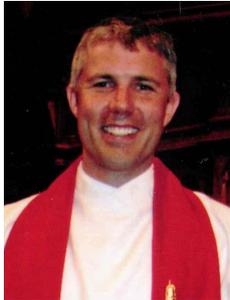


A Vision for Giving



GIVING AS WORSHIP
Rev Allister Lane, July 2013

This **Vision for Giving** at St John's goes to the centre of our faith and how we live out our faith. Perhaps we don't talk about giving enough; giving is an action of faith in response to what God does for us.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son' (John 3:16).

God is the divine Giver, and invites us to be *receivers*, as well as *givers*. This continuous flow of gracious giving cannot be taken for granted, for it is at the heart of who God is and who we are because of God.

'I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.' (Gals 2:19-20)

The Bible tells us about God and about us. It identifies us as God's image-bearers (Genesis 1) and so theologian N.T. Wright describes worship as 'reflecting God's glory back to God and into the world'. Anything we do to reflect God's glory is worship. And when worship is seen this way, we can recognise our giving as worship.

At St John's we wholeheartedly believe God is leading us in mission and ministry. We happen, though, to have a projected shortfall of resources for all the ministry and mission we are doing. Without more giving we can't continue all we are doing and must act now.

"What you do with every cent says something about your view of God and what He means to you. And what your values are in this age. And what you think your few years on earth should be spent for."
– John Piper

With this in mind some practical suggestions for giving can be drawn from scripture, mainly from Paul's teaching (2 Cor. 8-9; Matt. 6: 1-4; 1 Cor. 16: 1-2).

We are to give:

- In proportion to our income or how God has given to us,
- Regularly, willingly, joyfully, cheerfully, and without compulsion,
- Sacrificially, gratefully, generously, and purposefully,
- In response to God's giving and not to be praised by people – our giving should be in secret.



**The St John's Future Finance Group
David Galt, Session Clerk**

In 2012, St John's faced a budget deficit of over \$300,000. Session and Council knew the deficit must be addressed to sustain our Ministry and Outreach and set up the Future Finance Group (FFG) to find a way forward. It concluded:

- We currently are spending more than we are receiving in order to make Christ known, help people turn their lives towards God and meet the needs of others.
- We forecast a deficit of \$150,000 to \$200,000 pa for each of the next seven years.
- More important, however, for us as Christians is recognising the importance of giving financially.
- **The FFG's key recommendation is that St John's aim to double its regular congregational giving from \$150,000 to \$300,000 each year.**
- There is some limited scope to increase our income from rentals and to reduce our expenditure at the margins, but these measures won't be enough alone.
- An alternative scenario, without additional giving, would see us having to reduce our outreach and Ministry spending. This is not recommended.

Please pray about how you can be involved. Session members have committed to increase their own giving in supporting the overall doubling of giving needed. Everyone can help here. We know some people are giving generously now and some will not be able to double their giving but others will be able to more than double their giving. Our goal to double our giving is a shared goal and we know that together we can do it. Thank you for your support and prayers.

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY



NO THANKS ... I'VE GOT PLENTY

Annual Giving in St John's, Wellington Presbytery and across the NZ Presbyterian Church in 2012			
	St John's	Wellington Presbytery	New Zealand
Per Person on roll	\$337	\$698	\$612
Per Attendee	\$779	\$1315	\$1204

What is St John's All About?

St John's core is about worship, making Christ known, helping people turn their lives towards God, and meeting the needs of others as our Mission Statement says:

"St Johns gathers in prayer and fellowship to worship God in central Wellington. Through the power of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit we seek to care for and strengthen our members and help them to a growing relationship with God. In this way, just as God cares for us, we seek to empower our members to share their talents, to meet the needs of those who come to us and those who we can reach out to in the community."

Each year, we fund \$260,000 of outreach beyond the Congregation, we fund over \$140,000 of youth, children's and families Ministry, we make facilities available to the community (80% at concessional rates for community organisations), and we proclaim the risen Christ in the heart of Wellington at two regular services each Sunday.

St John's has adopted priorities of growing faith, building community and encouraging participation. St John's is doing all those things. For instance, in June 2013, each week 90 children and 24 youth (on average) were reached by our youth work while 147 adults took part in our small groups and 219 people, including children, attended Sunday worship.

Our outreach is supporting:

- the work of the wider Presbyterian Church throughout New Zealand;
- the expansion of Knox Church at Waitara's mission to a less privileged community;
- mission by the Church in Myanmar and elsewhere overseas;
- opportunities for those in prison;
- the most vulnerable people, of all ages, in our region through Presbyterian Support and Downtown Community Ministry;
- Wellington youth beyond St John's through the BGI, and
- Christian theology in the Wellington University environment

Our passion for worship and outreach means we must also think about the financial base for this activity. Without a strong shared response to this vision for giving, we may be faced with having to cut some of our activity back.

If you would like to know more about the work of the Future Finance Group, the Christian theology of giving, what St John's is doing, and how you can give, you can find all the details on the St John's website at

www.stjohnsinthecity.org.nz

What St John's Elders Love about the life of St John's

"I love to see the Church empty out as so many children leave with so many leaders to learn about the Christian faith. I love the teaching, the rich variety of music that supports our worship, our many small groups, the pastoral care, and the youth work." *David Galt*

"What I love about St Johns is the diversity of the people who belong to St Johns, who have wide ranging interests and different backgrounds, but above all have the one core belief in common. Also, I love the families buzzing around on Sundays." *Malcolm Shaw*

"I love having the time and space to reflect on faith. I love spirited discussions over hot food at Men's Breakfasts." *Anton Ojala*

"I love being with the kids, especially the joint time at St J's Kids." *Ross Davis*

"I love the caring community at St John's. It is an inspiration seeing the way people care for one another whether in joy or sadness, sickness or health, showing the true light of Christ." *Margaret Gilkison*

"I love at St John's how we happily hold differing theological interpretations in the same family. We have great ministers and wonderful people at all spectrums of age and spiritual maturity so there is support, and challenge, for all of us." *Beth Beard*

The Overall Financial Position 2013/14

Shortfall	\$430,000	Ministry Team	\$197,000
		Worship, Music & Congregational Activities	\$25,000
		Christian Education	\$149,000
		Outreach	\$276,000
		Communications	<u>\$14,000</u>
			<u>\$661,000</u>
Congregational Giving	\$153,000		
Other	\$74,000		
Rental Income	\$212,000	Property costs	\$393,000
Trust Fund Income	\$479,000	Administration	
		- Staff	\$170,000
		- Operational costs	<u>\$124,000</u>
			<u>\$687,000</u>

The chart shows income on the left and expenditure on the right.

Note that the shortfall, based on 2013/14 is before the doubling of giving we are seeking.

Congregational giving is much less than the costs of the Ministry and Outreach we undertake and, even if doubled as we propose, will remain much less.



The Year of
RENEWAL