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Dear Friends,

Pastoral Letter – Christmas 2019

First of all, I want say a big thank you to everybody for their generosity over the recent gift day when £4,600 came in directly and some people have increased their regular giving. It is clear that significant resources are needed to run the church but I want to take this opportunity of thanking everybody for being so kind, generous and prayerful as they have been. It looks as if we will be able to pay £54,000 parish share this year.

On the matter of finance, our budget for next year will be in the region of £74,000. Therefore we will only be able to pay the diocese £50,000 next year. We have already spoken to the deanery and they understand the financial position we are in and have accepted it. We are working together with them and the diocese to make sure that our parish share will continue to be at a reasonable level that we can afford to pay while continuing to cover the costs of having a full time stipendiary minister.

The second thing I wish to thank everybody for is their generosity over Shoebox. This year over 600 boxes went to Ipswich and will be distributed probably somewhere in Eastern Europe. Once again, it was great to see so many boxes come in and all the hard work those individuals, groups and the Sunday school put in. Over 120 boxes came directly from our own fellowship with the remainder coming from other churches that use us as a drop-off point. We want to thank you for your kindness and generosity in all the ways this has been shown. This is a vital ministry which we hope to continue as the years go on.

Another big thank you for all the money that has come in for the Christingle appeal; and thank you to all the people who helped to make the 100 or so Christingles. We hope to keep this going in future years as all the money raised goes to children who are in particular need in this country.

At the time of writing this letter, we are in the midst of the food bank appeal which will finish sometime in early January. I do hope you will find it in your hearts to bring a bag of shopping for the food bank so that those families less fortunate than us will have something over the Christmas period.

We are one of the few churches in Bury St. Edmunds to offer a ministry in schools – Fresh Shoots – as well as a fully functioning Sunday school and youth club. All those ministries are of vital importance to the young people concerned and in the life of our church.

We need to recruit some more leaders and helpers, particularly for Sunday school. There is a clear job description available setting out what is involved and if you are able to help you will only be required to offer one Sunday per month. If you would like further information please see me. It is my fervent prayer that we will be able to support and encourage our leaders and helpers and grow this ministry for the good of all the young people across the estate.

It is a joy to be able to pastor such a generous church. You give so freely and so often to those in need. I am sure that your largeness of heart and generosity will be blessed by God and I know that you are a blessing to everyone who receives our gifts.

With every good wish for Christmas and the New Year

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jonathan Ford". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Revd. Jonathan Ford
Minister of Christ Church Moreton Hall