

My Church: St. George's in all our hearts

We're a really diverse group of people in the congregation of St. George's, but we do have at least one thing in common: St. George's is very important to us all.

St. George's enriches the lives of each of us, in various ways. It's our church, and we feel very fortunate to be members of it.

And we all want it to thrive and grow. We all want it to continue its very special kind of ministry and tradition, its very special style of worship and fellowship.

Under Fr Matthew and Fr Andrew, St. George's is the focus week by week of a regular pattern of masses, culminating every Sunday in the inspiring 10.30 Sung Eucharist with our marvellous choir, and the fellowship that follows at wine and cheese and our Parish Sunday Lunches.

St. George's also devotes much clergy time to other important areas, including visiting the sick, our thriving Malagasy community and our growing ministry to young people and students. In addition, St. George's has a particular role to play in ecumenical affairs in France, especially through Fr Matthew's work as the Bishop's Ecumenical Representative in France.

Both Fr Matthew and Fr Andrew regularly serve the growing community at our daughter chaplaincy in Caen. And both are busy at most times of the year preparing candidates for confirmation and generally accompanying all of us in the deepening of our faith, through study groups, retreats and individual spiritual guidance.

To enable it all to continue and grow, our Treasurer and Churchwardens keep a sharp eye on the amount of money coming in, all of which is needed to pay for the increasing cost of keeping St. George's afloat. Which is why we are making this approach to you today.

The costs of running our Church

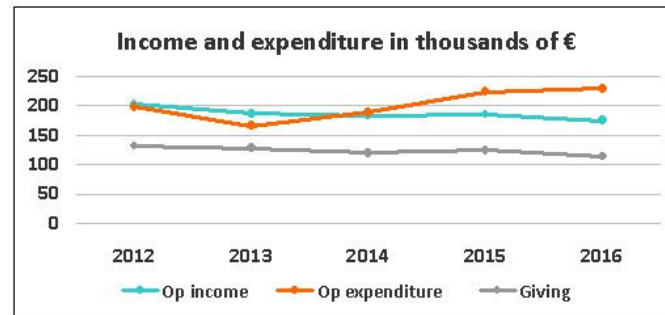
St. George's depends to a great extent on its congregation to fund its mission. We receive no subsidy or funding from any source. So most of the money needed has to be raised from us, the congregation. Some of the money also comes from donors, some from other users of our church and hall, and from time to time grants for capital spending from our patron body in London, which is a coproprietor of the building.

We receive no funding from the Church of England or the Diocese in Europe. Indeed, we have to pay *them* money (the Diocesan Quota) every year.

We keep expenses as low as possible, but, increasingly, we face costs that cannot be reduced. Many of these are a result of new regulations, for example for compliance with handicapped access requirements.

We could live with these cost increases if money coming in from the congregation was keeping pace with the rise in expenditure.

But sadly, it isn't. So we need to close the gap.



It costs about 230,000 € per year to run St. George's, not counting exceptional items such as building work. We're not there yet. So our target in the 2016 Stewardship Campaign is to increase our congregational giving by 15%.

My Challenge

This is why we are asking you again to consider how much you can afford to give in support of your worship and witness at St. George's, and how you give it. And, of course, our faith inspires us to think of our giving in a particular way as a response to God's love.

Stewardship: reminds us that all we possess comes from God in the first place and we are simply stewards of it.

All things come from you and of your own do we give you. I Chronicles 29:14

Offering: our worship, which is at the heart of St George's mission, is also about the offering of our whole lives.

All this abundance that we have provided for building you a house comes from your hand and is all your own. I Chronicles 29:16

Generosity: we want to be generous in response to God's generosity to us, to provide for the needs of the people of God and be a blessing.

For God loves a cheerful giver and is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance. Romans 9:7-8

Tithing: a biblical practice of giving away the first tenth, reminding us to think in percentage terms, not a sum of money.

As soon as the command was spread abroad, the people of Israel gave in abundance the first fruits and brought in abundantly the tithe of everything. II Chronicles 31:5

Sacrifice: we are asked to give not from what is left over, but as a first gesture, and to think about how we use our money.

They all contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, her whole living. Mark 12:44

My Choice

How and how much you give to St. George's is an individual decision. Of course, we recognize how much you already give to St. George's, in many cases not only financially but in all you do for the Church community. We are truly grateful to everybody for their generous gifts of their time and talents. It's what makes us what we are.

Ways of giving to St. George's

For some, deciding how much to give is as easy as calculating a percentage of one's income. Others may want to take advantage of France's generous income tax reductions* for those giving to churches and other charities.

There are three main ways in which you can give regularly:

By setting up a standing order or <i>virement permanent SEPA</i> from your bank directly into the St. George's account.	66% INCOME TAX REDUCTION*
By writing a cheque	66% INCOME TAX REDUCTION*
By putting cash into the collection on Sunday mornings	NO INCOME TAX REDUCTION

* up to a limit for all your charitable giving of 20% of your taxable income

- If you currently give by the old kind of standing order (your bank may well charge you for this), we suggest you switch to a *SEPA* standing order (see back page for more details). Most banks offer these free of charge.
- If you are already giving by cheque, we suggest you switch to a *SEPA* standing order. This will help us to budget our expenditure more effectively, as well as reducing office work. And there's no risk of forgetting a payment!
- If you currently put cash into the collection, you get no income tax reduction at all. So we suggest you switch from cash to a *SEPA* standing order (preferably), or put a regular cheque into the collection.

However you pay, please bear in mind the increasing costs St. George's has to face, and please reconsider the amount you give.

Give to St. George's and pay less tax

If you pay French income tax, and you give to St. George's by identifiable means (*SEPA* standing order, old-style standing order or cheque), you may deduct 66% of your giving (up to a limit for all your charitable giving of 20% of your taxable income) from the amount of income tax you would otherwise have to pay. So every 100 euros you give in any year will only cost you 34 euros after the income tax reduction notified to you the following year. If you give this way, we will send you an official tax receipt.

SEPA standing orders

To set up a *SEPA* standing order (*virement permanent*) you should go to your bank's internet banking site, or contact your branch. To set up St. George's as a beneficiary, you will need to quote our bank details:

Account name (*Intitulé de compte*):
ST GEORGE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
IBAN: FR76 3058 8610 8172 9974 3010 183
BIC: BARCFRPP

It will probably take a day or two after setting up St. George's as a beneficiary before your bank will let you request a payment.

Reflect, decide, act

We ask you to give careful consideration to what St. George's means to you, and to how and how much you can afford to give. Then please fill in a confidential pledge card and give it in a sealed envelope to the clergy, Churchwardens or Treasurer before 13 March. Or post it to the Church.

Our heartfelt thanks to you for all you can do to help St. George's to achieve its target of increasing giving by 15%, and thereby to continue to grow its ministry and witness.

For more information, please contact one of the Churchwardens (Mary Berg or Christopher Chantrey), the Treasurer (Mike Orrin), or the clergy.

A ministry for everyone – 'each according to your means' II Corinthians 8:11



My Church My Challenge My Choice

A guide to giving to St. George's, Paris



From the Stewardship Team February 2016