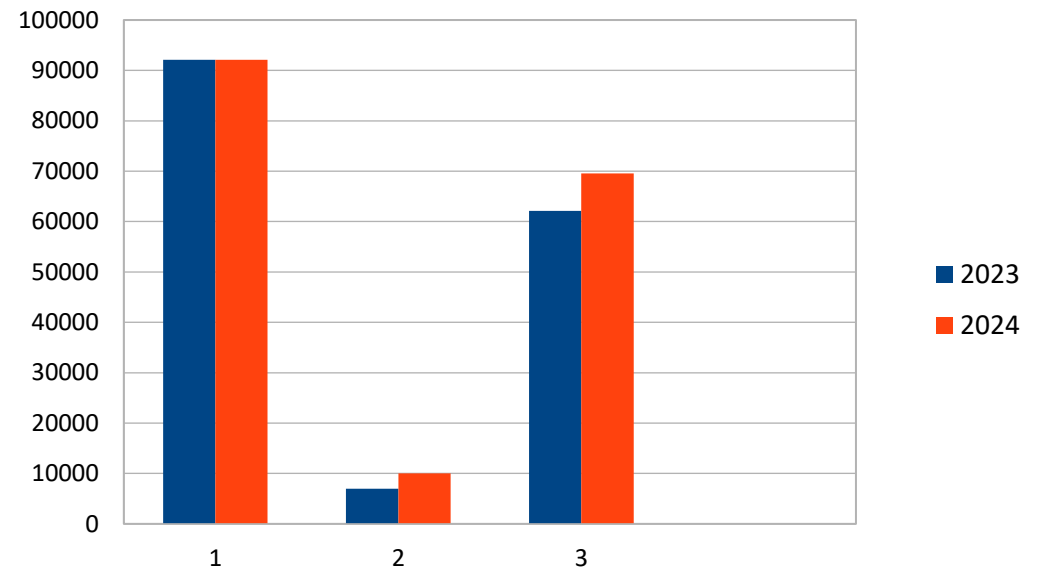


1. Stewardship & tax recovered
2. Premises hire
3. Other donations & collections, including bequests.

WHAT WE SPEND

Our anticipated expenditure for 2023 is £161,263

Our forecast expenditure for 2024 is £171,657



1. Common Fund is our contribution to financing clergy posts in the Diocese
2. Mission & other giving
3. Running costs & maintenance

To avoid a deficit in 2024 we will have to cut our donations to missions and charities. We need at least £8,000