



The Parish Office
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10th July 2020

Dear Friends,

St Mary-Le-Tower Church Ipswich Emergency Funding Appeal

We find ourselves in unprecedented times and in uncharted waters due to the Covid-19 pandemic; for income to St Mary-le-Tower has taken a major hit. Regular giving income has been falling for some time, a planned Giving Renewal for this spring has had to be abandoned, and all Concerts and the Christmas Tree Festival have been cancelled too this year.

We are planning strategy and events to increase income substantially. The PCC Finance Committee has thoroughly reviewed income and expenditure, and is actively exploring ways to reduce expenditure significantly. As you can see from the enclosed Finance Information Sheet, the financial position of the St Mary-le-Tower is perilous indeed. This represents a very real threat to the continuation of St Mary-Le-Tower Church as we know it.

It is therefore with a sense of extreme urgency that the PCC has urged that an emergency appeal must be made to everyone who cares about St Mary-le-Tower, whether they are connected through the Choir, Concerts, Bell Ringers or Church membership. We are aiming to raise at least £50,000 this year to support the Choral Ministry of the Church, and also to enable the church building to continue to be a living sign of God's presence in the centre of Ipswich.

SMLT is the only Parish Church in Suffolk (other than our Cathedral) providing extensive and exceptional choral opportunities for children and young people within worship. This is a real area of growth and mission. Sustaining this choral ministry requires an intensive programme of choral services and SMLT is unique in Suffolk in the range of choral services we offer. We also have a 300-year-old bell ringing tradition at SMLT and our belfry is one of only three 12 bell rings in the county.

To protect and enhance this Choral tradition, which draws people to our church in so many ways, we hope and pray that everyone with a connection to this special place, with its special style of worship, will contribute as much as they possibly can financially before the end of September, in order to secure the immediate future. We are under no illusion that if we fail in this appeal the future of the Music Department, and indeed our church in its present form, is in serious doubt.

Please will you make a donation as soon as you are able? The enclosed Finance Information Sheet gives several ways you can do this, and we enclose a return envelope. If you have questions or suggestions please contact the Churchwarden, Jo Jones. See contact details above.

With very many thanks,

Jo Jones (Churchwarden)
Mary Baldry, Sonia Docherty, Richard Hanley, Ian Lord (Fundraising Team)