



ST THOMAS
CHURCH LANCASTER
SHARING GOD'S LOVE FROM THE HEART OF THE CITY

Heart of the City Project - Pledge Day 2

'Last year, you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means.' (2 Corinthians 8.10-11)

We've made a great start

In January 2017, the PCC of St Thomas' Church launched the giving campaign for our major building project. In the initial pledge period, the church membership responded with wonderful generosity, pledging almost £1.3 million including Gift Aid, to be given over a 3-year period, from January 2017 to December 2019. These pledges have been honoured with great faithfulness, so that by the end of August 2018, just over £880,000 has been received into the Heart of the City Project Fund.

Phase 1 is nearly complete

These initial pledges have enabled us to get much-needed building work under way, with a total cost of approximately £250,000. This has included:

- Repairs to the spire: strengthening the upper stonework, adding a new stainless-steel cross at the top, repointing much of the external and some of the internal stonework, pigeon-proofing the windows, improving the lightning conductor, and fixing problems with the wooden floor.
- Pre-school project: damp-proofing the floor, laying new flooring, installing new child-sized toilets, replacing guttering and down-pipes, replacing damaged window-glass, repainting the gable end facing the ramp, and adding a new pre-school sign.
- West End Project – repairing the roof over the front entrance to church, fixing a long-standing leak, repointing external stonework, and re-plastering the inside wall around the tall windows in the upstairs room (due for completion 16 November 2018).
- Planning application – this has involved Dan Brown our architect drawing up plans and preparing a number of supporting documents for our planning application.

We're good to go!

Our planning application was given unanimous consent by the planning committee on 23 July, with committee members commenting, 'The church is ambitious to do good work. They need to have a better building. We should help them to do the work we all want them to do.'

Now it's time for Phase 2: The New Centre

Now that Phase 1 is nearly complete, and we have received planning permission, we are focusing our efforts on Phase 2: building the new church centre, and landscaping the grounds including the car park. The new centre is the heart of the project – it is the new centre that will release new forms of mission such as the Family Life Centre, as well as giving us much-needed space to accommodate the many groups for children, youth, students, and adults with which we are so blessed. The new centre will give us 7 new large and mid-sized meeting rooms, in place of the two that we have currently – and all of them made accessible by a lift. The estimated cost of Phase 2 is £2.8 million.

We're well on the way

The only thing now standing between us and the successful building of the new centre is our own willingness and ability to give the money that is needed. However, we are well on the way already. If the pledges that have been made already continue to be honoured as they have been, then we expect to have just over £1 million available for the building fund after we have paid for Phase 1, from money that has already been promised and/or given.

There's still a challenge ahead

In order to complete Phase 2, and build the new church centre, we are now looking to raise £1.8 million in additional funds. That's why we have employed Stewart Graham, a Christian fundraiser, who is working with us to apply for grants from trusts and philanthropists. On the basis of a feasibility study, the fundraising team has set a target of raising £500,000 from trust funds, 'high-net-worth' individuals, and community-minded businesses and commercial enterprises. 25 applications have been sent off already, with several major bids being prepared currently. If you have any contact with any trusts or individuals who could be approached to help fund this project, please do get in touch via hotc@st.tees.org.uk.

If we are successful in raising £500,000 from external sources, that leaves us looking to raise an additional £1.3 million from within the church, through a combination of direct giving and personal sponsorship challenges.

The adventure of trust

£1.3 million is a lot of money to pledge, but we have done it before. Between us all, could we do it again? If we did, this would help us complete Phases 1 and 2 of the project and utterly transform the city-centre ministry of the church for generations to come. Rising to this challenge would take us all on an adventure of sacrificial giving, but it's only out on the water, not in the safety of the boat, that the great lessons of trust in God are learnt.

Heart of the City Pledge Day 2: Sunday 4th November 2018

We have set aside a second pledge day for the Heart of the City Project: Sunday 4th November. We are inviting everyone in the church to make a pledge, whether great or small, as a sign of our commitment to investing in growing God's kingdom through reaching out to people in need who are far from Jesus, here in the heart of our city.

We are inviting new pledges over a 2 year period, beginning in January 2019, and extending to the end of December 2020. Lump sum donations and one-off gifts are also very welcome at any point, although the more information you can give to our financial team, the better we will be able to plan for the project. Any pledges made will be kept in total confidence by the small financial team, and no details of individual pledges will be shared outside this team at any point.

If you know that you have pledged to your maximum capacity already, then please do not feel pressured to find a pledge you cannot afford. Or if you know that your finances are in difficulty, then perhaps you might benefit from speaking to Jono Peatman, the CAP Debt Centre manager for Lancaster and Morecambe.

However, a number of us who have pledged what we thought was our maximum back in 2017, have found that one way or another, God has provided us with more than enough, and we've had some money left over, despite giving generously to the building project. If that's you, perhaps you have the capacity to consider pledging again, on top of what you have already committed, in order to get us over the line.

For others of us, we have yet to make our first pledge. Perhaps you were waiting to see if this project was really going to happen, or you were waiting for us to get planning permission, or you felt that your contribution would be too small to make any difference. If that is your situation, please do consider now making a first pledge, of whatever size, as a sign of your commitment to this great adventure of trust that we as a church have embarked on together.

If you are already giving to the regular ministry of the church, please may we ask you not to reduce or divert your giving away from this to the building project. If

you can give only once, please continue to give to the ongoing ministry of the church.

Fundraising and Sponsorship Opportunities

Direct giving is likely to be the main source of income for a project of this size, but we can contribute in other ways too. There have been a number of fundraising events that have taken place already as church activities, including a cinema afternoon in church, a vintage tea, and a quiz night. Forthcoming events include:

- Auction of Promises, Friday 16th November;
- Taskmaster Challenge evening, 2nd March;
- Jonathan Viera concert, 6th March.

If you would like to help organise any of these events, please contact Jess Walmsley via hotc@st.tees.org.uk.

A number of church members have set out on their own personal fundraising or sponsorship challenges, looking to raise funds from friends and family outside of St Thomas' Church, including:

- South India Feast
- Walking the Cumbria Way
- Organising a ceilidh night
- Sponsored silence, or 7-day screen free challenge

If you want printable sponsorship forms, or step-by-step guidance on setting up a Give.Net page for online giving, please see the Building Project page on the church website, www.st.tees.org.uk.

If you are planning your own form of fundraising or sponsorship challenge, let the fundraising team know on hotc@st.tees.org.uk. There is also space on the pledge form to indicate your intentions.

So what now? Please pray

- Please pray that God will provide all that we need to do what we believe he has asked us to do, and please pray about what your own response might be.
- Please pray for those charged with leadership of this challenging but exciting project.

And then what? Please give

Please come prepared to give in a pledge form on Sunday 4th November, or during the week following if you cannot be in church on 4th November. This pledge day will be a key indicator to the buildings teams and PCC about how best to proceed, so please do let us know as much as you can about your giving intentions via the enclosed pledge form. Thank you.