

How to encourage legacy giving in your parish

Legacies can make a vital difference to a parish's local mission and ministry, whether used for additional staffing or to improve church buildings and facilities.

The key thrust of any legacy programme is to get people to review their wills regularly as part of their everyday Christian discipleship.

Promoting the opportunity to leave a gift to the church should be kept sensitive and low key, drip feeding messages in different ways over the years. Messages for different groups (e.g. young families, empty nesters, very elderly) should be tailored to their particular needs.

Resources to help PCCs

More resources and information on legacies and how to encourage legacy giving is available from C&R.

Contact

Communications & Resources
Diocese of Southwark
Trinity House
4, Chapel Court
Borough High Street
London SE1 1HW

Tel : 020 7939 9400

E-mail: communications@southwark.anglican.org

The additional resources include:

- A general leaflet for members of your congregation on legacies and wills
- A more detailed booklet to help individuals preparing to write a will
- A detailed guide for PCCs on promoting legacies and running a legacy campaign.

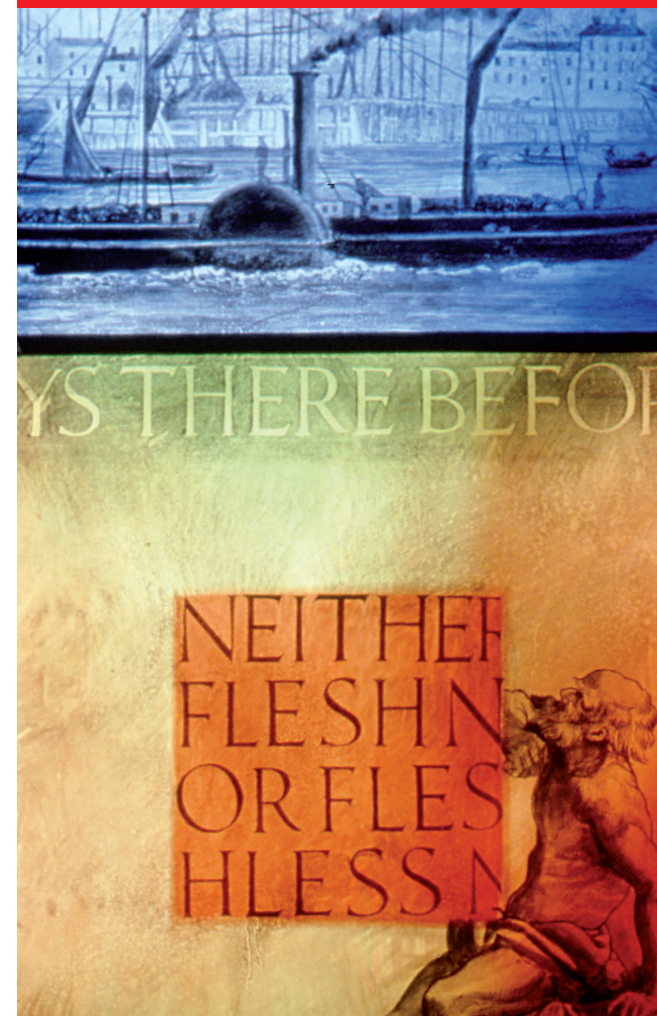
Additional information also available on:

www.southwark.anglican.org/what/legacies

www.churchlegacy.org.uk

Legacies and Wills

Decisions that will help the PCC



ACTION

The PCC should agree appoint someone willing to encourage legacy giving in the parish.



The Diocese of
Southwark

This leaflet is produced by the Diocese of Southwark and is based on material produced by the Christian Stewardship Network of the Church of England and the Church in Wales.

Images reproduced with kind permission of the Dean and Chapter of Southwark.



The Diocese of
Southwark

Legacies and Wills

Why a PCC should consider wills and legacies

Each year around 3,000 parishes across England benefit from a legacy. Some parishes accept these as a welcome and unexpected gift, whilst others openly encourage their people to make a legacy to their church.

For many people, leaving a gift in their will is a final opportunity to say thank you to God for God's blessings to them and to help the development of their church family.

Many churches have not considered this topic at all. They have not thought through the importance of encouraging church members to make a will, nor developed a policy on how to use money donated through legacies.

This leaflet aims to help your PCC consider these issues.

Why every Christian should have a will

Jesus taught us that our life does not consist only of the abundance of our possessions, and that we should be wise stewards. Ever since the first edition of the Book of Common Prayer, the Church of England has highlighted the importance of making wills and keeping them up to date.

Every year many thousands of people die without leaving a will. This can cause unnecessary complications for their families and friends, and can often mean that their wishes are not carried out.

There are several good reasons why we should encourage people to make a will: pastoral care, good personal financial management, and teaching on Christian stewardship.

Making a will and keeping it up to date is a simpler and less expensive process than many people imagine.

Why the PCC should have a legacy policy

Most people will only leave gifts in their wills if they think the church will use them for development projects, not simply to fund current operating expenses. It is also advisable to discourage restricted legacies as the needs of your church will change over time.

PCCs need to agree a policy on how legacy income will be spent, and then communicate this to the congregation.

A policy might be along the lines of:

'The policy of the PCC is to use legacies to help fund significant development projects in the parish, whether buildings, equipment or staff. As circumstances change over the years, it may not be possible to fulfil specific donor requests, so church members are encouraged to leave legacies for the general purposes of the parish. The PCC will discuss with executors the most appropriate use of the legacy in the light of current projects and the donor's known areas of interest in the church (e.g. children & youth, music, buildings).'

ACTION



The PCC should put legacy giving on its agenda for a forthcoming meeting.

ACTION



The PCC should affirm or reaffirm its commitment to encouraging people to make and review their wills.

ACTION



The PCC should agree a simple policy on using legacies and communicate this to the congregation.