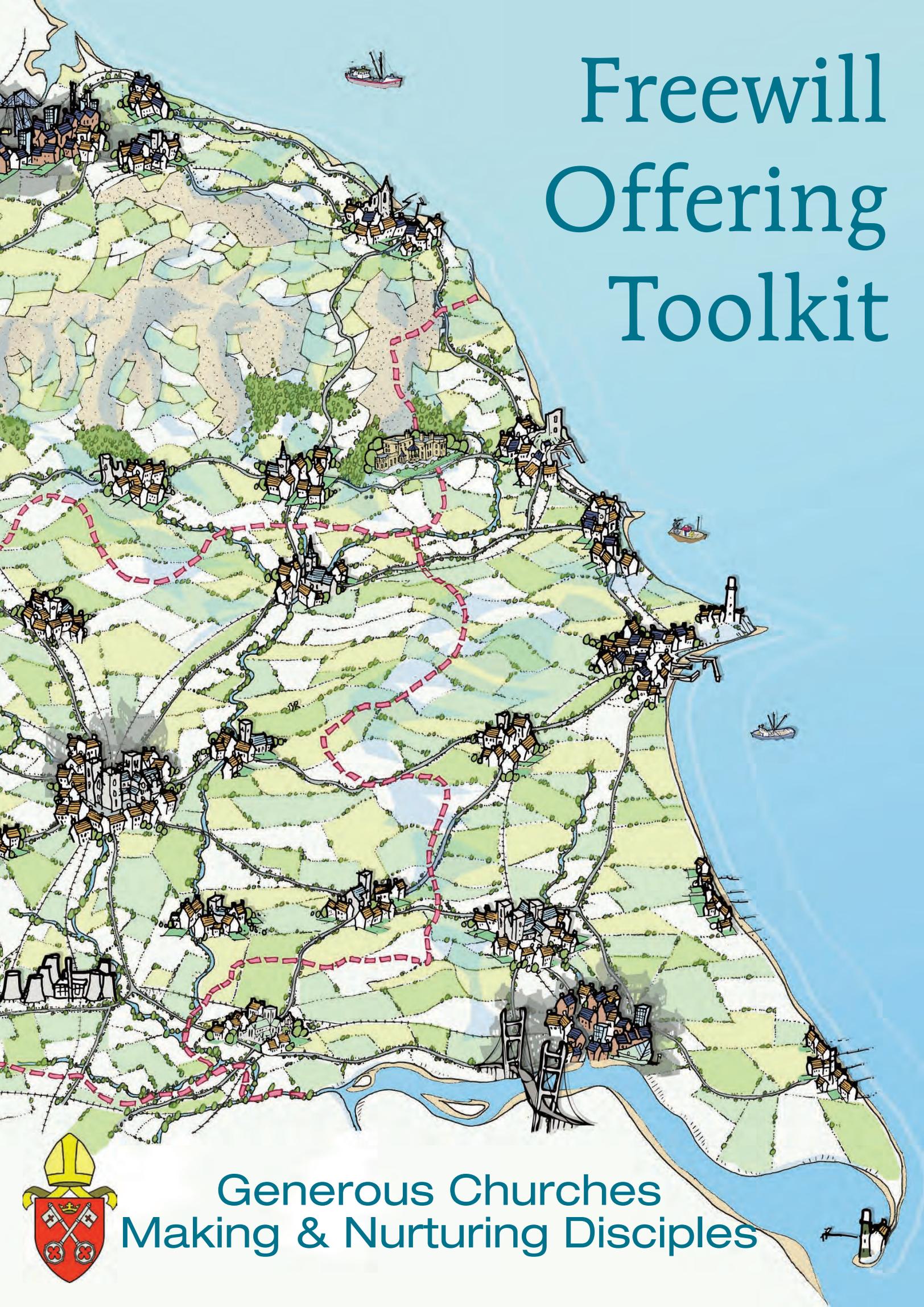


Freewill Offering Toolkit



Generous Churches
Making & Nurturing Disciples

Letter from Archbishop Sentamu

Dear PCC members,

Before anything else, let me say thank you for all the work you do! It's your hard work and service that means our churches can spread the love of God throughout our villages, towns and cities. Without you, the Kingdom of God would be much poorer. I value your ministry very much.

I hope that this booklet and the accompanying information will be useful tools for you when deciding what offer to make to our Diocesan Common Fund. This booklet will explain the why, the what and the how:

- Why we're changing from Parish Share to Freewill Offering
- What your money pays for in the Diocese
- What the Common Fund is
- How to make an offer

But before that, I want to share a bit about generosity, and why God, in Jesus Christ, calls us to be generous.

We have a great precedent to be generous. All that we have comes from God. "For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich" (2 Cor 8.9). But with this generosity comes responsibility. Gifts are for giving – God doesn't give us these generosities to hoard them away. He gives them to us so we can share them.

Now, we don't tell individual people how much of God's gifts they should give back to Him. We don't tell people, "You should give £10,000 a year to the church!" Instead, we invite them to pray, talk to God, and work out what God thinks is right for them to give. For "God loves a hilarious giver".

What applies to the individual also applies to the church. In some ways it is harder for groups to be generous, because they tend to be more cautious, and because they tend to be risk-averse. So if you are a member of a PCC or another church group, make sure you play your part in arguing for generosity and cheerful giving.

PCCs, I want you, according to your means and according to your ability, to sort out with God what it is you think you should be putting in our common purse. You're not being told what to give any more – we are living under grace and not under the law! I can see that might be a bit scary, but if we give first to God, we can't go wrong.

This is something I do personally – regardless of what my heating bills may be – I give first to the Lord. And since I started doing this I have never, actually, been without. It's meant that I've had to adjust some of my expenditure, but I've got to be generous to God first through Christ's Body, the Church. God asks this of us.

When the Pharisees asked Jesus what the greatest of the commandments was, he quoted the verses in Deuteronomy chapter 6, which may be translated as:

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD is the One and Only. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.”

This is the bottom line of the Judaeo-Christian religion. A command to acknowledge that God, the Lord is the One and Only, and to love him with all we have. The final word in that verse is often translated as strength or might. But the Hebrew word is *mayode*, meaning total means or resources.

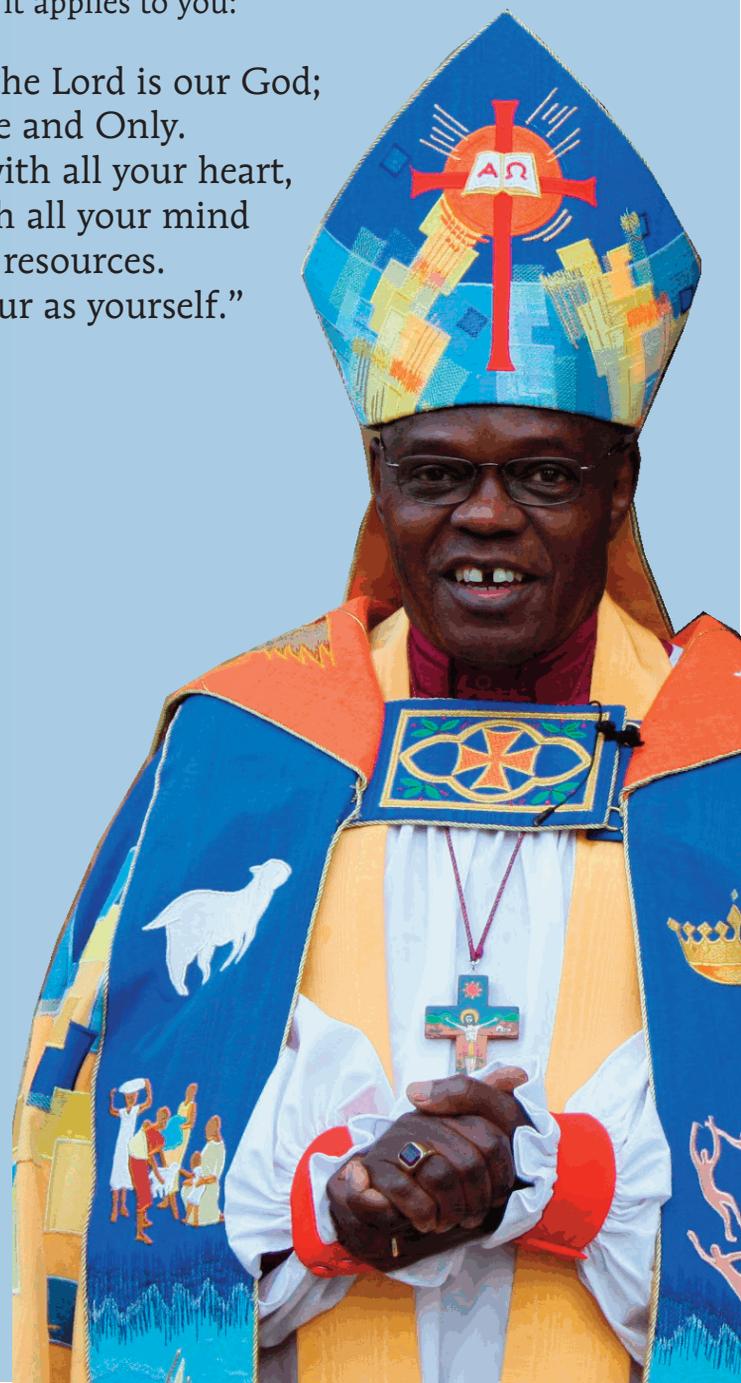
So, we could translate Deuteronomy chapter six, verse five as “You shall be totally committed to love the Lord your God, and you shall express this commitment by making a clear and unequivocal decision in your heart, by committing your whole self and being (your soul) – that is, even if your devotion to God requires that you forfeit your life, and by devoting and committing all your resources and ability – that is, even if love of God causes you to lose all your means/money.

Most people don't take this commandment literally. But we should take it very seriously. After all, Jesus endorsed it, and enabled us to love God by demonstrating a similar love for us. When you hear this verse, I'd like you to think how it applies to you:

“Hear, O Diocese of York, the Lord is our God;
The Lord is the One and Only.
Love the Lord your God with all your heart,
With all your soul, with all your mind
And with all your resources.
And love your neighbour as yourself.”

Making a generous offer to the mission of God in this Diocese, through our Common Fund, is loving God with all your resources and loving your neighbour as yourself. Please give generously. My prayers are with you as your PCC decides what offer to make. It would be good, too, if each member of your church would also be willing to review their own generous offer to the Lord.

+Sentamu Eboracensis



Freewill Offering, not Parish Share



From 2014, the funding of mission and ministry in the Diocese of York will be approached in a different way. Instead of each Deanery being allocated an amount of Parish Share to pay, each parish will be invited to make their own Freewill Offering to the Common Fund.

The end of Parish Share, and the move to Freewill Offering has come out of the Mutual Support consultations held across the Diocese in November 2010. People said they wanted our churches to grow, which means we all need to be generous in support of one another.

Freewill Offering means that PCCs will have more freedom. It's not a top down system, where your PCCs is told by someone else how much to give – you will have the freedom to decide that. But with greater freedom comes greater responsibility. Your PCC has a responsibility to make a decision, a responsibility to all the other churches in the Diocese, and a responsibility to God to use His resources wisely. *Ros Brewer, Scarborough Deanery Lay Chair.*

Parish Share has served us well over many years. Over the years it has enabled millions of pounds to be spent on mission and ministry, and we give thanks for it and for the time and energy of all the people who have made the system work.

But it is now time for change. Parish Share was not focussed on mission and growth. It was not popular – people have described it as obscure, complex, a penalty for good performance, and a tax on growth.

Despite the fact that the 2012 budget figure for Parish Share receipts was exceeded, the total collected was less than that for the previous years. Parish Share has been in decline, and we can't simply do nothing. We want to focus on mission and growth and that requires resources, many of which cost money!

York is not the first Diocese to have moved from Parish Share to a Freewill Offering system. Other Dioceses that have already done this are Bristol, Carlisle, Durham, Gloucester, Leicester, and London. Carlisle is very like the Diocese of

York in that it has urban and rural areas – there it led to parishes having more freedom, and being more generous.

I was in the Diocese of Carlisle when we moved from our version of Parish Share to Freewill Offering. It was a really positive experience, which we embarked on to resource our ministry in the best way possible. It's been successful in Carlisle, and it meant parishes were at the helm when making decisions about spending in mission. *The Revd Simon Rudkin, Vicar of the Thorntons and the Otteringtons, and North Yorkshire Police Coordinating Chaplain.*

The move to Freewill Offering will mean that we need to trust each other more. We have to trust our fellow churches that they will give a prayerful and generous offering to the Diocese. We have to trust the Archbishop's Council and Diocesan Synod that they are spending our money in the best places. And that might seem a bit scary, but we need to do this – we are all part of the Body of Christ in this Diocese and we need to work together. *The Revd Becky Lumley, vicar of St Mary's Beverley.*



What your money funds

The Diocese of York is the Church of England from the Humber to the Tees, and the A1 to the coast. In this area there are 600 churches, and 128 church schools and academies.

The mission of the Church of England is to provide a Christian presence in every community. That's what your money funds – it means anyone in any town, village or city can go to a church, can have a Christening or a funeral, and can discover God's love for them.

North Ormesby is a challenging place, it's the second poorest parish in the whole Diocese. It's quite a vibrant place as well as a place that struggles. We created the church's Trinity Centre here in 2003, and it's become a really important meeting place for people in the community. About 4,000 people come through our doors every month, and as community facilities are withdrawn in the government cuts, places like this are becoming more important as places of community meeting. *The Revd Dominic Black, Rural Dean of Middlesbrough and Vicar of North Ormesby.*

We have about 300 clergy who serve in our Diocese. They work alongside approximately 200 Readers, and many, many more lay people. These people - including you - share the Gospel message and serve the 1.4 million people who live in our cities, towns and villages.

I'm the project manager at St Michael's youth project, which is based in two outer estates in North Hull, and partly funded by the Diocese. We have about 6,000 children and young people that live in our parish, and we work with hundreds of young people the course of the year to enable them to reach their full potential. We offer fun activities like mountain biking, rock climbing, and making short films, and also teach them life skills like cooking sessions, creating and maintaining a healthy diet. We want them to fulfil their God-given potential. *The Revd Anne Richards, Assistant Curate at St Michael and All Angels, North Hull.*

And as well as that, we provide 18,000 children with a Christian education through our church schools and academies.

Church Schools are inclusive places that articulate the Christian story to those of all faiths and backgrounds, valuing every child as a child made in the image of God. Christians can become salt and light, as church and school work in partnership for the good of the whole community, providing high quality education rooted in Christian values. As Tim Elbourne so perfectly puts it in his book *Church Schools: A Christian Shaped Vision*, "What a gift to be entrusted by the state with schools offering Christian community and hospitality to children and families of entire neighbourhoods". *Olivia Seymour, Diocesan Schools Advisor.*

We're moving to Freewill Offering so we can focus on mission and growth. Our aim in the Diocese of York is to be Generous Churches Making and Nurturing Disciples. We want each church to grow, and we've identified five areas where churches can and should grow - in Christ-likeness, commitment, partnership, influence and numbers. In changing our approach to funding our mission, it's not about how we balance the Diocese's books. The focus is on mission and on growth in these five areas:

Christ-likeness

Becoming like Christ is the fundamental call of Christian discipleship. It is not always easy to assess, but we often recognise the flavour of a life becoming more godly. How we pray and worship is a key element in this mark of growing.

Commitment

Commitment itself has several features, including: commitment to God, to seeking God's kingdom, to Christ's body the Church. The outward signs might be measured in terms of those engaged in nurture courses, baptisms and confirmations, vocations to lay and ordained ministries, stewardship.

Partnership

Working with other churches, locally and globally, with schools, community groups, people, organisations for the common good, peace, justice and a healthy environment.

Influence

Seeking to influence attitudes and behaviours in our communities and wider society.

Numbers

Increasing the number of people associated with our churches, as worshippers and disciples.

Generous Churches Prayer

Heavenly Father,
as we seek to grow as Generous Churches Making and Nurturing Disciples:
Help us to fix our eyes on Jesus,
the pioneer and perfecter of our faith:
and grow in Christ-likeness.
Help us to give Christ first place in everything:
and grow in our commitment to him.
Help us to work together as members of one body:
and grow in partnership.
Help us to be salt that does not lose its taste:
and grow in influence.
Help us to make disciples of all people:
and grow in numbers.
May your kingdom come, and your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
For yours is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

References: Heb 12.2; Col 1.18; 1 Cor 12.27; Mt 5.13; Mt 28.19; Mt 6.10

The Common Fund



Money is a spiritual matter. We are called to love the Lord our God with all our resources, and to love our neighbour as ourselves.

The Common Fund facilitates this in the Diocese of York. The mission and ministry of the Diocese happens because PCCs give money to a central pot of money - the Common Fund. This money is then used to pay for the work that happens in parishes. Almost all the money in the Common Fund comes from parishes, and almost all of it goes straight back out again to fund those parishes. We all put into the Common Fund, and we all get something out.

So why do we have this Common Fund? Why doesn't each church pay for itself? The reason we don't do this is because we're a family of churches, part of the body of Christ. Some of our churches serve affluent areas, and some serve very deprived areas. It would be wrong if the more deprived areas of our Diocese didn't hear the message of God's love, or have a church to help them, just because they were poor. In his letters St Paul encourages those who do have the resources to be generous in sharing them with others so that there might be a fair balance of provision (2 Cor 8.12-15). This is the principle that underlies what we have been calling "mutual resourcing" in which we share financial and spiritual "riches" so that ministry can be provided equally across our Diocese.

I'm vicar of the Tadcaster benefice now, but before that I worked in Hull, at St Nicholas in West Hull, St Aidan's in East Hull then the Marfleet Team Ministry. Tadcaster and Hull are very different areas and the biggest difference in the resources that are available to them. I think it's really important that we share the resources we've got. The early church put everything into the pot and then shared it out, and I think that's a good pattern for us to follow. So there are always going to be richer areas and poorer areas, and if we give what we can, then it can be shared out amongst us. *The Revd Canon Sue Sheriff.*

The great majority of the money in the Common Fund goes towards front line services, but being part of the Church of England also means that you get access to services and support from your Diocese. This includes assistance in areas like training for clergy and lay people, youth work, safeguarding, looking after

church buildings, advice for PCCs on their property and investment trusts, help in dealing with the media and professional legal advice. You can find out more about how the money in the Common Fund is spent in the accompanying video (which can also be found on the diocesan website).

So, your parish has a responsibility towards all the other parishes in the Diocese. If you put less into the Common Fund, it directly affects them. This is the case whether your church is in a wealthier or more deprived area, whether your church has a full time vicar or not. You are part of a family, and the decisions you make will affect the others in your family. If you give generously to the Common Fund, you will be helping your brothers and sisters across the Diocese.

Being a part of the Diocese means our church gets help on the practical things in terms of day-to-day parish ministry, and then there's things that we can do as part of wider Diocesan family which we would maybe struggle to do as an individual church. We get help looking after the vicarage – that's the Property Committee – and help steering through the bureaucracy of being responsible for listed buildings. We've got the privilege of having a really good church school in our parish, and the Diocesan Board of Education really help us to get the best education for our community from that. *Dr Nick Land, Great Ayton PCC.*

Our churches give most of the money that pays for all this. But we do have some other money coming in to the Common Fund. Money comes in from rents, investments, fees and donations – just over £1 million, and we're given money from the national Church Commissioners – about £2 million. We get this money from the Church Commissioners because we are considered one of the poorer Dioceses, and we are grateful for their generosity. There's also a number of other smaller – but collectively significant – streams of income. But we still need our parishes to fund the remaining £8.5 million to deliver ministry in the Diocese.

Of course, churches have financial obligations beyond the Common Fund. The basic running costs of the parish: heating, lighting, insurance, repairs, services etc are paid for by the congregation. Many churches employ, or hope to be able to employ youth workers, administrators and missionaries, but the Common Fund needs to be given the highest priority when thinking about the PCC budget. It funds your clergy, shared services that you benefit from and meets costs that are the shared responsibility of all of us who choose to be a part of the Church of England. The reality is that, as in many other parts of the country, the contributions to the Common Fund will be the largest item in the PCC budget.



How to make a generous offer

One way of looking at what a generous offer might be, is to see if your offer would help other churches in the Diocese. This would mean that your offer covered the costs of providing mission and ministry in your parish, and then made a contribution that could help less well-off churches.

What mission and ministry costs

Every parish is different, so generous will mean different things in different parishes. But there are costs that are the same across the board. The figures below show what it costs to provide one full time clergy person in Diocesan housing in a benefice which is supported by the central functions of the Diocese. It will also help you see what costs are involved if your parish has a self-supporting minister or the housing costs for a house for duty clergy person

Stipend costs per clergy person:	£24,326
National Insurance and pension costs per clergy person:	£10,636
Housing costs per stipendiary or house for duty clergy person:	£10,331
Annualised training costs per licenced clergy (including SSMs):	£1,337
Vocations and curates per benefice:	£5,992
Other shared national costs per benefice:	£1,555
Other shared diocesan costs per benefice:	£9,676
Total:	£63,853

If you're in a multi-parish benefice, it might help to speak to the other parishes in your benefice, to see if your combined offers cover the cost of ministry in your benefice.

The other shared diocesan costs per benefice (£9,676) include:

- The legal responsibilities – safeguarding, HR for all our clergy and employees, our synodical government, Church Schools, patronage, pastoral and mission work, and the faculty system. These are supported by central Diocesan staff on behalf of all churches.
- Professional advice on areas like youth and children's work, looking after church buildings, advice for PCCs on their property and investment trusts, lay training, dealing with the media and the costs of the Archdeacons (but not the Bishops).

These figures are all based on an early draft of the 2014 budget, which reflects a prudent level of anticipated cost increases.

My role description is about making our money work for mission. We scrutinise all our costs at the centre, like a PCC would, making sure we get the best deals for our IT kit, electricity contracts, photocopiers etc at Diocesan House. In fact, there's a surprisingly small team at Diocesan House, punching above their weight in terms of the work they do. We are also looking at our investments and assets, getting the most out of them, and making our money work for our mission. I couldn't ask parishes to be generous if I couldn't put my hand on my heart and say we're wringing every last penny from our shared Diocesan assets.
Maureen Loffill, Chair of the Board of Finance.

Of every £1 we plan to spend in 2014, we plan to spend:



64p on deploying clergy in parishes - that's 45p on stipends, pensions etc, 18p on housing, and 1p on other expenses.



14p will go on training lay ministers and clergy, and nurturing ministers for the future.



3p will be spent on children, youth and education.



10p will be spent on other support which directly helps parishes in their ministry.



3p will go to the National Church.



6p will be spent on administration, support and contingencies.

The Diocese does have some money coming in from rents, investments, fees and donations which helps to offset some of the costs listed on the previous page by the equivalent of £7,307 per benefice.

Support from the Church Commissioners

We receive almost £2 million of generous funding from the Church Commissioners most of which is to support the cost of resourcing ministry in those areas of our Diocese that are most in need (and amongst the most deprived in the country). A small amount is to develop mission and ministry for the benefit of the whole Diocese. We cannot afford to take this for granted, and we are being increasingly asked to demonstrate that the funding is supporting fruitful ministry in the areas of greatest need. We need those who can become more

generous to do so in order to reduce our dependence on this funding, and also to free some of it to invest in encouraging new and existing congregations in places where there are opportunities for growth, both in rural and urban areas.

Not all PCCs can pay for the costs of mission and ministry in their parishes, so the generosity of the Church Commissioners and that of other parishes helps those who cannot meet their full share of the costs. However, this money is limited. If the Church is to continue to be present in less affluent areas of the Diocese, as well as in more affluent areas, the less well-off parishes will need to be able to depend on the generous, committed and sacrificial giving of their neighbours, as well as their own.

Putting your parish in context

It may be hard to get a sense of whether your church is in a richer or poorer area, and whether it's a large or small church in the context of the Diocese. Your parish's Data Sheet will help at this point. It's human nature to assume that someone else is bigger, better, and richer than us but these statistics may show your parish is a more significant player than you thought! They show:

- How many people come to your church, and what percentage that is of the Deanery and Diocesan total.
- What your church's income per attendee is. Is this more or less than the average in the Diocese? This could help you think whether you're a church that could be giving more.
- Deprivation – this shows whether you are one of the most or least deprived parishes. It also shows where you are in the Diocese and in the UK. If your parish is not so deprived, could you be giving more? Should you be making sure that your offer at least means that you are not relying on resources that are meant for those parishes who are most deprived?

What do we mean by deprivation? These numbers are based on the ranking on the 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). The IMD measures income, employment, health and disability, education, housing and services, crime, and living environment. These statistics are on the Church Urban Fund's website, and you can read more about this at www.cuf.org.uk.

Making an offer

We all need to work together to manage this new system. It will help if PCCs use their 2012 and 2013 giving as a starting point. It would be wonderful if going forward all PCCs were able to increase their offer to take account of inflation.

Some PCCs may want to keep some money aside for unexpected emergencies - what

happens if the roof falls down? But there are other parishes who are in emergency situations right now who need your help. If an emergency did occur, please contact the Archdeacon and the staff at Diocesan House in the first instance. Everyone would understand that there are some circumstances under which a PCC might not be able to honour its offer in full.

Every PCC will approach making an offer in a different way. The process should be one that works for your PCC, but it might include these steps:

- Pray for God's guidance, and listen to God
- Take into account the costs associated with mission and ministry in your benefice
- Reflect on your income
- Develop your offer
- Check with the information on the datasheet that this is realistic and generous
- Formally pass a resolution in your PCC meeting
- Fill in the Offering Form and send it to Diocesan House.

Offers will be made by parishes, rather than benefices or deaneries, as they are the legal entities. However, if you're in a multi-parish benefice it might be helpful to get together and talk about what you're all offering.

If your PCC needs help deciding how to make an offer, your Deanery Financial Advisor or Rural Dean will be able to help. Rural Deans and DFAs are holding meetings in their Deaneries to help parishes make their offer, and are available to help if you need their assistance. Please do make contact with them if you need their help.

Making a generous offer to the mission of God in this Diocese, through our Common Fund, is loving God with all your resources and loving your neighbour as yourself. Please give generously. *Archbishop Sentamu.*

Thank you