



**DIOCESE OF
YORK**



Parish Finances Guidance

Dear Treasurer,

Thank you for all you are doing.

With our buildings closed many churches are concerned about finances. Not only are no offering plates being passed around, but also there are no halls being rented out, no weddings and no fundraising events. Yet, there are still bills.

Of course, the national church and everyone at the Diocese are working flat out to lobby the government, cut costs and help to improve finances. However, there are also things local churches can do themselves.

To this end the Generous Giving and Finance Teams are working together to provide you with as much help as possible. Below are some suggestions to get people thinking. There is further information on our website: www.dioceseofyork.org.uk/generosity-stewardship/generous-giving-during-covid19/

We are here to help.

Generous Giving & Finance Teams

19 June 2020



Things to consider:

- Communicate to your congregation the importance of giving. Ideas on this, and templates for letters which can be sent can be accessed here: www.dioceseofyork.org.uk/generosity-stewardship/generous-giving-during-covid19/generous-giving-resources-and-advice-during-coronavirus/
- Include an offering as part of your online worship. Advice on how to integrate the offering can be found here: www.dioceseofyork.org.uk/generosity-stewardship/resources/offering/
- Set up an online donations page and put a link on your website. Then encourage people to use it. See **Online Donations** below.
- Make it possible for people to give electronically using a BACS (online) payment.
- Make people aware that just because the building is closed, it doesn't mean that there are no bills to pay. Consider making a list of outgoing and make it available for everyone to see.
- Contact those that use the envelope system and, if appropriate, ask them to give by cheque or Bacs each week. Otherwise, suggest they continue to fill and put aside their envelopes each week, and hand them all over at once when things change.
- Ask people who give by cheque to post their cheques to the treasurer each week who can then post them to the bank with a paying-in slip.
- Encourage people to join the Parish Giving Scheme. New donors can now enrol by phone. Contact the [Generous Giving Team](#) you can read more about PGS on their [website](#).
- Buy a card machine that can take donations over the phone and suggest that people give the money they would normally spend on buying a cup of coffee each day or each week. See Digital Giving below.
- Explore the [Parish Buying](#) website for offers. Look at [Parish Resources](#) for ideas.
- Consider the measures the government has put in place including the Job Retention Scheme and Statutory Sick Pay.
- Be creative about fundraising. For example, can something you've done in your church in the past become a virtual event?
- Explore the [Ecclesiastical Insurance internet site](#) that highlights potential grant funding bodies among other fundraising suggestions.
- Explore the grants that may be available to your church. See below.
- **Don't forget to thank people who are giving.**



Online Donations

Receiving online donations – 1hr Webinar 23rd June 12pm, 2nd July 2pm, 13th July 2pm, 24th July 11am
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/5015888640699/WN_rutsVUNwQ3-O-BNjHARLrA

How can we encourage people to give financially to the church during this time? I would recommend starting here. The webinars are an excellent way of learning how to setup and encourage online giving to help replace your weekly church service collection.

Churches rely on the generosity of their congregations and their communities to support their mission and ministry. Many people give regularly to their church by standing order or direct debit. Others give in cash when the offering is taken in a church service or when visiting the church, and people will not be able to give in this way whilst our church buildings are closed. Many individuals are going through financial uncertainty as a result of lost or changed employment during the restrictions, and that may affect their giving too. This means that it is even more important that those who can give are able to do so. In this one-hour webinar, we'll cover setting up and receiving online donations, encouraging online donations, communicating with your community, as well as providing an opportunity to ask questions which will be answered live.

Online Donations - Resources to help you encourage giving online

Online giving is a good mechanism to enable one-off donations from people and to act as an alternative way to give for those who regularly donate by cash or for occasional and new givers. The resources on this site are there to help you encourage people to give at this time.

www.parishresources.org.uk/encouraging-giving-online/

Setting Up Online Donations

It is simple to set up an online giving account, and once you have set up your account you will be able to link it to your church website or social media page, making it easy for people to give. Watch this video for a step by step guide:

www.parishresources.org.uk/encouraging-giving-online/setting-up-online-giving/

Receiving Online Donations

This page guides you through a comprehensive list of suppliers, and which one would best suit your church. Most providers give you a donations platform or space that is linked to your website so that an individual can make a donation using a variety of payment methods. Most donation platform providers can embed a 'Donate Here' on your website and will also automatically reclaim the Gift Aid on your behalf.

www.parishresources.org.uk/receiving-online-donations/

Promoting Online Donations

A Church Near You is one of the easiest ways to promote your online offering facility. By way of a donate button. The donate facility can be added as a link at the end of your online service or on your website or Facebook page.

<https://achurchnearyou.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/360007655378-Receiving-Donations-on-AChurch-Near-You>

Digital Donations

In addition, there is a section, which generally explains Digital Giving options. In the wider charitable sector, new forms of giving are growing fast. This is particularly true amongst younger givers, but many older givers give through digital giving portals too.

Although regular giving is the bedrock of support for most churches, one-off donations are a very useful additional supplement to this. Enabling people to make a one off donation online can really increase the amount your church can raise for specific appeals and one off events. www.parishresources.org.uk/digital-giving/



Covid-19 Grant Funding

Local Government Covid Grants

[Coronavirus Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund](#) or the [Coronavirus Small Business Grant Fund](#)

***UPDATE (19/06)*:** Feedback has indicated that local authorities are making businesses registered for business rates that are not zero rated the priority. You may therefore find this grant not open to church halls. Church halls are normally zero rated for business rates and this grant is from the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund rather than just rates relief. This grant could be worth £10,000 to churches who would normally let their halls on commercial basis (i.e. charge rent) to groups outside their church i.e. children's parties, other community groups etc. but cannot under the Government restrictions. To apply you need to contact your local council and ask for the department that is dealing with small business help (could be the rates relief department). Explain you have seen the above website and discuss what financial help is available to your business of letting the hall.

We would be grateful of any feedback as to whether you have been successful or not. Email finance@yorkdiocese.org

National Lottery Community Grants

www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/covid-19

They are funding activities supporting people and communities affected by COVID-19. They can't fund everyone but are will prioritising:

- organisations supporting people who are at high risk from COVID-19
- organisations supporting communities most likely to face increased demand and challenges as a direct result of COVID-19
- organisations which connect communities and support communities to work together to respond to COVID-19.

Other Grants

Explore the [Ecclesiastical Insurance interest site](#) that highlights potential grant funding bodies.

The resources will provide you and your church with fundraising tools that can assist your church and its community during these uncertain times.

2019 Return of Parish Finance and Annual Report & Accounts

Further information and guidance: www.dioceseofyork.org.uk/parish-returns/

1. **Statistics for Mission** – by 31 January
EXTENDED TO 29TH FEBRUARY FOR 2020 ONLY
2. **Online Return of Parish Finance** – by 31 May
EXTENDED TO 31ST JULY FOR 2020 ONLY
3. **Annual Report, Accounts & Budget** – by 31 May
EXTENDED TO 30TH NOVEMBER FOR 2020 ONLY
Reports (Vicar, Wardens, Finance etc.)
Accounts (aggregated for multi-church Parishes)
Signed copy of the Examiner/Auditor Report
A budget for the following year
4. **Charity Commission** - 31 October. (for PCCs with income of £100k+)
Charities that are due to submit an annual return imminently, but feel unable to do so, can email to ask for a filing extension.
Please include your charity name and charity registration number when you email them:
filingextension@charitycommission.gov.uk.
Further information available: www.gov.uk/guidance/prepare-a-charity-annual-return/
5. **Electoral Roll** –1st July
EXTENDED TO 1st NOVEMBER FOR 2020 ONLY