Treasurer update Annual Church Meeting St. Martha's and St. Mary's Anglican Church Leuven, 31 May 2026.

As a community we had a lot to be grateful for in 2025. We welcomed many newcomers of all ages, expanded our musical worship and found a new chapel to host our evening services.

We also successfully formed a vzw ("The Friends of St. Marth and St Mary") and opened a new bank account to be able to more cleanly manage our finances. Going forward, the kerkraad account will be used exclusively for the expenses directly related to running the Sunday services, and all other expenses such as community building activities (social works, Café Noir, welcome event, etc.), ministry (e.g. running an Alpha course), and mission giving, which will come from the vzw. We believe this will also make us eligible to receive some subsidies from the city of Leuven in the future.

From a financial standpoint, as shared during last year's annual meeting, the Council has decided to put some of the reserves built up over the Covid years to use in order to build up the church. This is being done through a thoughtful increase in spending in 2025 and 2026 in a combination of community building activities and one-off expenses. In 2025, this led to the purchase of new hymn books, new bibles and new silverware for communion. We also organized an Alpha course, exploring the Christian faith with fresh eyes, and invested in our music worship. For 2026, we have acquired some new furniture and materials for Sunday school, printed hymn books for the Leo XIII college and, based on its success last year, again organized an Alpha course.

Based on this increase in spending, we had planned for a deficit of 11,685 EUR in our 2025 budget and 6,945 EUR in 2026. Our total expenses last year ended up slightly lower than expected however our deficit was higher at a little over 14,000 EUR, primarily due to our giving being lower than anticipated. For 2026, we expect the deficit to be a little smaller than planned, forecasting around 5,500 EUR.

Looking forward to 2027, we would like to return to a more sustainable budget. This can be achieved either through increasing our income or decreasing our expenses. A positive note here is that we expect to receive some subsidies from the city of Leuven in 2027, which will help to reduce the deficit. Nevertheless, at our current level of giving, we may not be able to continue all the activities that we would like to support. The Council will monitor this carefully and adjust plans accordingly in the year to come.

One area where we will not make be making any cuts is in our mission giving. As you may know, every year M&Ms donates 10% of its income to worthy causes. In 2025, M&Ms donated just over 1,300 EUR to various good causes including the Community Kitchen, a Space for Hope and the Anglican Al Ahli hospital in Gaza. For 2026 we plan to support Football Girls Leuven and the Siwok Foundation in Salta, Argentina.

Finally I would like to thank everyone who gave so generously to M&M's in the past year and encourage anybody who is not yet doing so, to contribute regularly through bank transfer, ideally to the new vzw account, as it really helps with planning and budgeting to know that we have a stable and regular source of income. Whether large or small, all contributions are welcome!

Thank you very much.