

Making a difference

Over the centuries, generous church members have left gifts to their local churches in their wills. These gifts have often helped transform their parish's mission and telling of the unfolding Christian story.

One parish received a legacy of £37,000. They used it to launch an appeal to build a new church centre to provide much-needed community facilities, and eventually raised over £650,000. Often legacies are able to provide the initial funding that will unlock the generosity of others, both individual donors and trust funds.

Another church used a legacy to employ a children's and youth worker to work with local youngsters. Having someone dedicated to this area of work made a real difference to their ministry with young people.

Yet a third parish was left a gift of £700. This enabled the purchase of a new bible for the lectern in a more modern translation and a complete set of pew bibles in the same translation. A further 100 bibles were sent to Ethiopia as the PCC knew that would fit with the legacy giver's wishes.

All these gifts have provided an ongoing opportunity to develop parish mission, as well as creating a lasting memorial for those who gave them. Leaving a gift in your will could make a real difference to the future life of your church.

Things change over time...

Out of date wills with old addresses or missing beneficiaries, for example, can cause unnecessary complications, distress and cost for family and friends.

Remember:

- as family situations change, your wishes may change
- the things you have to dispose of may change.

A new will can be made at any time with a solicitor, and shouldn't cost much. It may be tempting to write a will yourself but home-made wills can be dangerous, and leave your loved ones with problems. A will made with a solicitor is far more reliable.

For more information contact

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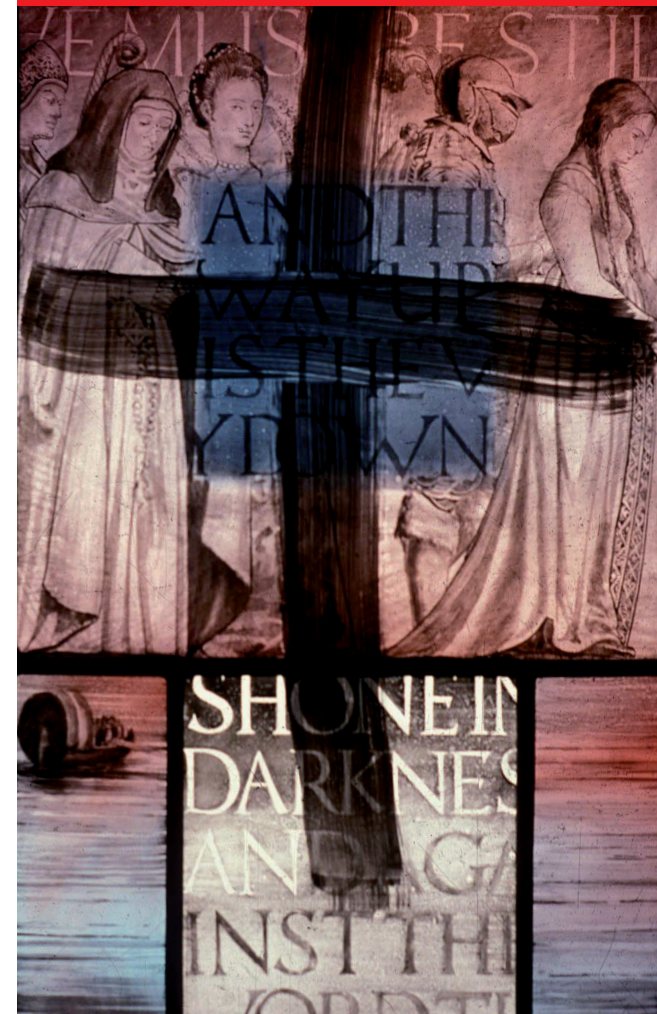
E-mail: communications@southwark.anglican.org

Or see the Diocesan website:

www.southwark.anglican.org/what/legacies

Legacies and Wills

Why bother?



The Diocese of
Southwark

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The Diocese of
Southwark

Legacies and Wills

Research shows that over half the UK adult population have not written a will

Yet without a will that has been properly witnessed, UK law requires the Courts to decide how to distribute an estate according to a fixed legal formula. This takes time, incurs cost and almost certainly differs from what was really wanted. In some circumstances, the whole of your estate could go to the government.

Many other adults have wills that are out of date, containing old addresses, or not reflecting their current family situation.

For nearly 500 years the Church of England has encouraged people to make a will. When Archbishop Thomas Cranmer wrote the first English Prayer Book in the sixteenth century, he reminded parishioners to keep their wills up to date while they were still in good health, for their own peace of mind as well as to help their executors.

In thinking about making a will, it is good to be reminded of David's prayer as he dedicated the Temple to God "All things come from you O God" (1 Chronicles 29). As we determine our wishes for what should happen to our property, money and belongings; we remember that we are merely stewards of all that God has blessed us with during our lifetime.

Providing for future generations

If you are thinking about making or revising your will, consider leaving a gift to the church. As God's people, we have much for which to be thankful. If it were not for the generations of Christians before us, faithfully sharing the Good News of God's forgiveness through Christ's sacrifice on the cross, we would not be here as members of the church today.

The building we meet in was built and maintained by our predecessors' investment and stewardship and is a reminder of their love and generosity. Our inheritance was their legacy for the future.

So what will we hand to our children's children? In future years will they too know of Christ's love in this community?

Will there still be a faithful community of Christians witnessing to God's love and forgiveness through practical service and regular worship? With our help, prayers and practical support all things are possible.

Why consider leaving a gift in your will to the church?

It's a practical way of saying "thank you" to God for all the blessings we have enjoyed during our lives.

It enables us to make a lasting contribution to our church family and helps secure the work of the church for future generations.

The Bible challenges us to be careful stewards of all that God has given to us.

Many Christians today follow St Paul's advice in 1 Corinthians 16:2 and give a regular proportion of their income to the church. That principle can be extended to cover what we will give back to God when we have no further earthly use for it.

Giving a proportion of your estate is called a "residuary legacy".

Gifts made to the church and other charities are exempt from inheritance tax, and are deducted from the value of your estate before inheritance tax liability is calculated.

Last Will
AND TESTAMENT

Witness of "My Trustees"
I, Executor and Trustee of the person or persons from
my Will and of the trust created under this Will as
witness to the authority to act in that capacity