

the Gospel?

It should also be mentioned that our giving is not just for keeping our church going, or for the stipend costs, but to see people coming to repentance and faith in Jesus and growing in their faith and becoming the people that God would have us be. That is a priceless thing!

We are in a fortunate position in that we have a ministry which is on a basis of full-time unrestricted tenure resident in the town, and that is a unique position amongst the other churches in the town at the moment. The buildings are largely in good condition and we have a number of new Elders and Managers. Therefore, we are in a pivotal, and exciting place for ministry in the town and to seek opportunities.

I pray that you are also excited by the energy for the opportunities for St Andrew's Church for Bellshill and for Christ's Kingdom. If you have any questions or comments or constructive ideas, please do not hesitate to contact me, or your Elder. However, most of all, please do pray for the work of the church.

Rev. Jason Lingiah
Minister of St Andrew's.
August 2023

What can I do?

- 1. Give Thanks:** Give thanks for everything with which God has blessed you.
- 2. Give Regularly:** Commit or re-commit to giving money regularly to the church and to other charities.
- 3. Give Generously:** A small increase can make a big difference to the Church.
- 4. Give Yourself:** Be involved in the Church by your presence and worship, Bible Study. You will benefit you your presence will bless others.

United Free Church of Scotland Bellshill: St Andrew's Church

Christian Living and Giving



'Love so amazing, so divine, demands my life, my soul, my all'

Bellshill: St Andrew's United Free Church SC016252 is part of the United Free Church of Scotland SC008167.

To members and adherents of St Andrew's Church.

Christian giving is a very touchy subject at times. We do not like to talk about the money part of giving, however money is essential for our church to be able to not just function, or maintain buildings or pay a stipend, but to be able **to teach the Christian faith, to worship and to bring others into a saving faith in Jesus.**

For our church to be able to function, stipend, maintenance and also enhancing the worship, mission and fellowship and being able to have enough money to pay for things that need replaced, I would like to see us being able to aim for an income of £60,000 per annum. We are fortunate in that we have a long standing let of the Neilson Halls, but that only goes so far.

We are blessed in that we have some reserves, but we cannot continue to use the reserves to pay for everyday running costs. Perhaps we are not always aware of how much it costs to run the church, or who pays for it.

In the United Free Church of Scotland, the congregation is responsible for paying the Stipend and Target costs. The minimum Minister's Stipend and Employer's National Insurance costs are around £30,000 per annum (significantly lower than the Church of Scotland stipend and benefits!). A stipend is paid to the Minister for him carry out the duties of ministry in the congregation and he will use that money for the costs of ministry such as hospitality, books, computer equipment. A Manse is provided for the minister and his family to live in the community that he serves and as a workplace and place of hospitality and meetings, and the Council Tax is paid by the congregation. The congregation pays for energy costs for the Church and Halls, but not the Manse.

At present, we do not receive a grant from the denomination for the costs of the church. The churchyard is unusual in Scotland as the St

Andrew's congregation own and are responsible for maintaining the grounds. Most churchyards are in local authority ownership and/or management.

Questions are often asked about **Target**. Target is a sum of money paid by every congregation of the United Free Church of Scotland towards the running of the church nationally, and towards the Minister's pension and insurance costs. Target is calculated by the Church Offices and is based on the congregation's income and savings. The current cost of Target in 2023 that St Andrew's is liable for is £6,400, however the Committee of Management asks for members to pay £65. However, the congregation is still responsible for the total cost. Therefore, we would ask that those who are able to make a higher contribution are able to do so.

There have been several questions regarding **Gift Aid**. If you pay tax on your salary or pension (therefore having a gross taxable income of over £12,500) you will be eligible for the Church as a registered charity to claim Gift Aid on your offerings. This means that the Church can gain an extra 25% of your offerings and donations, with no cost to yourself. For the 2022 calendar year, the Church received almost £3,000 back in Gift Aid.

Therefore, **I would ask all members and adherents of St Andrew's Church to consider and review their giving, not just of money, but of time and talents.** It is a Biblical principle for Christians to give generously cheerfully and even sacrificially for the work of Christ's Kirk. Perhaps you may also wish to consider how you may be able to consider how you can bless the church by volunteering time or skills. Even the presence of folks at worship and church events is an encouragement. We all have our passions and hobbies and interests that we spend our time, talents and money on. Faith in Christ is more than just a tradition or hobby or activity and therefore if we expend our resources on these things, how much more should we spend on