



Gospel Growth 2026 📱 | 🔍

www.stjohnschap.co.uk/what-we-do/giving



ST JOHN'S
CHAPELTOWN

GOSPEL GROWTH

We head into the Autumn, a very blessed church! We've received so much from the Lord:

- Sunday by Sunday, vibrant worship, faithful teaching and a warm church family
- 25 folks from church and community finding friendship and support each week at Wednesday Friends
- over 1,000 children reached in local schools through assemblies and the Christian Union at Ecclesfield School
- 20 new families involved in our holiday club
- new Christians through *Christianity Explored* and 6 confirmation candidates next month
- new faces joining congregation and Cells
- the new Food Pantry at the Foodbank
- large and lively weekends away from both our ladies and Ramblers groups
- church fuller than ever last Christmas

And there's many other daily and weekly examples of God's work among us.

Add to those one further encouragement: our financial needs have been met, thanks to the generous gifts of your time and prayers and money. Your Church Council (PCC) wants to say a huge thank you to our amazing God – and also to all who helped – for making this happen. Truly, the gospel is growing among us.

AND GOSPEL PAINS

Yet here's the truth: church is no different from those of us who are gardeners or parents. New growth never comes without growing pains! We love it when the roses thrive, but not always the pruning or clearing of greenfly. We rejoice to see little ones



shoot up in height, but not ever more new shoes! Yet without the pains, none of the gains.

HOW IT WAS THEN

The Bible shows that's just how it is when the gospel changes lives and communities. Like anything that grows, it makes demands and pressures: including on our wallets.

A little Bible study in the book of Acts is instructive. Time and again there's growth numerically, spiritually – and at the same time, new demands on their giving and their resources. Luke loves to report it: how it happened at Pentecost and afterwards (Acts 2 & 4); to individuals (like Barnabas, Cornelius, Tabitha: Acts 2, 9, 10); and sometimes to local churches (like Antioch: Acts 11). They found that with gospel growth comes gospel pains.

HOW IT IS IN 2026

As our church council looks into next year, we're planning to keep the gospel growing among us and in our community. That means we've a budget that will both maintain current life and witness, and also help it to grow. And it means growing pains!

What do we mean?

You will know about inflation from your own weekly shop. St John's is sadly not immune from that. We've also seen the loss of a regular and generous user of the Parish Centre. Added to that we've found 3 key areas where we need a modest increase in our expenditure:

1. *Mission in South Yorkshire*: an inflationary increase in our contribution towards ministry in our poorer sister parishes in the Diocese

2. *Mission across the world:* we've not increased our support for gospel work overseas for some years. Having seen the Lord bless us, we'd like to make a small total increase of £300 to the Leprosy Mission, Oatridges and the Foodbank.
3. *Mission in our community:* to keep the Parish Centre as a resource for mission and community use, we need to do essential repairs and renewals. We also want to renew the signage at the Newton Hall and on Housley Park, to make them attractive and up to date – so folks know we're here!

THE GOSPEL GAP



This will mean increased spending next year of £12,500, or roughly **£160** per year for each regular giving household in our church. In other words, if we carry on as we are, with no

increase, there will be a gap in our funds, and in the work of the gospel we long to see. An increase of about that amount would meet our target. (You can see how the budget is made up on our website: <https://stjohnschap.co.uk/what-we-do/giving/>)

But at a time when some are finding real challenges in their finances, how can we think of an increase?

The short answer is: because we long to see God's kingdom grow and trust he gives the resources. Jesus is at work drawing men and women, boys and girls to himself, and equipping his people for that task. As he's been faithful this year, we can rely on him again.

BRIDGING THE GAP

Our sense is that though this will be a challenge for us as a church family, it is one that we've seen the Lord help us with before, and one that in faith we ought to aim for.

So the PCC is asking: *will you help us bridge that gospel gap together? So we see yet more gospel growth in 2026?*

Here's how that might happen:

It starts with **listening to the Lord:** He's our great Giver and the One we need to hear. So on Sunday 5th October, alongside our special Harvest Thanksgiving and lunch together, we've asked Rick to help us hear again what God's Word shows us about loving Jesus with all our gifts, including our money. (You can also read a short summary of what the Bible teaches about giving on the Giving page of our website)

Then having heard God's word, we can **prayerfully respond**. In the Bible there's no 'one size fits all' (we're to give 'in keeping with our income': 1 Cor 16:2). Some of us are really struggling and need to be very careful. Others are doing reasonably well, our savings, holidays and lifestyle not too much affected. Yet others are somewhere in the middle.



So we all need each other, and can all play a part. Those unable to look at any increase in giving are just as vital as they pray, serve and use their practical skills. Those of us who are able to help by increasing our monetary giving can do our bit to help the gospel advance, taking the strain that others can't. Like in any family, we

share the burden between us, those with the ability taking the weight, and those who can't using their other gifts which are just as needed.

OPTIONS FOR GROWTH

What your PCC asks is for us all to do what God's Word teaches: namely to give like the Lord Jesus, cheerfully and as generously as we can.

In practical steps, here's a few options you might want to consider:

- An **increase in your regular giving** for 2026, upping your standing order or cash offertory.
- A **one-off or occasional extra gift** either now or later in 2026.
- Giving by **Gift Aid:** all it needs is to let Andy our treasurer know, and he'll do the rest – the Government will then increase your giving by 20%. *Most retired folks and those on pensions now pay tax so can be part of this!*
- Using **other gifts** in new ways: is there some time or skill the Lord might be nudging you to offer/discover?

PRAYING, PLANNING, PLEDGING

We invite you this Autumn to do 3 things:

1. **Pray**, ask the Lord how you can respond.
2. **Plan**, see how you can honestly respond, whether financially or in your time and gifts.
3. **Pledge**: use the attached pledge form – filling it in and putting it in the offertory between now and Sunday 26 October. The PCC can then share how things are looking as we go into 2026.

Will you join us in praying that the Lord will provide our needs? Most of all that we'd see even more gospel growth next year?

Rick Stordy, vicar & Andy Mumford, treasurer