

Jesus told a story about a rich man whose land produced a vast harvest. The man responds by tearing down his barns and building bigger ones to store his abundant produce.

He feels confident and comfortable knowing he has plenty stowed away for the years ahead. And then the story takes a darker turn. The man

dies suddenly and never gets to enjoy the fruits of his labours.

Jesus explains to the crowd that whether we have a lot or a little, we should use our earthly treasures in ways that honour God. He's not saying that we should never spend money on ourselves. But he reminds us that *where our treasure is, there our heart is also.*

Luke 12:34.

Do you have a heart for St Mary's and our community across North West Bristol?

I hope that you do. If your heart is encouraged by all that is happening at St Mary's, you are invited to invest your treasure here too, by giving regularly so that we can continue to bless our parish and beyond in the year ahead.

God continues to be at work at St Mary's, and there is much to celebrate!

Several people have become Christians and joined the church. Ministry amongst our older and younger members (and those in between!) is flourishing again. Many are serving in all sorts of ways, quietly using their time and talents not only to bless people in Stoke Bishop, but also the other communities in NW Bristol which make up the Avonside Mission Area.

In some respects, St Mary's is like the rich man in Jesus' story. We have enough. Maybe even more than enough, uncomfortable though that might be to admit. **We are one of the most well-resourced (in terms of finance and people)**

churches in this diocese. The implication in Jesus' story is that the man reaps the consequence of storing up treasures for himself, rather than using them to bless others. The consequence for him is death, not life.

On another occasion, Jesus said: ***I have come that you may have life, and have it abundantly.***

John 10:10. I want us all to experience that kind of life. Giving stuff away in order to bless others is part of the full, real life that Jesus offers us.

Share what you have, says Jesus, and you will know life in all its fullness.

Everyone who is part of the ministry team, and many others in the church family, gives some of their time to serving the other ASMA churches and communities across NW Bristol.

At St Mary's we encounter
Jesus' life in all its fullness by
sharing what we have.

We share treasure.

We share time.

We share talents.

We share team.

A portion of our regular income, given by those in the church family, is used each year to support our Mission Partners, locally and overseas.

If you're already giving regularly, THANK YOU! Your giving enables St Mary's to be a blessing to many people, near and far.

We give significantly to support the wider ministry of Bristol Diocese, which helps churches who have far less than we do.

**Every week around 240 adults receive our e-updates.
150 adults give to St Mary's in a planned way.
This is amazing!**

Having so many people who give enables us to confidently employ five members of staff, who in turn can use their time and gifts to serve this church and the wider Mission Area.

If you are one of the 90 adults who feels they are part of the church family, but who isn't yet giving regularly, could you consider doing so? Whether it's a lot or a little, it's our attitude to giving and not the actual figures which is truly important. In God's economy, if everyone gives what they can, we will have more than enough.

Please use the Parish Giving Scheme for your donations if you can. Run by the Church of England, this scheme reduces the administrative burden for the St Mary's Treasurer and we can recover Gift Aid more easily, so your gift can have a greater impact more quickly. There's the option to

automatically increase your giving in line with inflation each year. It's quick and easy to set up your planned giving by [clicking here](#).

However you respond to this appeal, whether it's by starting to give in a planned way, increasing your regular donations, giving a one-off gift, or by continuing as you are, be assured that **I am so thankful that you are part of the church family.**

As we look towards 2022, I'm excited about what God will do, and hopeful that we will see many people come to faith as we all continue to share the love of Jesus through our words and actions.

Yours in Christ,



Vicar of St Mary's



As members together of St Mary's church let's be
worshipping regularly
praying persistently
sharing the good news about Jesus boldly
serving humbly
giving generously

Information about how much each person gives is held confidentially by those who process the payments.

For a confidential conversation about your giving please speak to

Tony Hughes, Stewardship Co-ordinator, stewardship@stmarysb.org.uk