**Building a Generous Church:**

**Best Practice Review**

**Introduction**

Generosity is at the heart of the Christian faith, and woven throughout the way that we grow in living Christ’s story. As we seek ways to become more Christ-like in our discipleship, we enable mission and ministry; gaining a fuller understanding of how our generosity is a gift, and an act of worship, in response to God’s abundant grace and love for us.

The diocesan family is committed to enabling a culture of generous churches. This requires us to regularly review the way we encourage people to live generous lives in the broadest sense and reach people we currently don’t. We also aim to transform our finances and structures to ensure we have accessible and safe mechanisms in place to enable people to give in a variety of ways.

We encourage all churches to follow this Best Practice Review once each year, creating a list of actions to follow up on in the coming weeks and months. In addition to this, we recommend running our Giving Programme for the whole church community once every two or three years.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date of review: |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Action | Who will be responsible for making this happen? | When do we plan to have completed this? |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Support**

If you would like a member of the Generous Giving team to guide you through this review, or support you in fulfilling your actions points, please get in touch with us though the Generous Giving pages on the diocesan website: [www.dioceseofyork.org.uk/generosity](http://www.dioceseofyork.org.uk/generosity)

**VISION FOR A GENEROUS CHURCH**

It’s important that we begin with having a clear sense of vision, which grounds our purpose as we put the building blocks in place to create a culture of generosity in our church.

**Vision for a Generous Church**

**1**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| We have prayerfully explored and articulated our vision as a church, including all ages. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We have communicated our vision to our community. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We clearly link our vision to giving, generosity and discipleship. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |

**WORSHIP AND TEACHING**

Using our worship and forms of teaching to embed a theology of giving in our churches.

**Worship**

**2**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| We include liturgical text and hymns/songs, which relate to giving and generosity, especially when intentionally reflecting on giving as a community. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| Generosity is included in our intercessions, including giving thanks, especially when intentionally reflecting on giving. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We include an offering in our worship each week, as a means of embedding giving as an act of worship. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| Guidance is given in notices or notice sheet on how to give for givers (both online services and in person). | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| A welcome pack is available for new church members, which includes information about preferred ways of giving. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| 50/50 offerings are encouraged for occasional offices (life events). | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |

**GIVING REVIEWS AND PROGRAMMES**

Ensuring we intentionally ask our communities to review and reflect on giving practice annually.

**Giving Programmes and Reviews**

**3**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| We preach about whole-life generosity regularly (at least once each year). | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We ask our community to review their giving annually. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We lead a deeper discipleship Giving Programme once every two or three years. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |

**Communication**

**4**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| When we ask people to review their giving, we explain what we spend money on and how their giving is an act of worship and can deepen their discipleship commitment. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| When we ask people to review their giving, we explain how people’s gifts enable mission and ministry. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We formally thank all our givers at least once a year. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We think carefully about the language we use when communicating about giving. For example, we say “receive an offering”, rather than “take a collection”. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |

**ONLINE GIVING MESSAGE**

Making best use of our online presence, sharing information and teaching through websites and social media.

**Website and/or ‘A Church Near You’**

**5**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Our church vision is communicated on our website. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We communicate our need for giving on our website, and the mission it enables. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We include a brief outline of theology and/or discipleship aspects of giving. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| The information about planned giving on our website includes how people can become new planned givers. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We have a message of thanks on our website. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |

**Social media**

**6**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| We share good news stories about generosity on our social media. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We include links to information about giving on our website and to our online giving platform. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We post messages of thanks for all people’s gifts. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We share content from other relevant pages, such as the diocesan Generous Giving page and other churches exploring generosity. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |

**GIVING MECHANISMS**

As we live in an increasingly cashless society, it’s important that we put in place accessible mechanisms which enable people to give.

**Regular Planned Giving**

**7**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| We explain how planned giving funds our continuing mission and plans for the future. |  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We have joined the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) and promote it in our church. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We encourage the use of Standing Orders. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |

**Contactless Giving**

**8**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| We have chosen a contactless unit which is best suited to our church and installed it. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We have put the unit in a prominent position in the church building. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We have created supporting materials to sit next to the unit, which communicates either a message of thanks, welcome, or information about what that giving enables. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We collect Gift Aid information, either through the unit or paper declarations. |  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |

**Online Giving and QR codes**

**9**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| We have chosen our online giving provider and registered for it. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We have put a giving button prominently on our website, and/or ‘A Church Near You’. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We regularly include a link to our online giving in social media posts. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We have created a free QR code for our online giving and included it on materials, such as orders of service and newsletters. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |

**STEWARDING OUR RESOURCES**

Taking care to use our wide range of resources wisely, and put good policies in place to reflect this, including finances, discipleship, volunteering and becoming a greener church.

**10**

**Gift Aid**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Givers are encouraged to complete a Gift Aid form. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| Our church regularly claims Gift Aid. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We claim all the GASDS we are entitled to. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |

**Budgeting**

**11**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Our PCC set a budget annually. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| Our budget is shaped towards our missional priorities. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| The PCC receives regular finance updates from the Treasurer. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |

**12**

**Reserves**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Our PCC have agreed a Reserves Policy. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We have communicated our Reserves Policy to the church community. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |

**13**

**Legacies**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Our PCC have agreed a Legacy Policy. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We have communicated our Legacy Policy to the church community. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We celebrate past legacies. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| Information leaflets about legacies are available, as well as information on our website. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |

**14**

**Volunteers/Voluntary work/Discipleship**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| We regularly communicate opportunities to volunteer and deepen our discipleship. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| Volunteer participation has increased since we ran a Generosity Programme (if applicable). | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| Volunteers are given a space in the church service to express their joy at serving others and advertise opportunities to be rotaed in. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| Volunteers are appropriately thanked regularly, either openly or privately. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |

**15**

**Church Building**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Our church building is open throughout the week for various group activities. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We advertise our church space for hire. | N/A [ ]  | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |

**16**

**Eco Church**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| We are mindful of how we use the Earth’s resources, e.g. we buy Fair Trade products, we have conducted a Carbon Footprint audit, etc. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| We have signed up to the A Roche greener church scheme. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| Our congregation is given space in the church service to communicate and inspire others to ‘reduce, reuse and recycle’. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |
| Information about how we are ‘Green Champions’ is on our website. | Not yet [ ]  | Yes [ ]  |