**DONATIONS APPEAL**

A church has stood here for over 1,000 years. This building in parts dates from Norman times. Until probably the latter part of the last century almost every person who lived in Clawton was christened, married and buried here, unless they were members of the Methodist church. They would all have heard the bells summoning them to church. This building and its churchyard are the living history of this village.

But along with many churches both rural and city we are very close to closing. The regular CofE congregation is no more than 5. Now we have merged with our Methodist friends we can make more use of the church, but they too have a declining congregation.

Maintaining an old building such as this can be expensive – and ignoring minor maintenance will soon give rise to bigger bills. We have just authorised new bell ropes – that’s £1400. Our 5-yearly inspection showed work needed estimated to cost £7,000. We do have this money now but that is the remains of larger sums accumulated over the years. We are just about breaking even on current expenditure but there’s nothing left over to replace those accumulated funds.

Many people who are not particularly religious still value having access to a local church for weddings, funerals and services such as this. Many have relatives buried in our churchyard. So we desperately want to keep our church open and the graveyard well-kept.

To do this we need your help.

We have a Parish Giving scheme which allows you to create a Standing Order for a bank transfer, monthly or annually as you wish. If you pay income tax we can reclaim an extra 20%, and this is done automatically, which makes it so much easier for us.

The system itself doesn’t give you the choice but if you wish any contribution you make to be restricted for use only for the bells, or for buildings and churchyard, you can do so by notifying Paul Grafton who is our Treasurer and he will ensure your gift is restricted in our accounts in line with your choice.

Current donations range from £40 a month to £100 a year. A £20 a month donation is just £5 a week – if it is Gift Aided we get another £5 a month. If just one in ten households in the village were to make such a donation it really would make a huge difference.

Parish Giving forms are available at the back of the church, and it can also be done online.

If you think this lovely building is worth saving for future generations, if you are not already a donor please consider making a regular donation be it large or small.

To donate please click on the link below:

<https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/clawton-st-leonard-holsworthy/>