



Rev Dave Brown
Rector of St Nicholas Stevenage & St Mary Graveley
2a North Road, Stevenage. Herts. SG1 4AT
Tel: 01438 213587
Email: revdmbrown@gmail.com



Dear Friends,

23rd November, 2018.

Church Building Repair and Development Project: Update and Appeal for Help

As you will know, over the last few years St Nicholas PCC has been slowly but surely developing plans for major repairs and renewals in the church to resolve some safety concerns and meet our needs as a growing church. These detailed plans are now almost complete. Conscious of the historic nature of the building, these plans have been shaped by consultations within the church family and with numerous heritage bodies, and we firmly believe that they not only meet our needs for the continued effective growth of the church but are in keeping with the history of this ancient and beautiful building. The plans have now been supported by the Diocesan Advisory Committee, and we are confident that very early in 2019 we will have the permissions required, and our target is to begin the work in March 2019 and take six months to complete

The work will include:

- A new stone floor throughout the nave and chancel, replacing the dangerously worn stones and the woodblocks.
- A new lighting system to current standards for a public building that is energy efficient.
- Upgrading our audio-visual systems to cover all parts of the worship space.
- A new internal layout, re-siting many of the wooden screens to create a larger and more flexible main worship space, an east end chapel for small gatherings and private prayer, a crèche and a dedicated area for our musicians.
- An underfloor heating system to provide cost-effective heating throughout the church, ensuring the church is always warm and welcoming.
- Replacing the in-fill of the arches between the church and the parish room with glazed door panels, to provide greater light into the main body of the church, and increased seating space for our largest congregations.
- A new floor above the parish room, providing much-needed meeting space for our Sunday children's groups and for other activities during the week.
- Associated works: to improve the facilities in the bell tower, create a welcome area, increase mingling space after services, and improve storage space.

If you would like to know more detail please speak to Anthony Taylor who is our church project manager.

We have employed a professional quantity surveyor to give us a good idea of the total cost of this project, and they expect the final cost to be in the region of £750,000 plus VAT. (Because St Nicholas is a Grade 1 listed church, the project is eligible to reclaim the VAT paid; all of these figures assume that we will do so) These costs are still an estimate, we won't know the exact costs until we finalise the detailed plans and complete the tendering process.

This total, whilst seemingly daunting, can be broken down into the following streams of funding:

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| • Money already given | £50,000 |
| • Grant from Hawkes Bequest Trustees | £500,000 |
| • Grants from other grants bodies | £100,000 |
| • Gifts/donations from the church and wider community | £100,000 |

I'm writing to you now to ask you to prayerfully consider how much you might be able to give to this project. Money could be given through **a single gift or as a standing order**, on top of your current regular giving, for a fixed number of years. For example, £20 a month for 5 years would mean a gift of £1200, which, if you pay income tax would take the gift to over £1500. If 20 people were able to commit themselves to this, we would raise £30,000 towards our target. If 60 do it, we would almost reach our total.

I realise we're coming up to Christmas, but pledges and gifts would not be due until 28th February 2019. All we need now are your pledges, although you can, of course, make your donations when you are ready.

So, may I ask you to prayerfully consider your response to this project. It has been a long time in the planning and countless hours of effort and energy have brought us to this point. It has the unanimous support of the PCC who not only believe it to be a prudent and wise way of making the most of the building the Lord has given us, but also that it is in accordance with God's will for us here at St Nicholas.

You'll find a response form at the bottom of this letter. **Please would you let us have your responses by the end of January 2019.**

We also need help in practical ways to see this project through. If you have the skills necessary to help to apply for grants from charitable organisations, please do get in touch with me or one of the Church Wardens. This is a vital source of funding and some of these application forms are time sensitive.

The 'Friends of St Nicholas Church' who have already contributed generously to the costs, are also gearing up for a major fundraising drive in the local community in support of this project. Please hold them in your prayers, and if you'd like to get involved do speak to Peter Gordon.

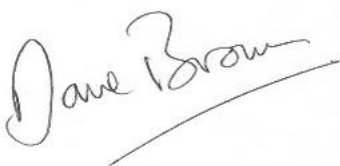
During the construction work, the church will be closed for all activities. This will require us to meet elsewhere, and unfortunately, we will not be able to host the many other mid-week activities that use the building including Happy Hedgehogs, Baby Bugs and Little Lambs, Brownies, Snack and Chat and the mid-week services. At the joint PCC Away Day in December, we will also be discussing our pattern of services for our time of exile. This is not a straightforward task, so please keep the PCCs in your prayers.

Meeting elsewhere, perhaps also at a different time, will require us to be patient and generous with one another as we make the adjustment to our new home. I'm sure that the time away from the building will be unsettling for many of us, but I hope that we will all be able to see this as an opportunity for greater growth and a wider witness to the community. As a PCC, we want to make sure that we make use of our forced exile to reach out with the good news of Jesus. Wouldn't it be wonderful if, by the time we get back in our building, our church family has grown!

If you have any questions, please do speak to me, one of the Wardens or PCC members, or to Anthony Taylor our church project manager.

May God bless us, guide us, lead us and provide for all our needs as we seek to grow his kingdom here.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dave Brown". The signature is written in dark ink and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Rev Dave Brown
Rector, St Nicholas Church Stevenage.

Response Form: Church Building Repair and Development Project Appeal

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode _____

Tel: _____ Email: _____

Complete/delete the below as applicable:

I/We pledge to give a single donation of £_____ to the Church Building Funds before 28th February 2019 or the start of the building work, whichever is later.

OR

I/We pledge to give a regular donation of £_____ per month for _____ months in total to the Church Building Funds commencing 28th February 2019 or the start of the building work, whichever is later.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

If you pay income tax, please also sign the declaration below to allow us to claim back the tax paid.

I want to Gift Aid my donation listed above. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please return this form to:

Our project finance administrator: Don Cooper via church or at 122 Chancellors Road, Stevenage SG1 4TZ

Your details will only be used to help us claim back the tax (if applicable) and to inform about the progress of the project.