



## **Giving for Ministry & Mission**

### **Sustaining financial support to your church in difficult times**

It goes without saying that as a church our first concern is for all of God's people; those sick, those caring for others and for all those who are finding isolation and a disruption to the rhythm of life unsettling and uncomfortable. Within these troubling and uncertain times, many clergy will have a leading role in front line care for everyone in their communities and so it is vital that as church officers and PCCs we take all reasonable and appropriate steps to secure regular financial giving and support their churches and this ministry.

When encouraging the continuation of regular giving in these times, first and foremost show a sensitivity and awareness to potential changes in the financial, economic and employment circumstances of individuals – current givers and potential givers. All encouragement to giving during these times should highlight an awareness of these difficulties and (if appropriate) an offer to help. Organisations such as [Christians Against Poverty](#) offer free advice on all aspects of money management and debt. You will also find here resources for churches which can be left in your open churches and made available for those who visit for times of quiet prayer, etc.

### **Sustaining financial support to your church**

It almost goes without saying that the most effective and efficient forms of regular giving during this uncertain period are giving through the Parish Giving Scheme and any Standing Order giving being received by your parish. Both these forms of giving ensure continuing giving to your parish even whilst regular worship services are suspended. They also minimise unnecessary social contact by avoiding the collection, exchange and banking of cash.

Many parishes within the Diocese of Chichester have already joined the Parish Giving Scheme and nearly 5,000 people in the Diocese already choose to give in this way to their local church. We are hopeful that the vast majority of this generous giving will continue uninterrupted throughout this unsettled period. Remember too that additional benefits to parishes include minimising administration, a Gift Aid claim function (for all qualifying gifts), direct payments from the Parish Giving Scheme into a church bank account and the option for givers to 'auto-inflate' the level of their giving each year, something that a majority of PGS givers do.

Please also take into consideration the even greater importance that planned giving will have to all churches whilst other usual forms of significant income – such as fundraising events – are curtailed, postponed or cancelled altogether as social contact is minimised to prevent infection. It is therefore vital that maximum effort be put into securing and growing levels of planned giving to all churches at this time.

## Possible follow-up actions:

- 1. Parish Giving Scheme:** If your parish has not already joined the Parish Giving Scheme you may like to consider taking steps to do so as soon as possible. It is a simple and quick process and a Parish Registration form and PCC Resolution can be found [here](#). In these extraordinary times we will agree to waive the formal requirement for a decision to join PGS at a PCC meeting (these will of course not be happening!) and instead will be pleased to receive confirmation of a wish to join PGS through e-mail confirmation from your incumbent / Priest in Charge and Churchwardens. You may be able to discuss your intention to join with the PCC by email or other remote means.
  - Once we have completed registration of your parish with the Parish Giving Scheme, we will work with you (by e-mail and/or telephone) to set up and launch the scheme to your givers and potential givers. All PGS materials are available free of charge through the Diocesan Office at Church House, Hove, but where possible we will endeavour to deliver them to your church where they can be left for collection.
  - Examples of locally written Parish Giving Scheme introductory letters can be shared with you by e-mail to help you in writing your own local version. Please be sure to reference some of the issues and aspects mentioned at the start of this brief guide.
  - If your parish is already a member of the Parish Giving Scheme you may like to take the opportunity to encourage remaining cash and envelope givers to switch from their current method of giving and join the Parish Giving Scheme. Consider writing to these people at the earliest opportunity (e-mail or hard copy) explaining the very particular difficulties that your church might experience at these times and how, through many different ways, joining PGS will be a significant help. Take this opportunity to gather together and review the details of all your congregation and the people which your church has wider connections and relationships with and compare this list with your list of current PGS givers. Who can you most usefully contact and encourage towards PGS at this time?
- 2. Cash collections:** Clearly, in the absence of any regular worship or meetings, there will very limited opportunities to receive cash giving. For most churches this will represent a small but important loss of regular income. It might be that some givers continue to visit our church buildings for private prayer and wish to leave their cash giving at the church. This should be done securely, perhaps through use of an existing donations wall-box. Please ensure that for maximum security church wall-boxes and other donation collection points are emptied regularly. It might well be the case that church buildings experience an increase in the number of visitors during this time, as people seek a place for quiet prayer and reflection. This may result in an increase in cash donations into wall-boxes, etc. so please ensure that these are emptied on a regular basis.
- 3. Cheques:** It might be helpful for those who do not wish to join the Parish Giving Scheme to be supplied with pre-addressed envelopes in which they can mail their cheque donation direct to your PCC Treasurer. Ensure that correct details of your church bank account are included.

4. **On-line banking – direct payment:** Another option is for people to make regular gifts via their on-line banking direct to your church bank account. Ensure that people choosing this option are provided with all the details needed to make a payment: Church bank account name, bank name, sort code, account number. It is very important to ask people to include their name within the payment reference so you can record their giving and claim Gift Aid where you hold a current Gift Aid declaration for them.
5. **Contactless giving units:** A reminder that more information on contactless giving units can be found at the [Parish Buying](#) service. Unattended units can function in churches without the need for anyone present so can operate to complement your 'open church' policy. Please be aware that to view prices of the various units, you will first need to register on-line with the Parish Buying service; this is a quick and simple process to complete.
6. **Use Gift Aid and the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme** as applicable to all giving received.

Finally, but importantly, in line with the latest government advice please ensure that you take all reasonable steps to **protect yourself**. If you are a PCC officer with responsibilities within the areas of giving and finance (especially PCC Treasurers) and you fall into the category of an 'older or vulnerable person', or you are clergy responsible for parishes where this is the situation, please ensure that such people are **supported in their roles by others who are less vulnerable** and who might be able to assist with key tasks such as collecting cash from churches and banking. You may need to add additional PCC members to the PCC bank mandate to ensure the bank account can continue to operate smoothly.

**Please note:**

- The Diocesan Office at Church House, Hove is now closed to members of the public and all usual business and meetings are suspended. A small number of staff will continue to answer telephones and deal with enquiries as far as is possible.
- Diocesan staff will continue to be available either from the Diocesan Office or working remotely and can be contacted by email using the details on our website or by calling the switchboard (01273 421021). If you already have the contact details of your Parish Advisor or any other person at Church House, please continue to use those details as calls and emails will be re-directed automatically.

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