

Giving is God's Way

Stewardship materials from the Diocese of Southwark

**Part 3:
Asking for
money**

How to use this guide

Giving is God's Way is designed to work in five distinct stages, each covering a different aspect of your campaign. For best results, you are encouraged to tackle each section in the order suggested. Each stage comes with a step-by-step guide to completing all the necessary tasks in that section, plus a checklist summary at the end.

**Part 1:
Getting
started**

This section shows you how to lay the groundwork for a successful campaign, including choosing your planning team, assessing the current state of your stewardship and gathering together the financial information you will need for your brochure and promotional materials.

**Part 2:
Teaching &
preaching**

The second part of *Giving is God's Way* asks people to consider their own response to God's generosity. This section links to a range of possible Bible studies to help with this question, and also provides sample sermons to preach at the beginning and end of your campaign.

**Part 3:
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This section gives advice on creating your own brochure to support your *Giving is God's Way* campaign, how to write 'ask' letters and what to include in the packs you distribute to encourage giving, including response and Gift Aid forms.

**Part 4:
Giving
thanks**

An important part of your stewardship campaign is saying thank you to those who have responded. This section shares ideas for thank you letters, a thanksgiving service and how to follow up with people who may not have engaged with your campaign yet.

**Part 5:
After the
campaign**

Once the campaign is over, it is time to reflect. This section shares ideas on how to debrief everyone involved in delivering *Giving is God's Way*, how to assess your strategy and success and how to continue to encourage generosity in the future.



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Step 1: decide what to put in your stewardship pack

After your second sermon or talk reflecting on people's response to God's generosity and what they have learned in their small group Bible studies, everyone in your church family should receive a pack of supporting literature, including those members of your congregation who weren't able to take part in the Bible studies. It is preferable for each pack to be individually addressed but please ensure that if you do this you are GDPR compliant (see box below).

As a minimum, the literature pack should contain the following:

- an 'ask' letter outlining why the stewardship initiative is important and how to respond. As long as you ensure you are GDPR compliant, these letters may be personalised for different groups in your congregation
- a straightforward brochure reminding people of your church's vision, the need to give and providing some background information
- response form(s). These are crucial in encouraging people to act and commit to giving; they also help you to collect the relevant financial information and note requests for additional information. Depending on the focus of your campaign, you may have one form for people to offer their time and skills and one for a financial response
- reply envelopes marked 'confidential' and addressed to the person collating responses. The reply envelopes should never be addressed to the Vicarage, even simply as a post box, and the financial response form should go to the Treasurer or pledge recorder. It is often helpful to have boxes at the back of the church for people to leave envelopes.

It is useful to have copies of the literature available on your website and linked to via your church's social media accounts. Some people prefer electronic copies and the ability to download copies is also helpful for new people joining the church or if someone mislays a form.

You may also wish to include some of the following literature, but be careful not to provide too much information; it's very easy for the literature pack to become over-full and too daunting to read:

- a *The Church is Always Asking for Money* leaflet, although it may be better to keep this for your annual renewal in 12 months' time. You can obtain these leaflets direct from the Giving Team – e-mail Gabby Parikh, Head of Giving, on gabby.parikh@southwark.anglican.org

Please note that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) changed the way in which we handle personal information and data stored on individuals. This will make a difference as to how you circulate stewardship review material. For more details about GDPR and our Diocesan advice please see our website: <https://southwark.anglican.org/support/for-our-churches/data-protection/>



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- a Gift in Wills booklet about legacies, also available from Gabby Parikh in the Giving Team. You may prefer to include the provision of legacy information as one of the options on your response form; equally, you may judge that it would be better to have a separate campaign about legacies and this is covered in [Part 5: After the campaign](#)
- a leaflet summarising Southwark's Parish Support Fund, available from the Diocesan website at southwark.anglican.org/giving/parish-support-fund/.

Step 2: Presenting your church finances

A key part of the information in your *Giving is God's Way* brochure will be your parish's financial facts and figures. Most of this will have been assembled in your initial planning (see [Part 1: Getting started](#)) but the type of information you will need to compile is illustrated below.

It can be tempting to include lots of financial information but it is best to keep it simple to appeal to as many people as possible. Try to present the figures broken down into weekly or monthly amounts. Photos, images and graphs are memorable and visually appealing: you can access a number of smart graphics

in Microsoft Word or find copyright-free graphics and photographs on the internet.

Among the [supporting documents for Part 3](#) are examples of brochures that use various techniques to highlight financial facts and figures:

- Southwark Cathedral used a montage of photographs to illustrate areas of mission and expenditure in its 2017 Season of Gifts brochure
- St Luke's Battersea used graphs in its 2017 brochure
- St John's Waterloo included a chart listing weekly expenditure costs "to help you see where your contribution could go".

How do you value what you receive from your church?

- Sky TV costs from £21.50 - £65 per month
- A pint of lager in a pub costs £3.50
- A cinema ticket costs at least £7.00
- A packet of cigarettes costs almost £8.00
- A takeaway pizza costs around £6.00
- Nike trainers cost almost £100!

So what's it worth to you?
The Church of England teaches that each of us should give 5% of our income to our parish and another 5% of our income to other good causes. The figures below equate to 5% of your income.

Your income per week	Suggested amount to give per week	Your income per month	Suggested amount to give per month
£100	£5	£500	£25
£200	£10	£1,000	£50
£300	£15	£2,000	£100
£400	£20	£3,000	£150
£500	£25	£4,000	£200
£600	£30	£5,000	£250
£700	£35	£6,000	£300
£800	£40	£7,000	£350

To help you see where your contribution could go:

Item	Cost for one week of the year
Cleaning	£70
Communications and printing	£80
Insurance	£88
Heating and lighting	£151
Missionary and Charitable Giving	£162
Upkeep of services – candles, bread and wine, flowers, organ tuning	£163
Maintenance of the buildings	£193
Salaries and administration	£292
Contribution to the cost of ministry (Parish Shares)	£764

St Luke's Budget 2017

£356,500 Budgeted expenditure

- £226,300 63.5% Parish Support Fund
- £97,100 27.2% Running costs
- £28,200 7.9% Mission and Outreach
- £4,900 1.4% Properties

£335,800 Budgeted income for 2017

- £239,700 71.4% Church voluntary giving
- £57,400 17.1% Church fees lettings and fundraising
- £38,700 11.5% Property rentals

St Luke's projected deficit for 2017 is £20,700 (expenditure) before the Stewardship campaign.

Please help St Luke's to bridge this deficit by contributing at least £10 per month

Costs for various activities:

- Cathedral precincts and upkeep: £42,500
- Congregation and Education: £4,100
- Visitor facilities: £4,800
- Trading and Fundraising: £33,300
- Ministry costs: £23,900

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Encouraging generosity: what can I give?

One question many of your church members will be thinking and may ask is: how much should I give? There are a number of ways of offering guidance on how much to give and your planning team should choose what is most appropriate to your congregation and situation. Don't set too low a target – be ambitious. Ask people to reflect on God's generosity but give them examples of how they can respond generously to meet mission targets, fund projects, give regularly and tax efficiently, and offer their time and skills.

i. Giving prayerfully and generously

Our offertory prayer "For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you" is based on 1 Chronicles 29: 11-13 where David praises God "for all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Riches and honour come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might; and it is in your hand to make great and to give strength to all. And now, our God, we give thanks to you and praise your glorious name."

Generous giving is an act of worship and thanksgiving. Encourage people to reflect prayerfully upon God's generosity and how we use the time, skills and possessions God has entrusted to us. Affirm that everybody's contribution makes a difference and encourage them to take one more step in their discipleship in the amount they give, by changing to giving in a more regular or tax-efficient way, or by using some of the skills and talents God has given them within his church.

ii. Encouraging regular giving

Weekly giving was encouraged by Paul in his letter to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 16:2). Not only does it reflect the priority we are placing on our giving to church, but regular giving helps individuals to budget and churches pay the bills, whether or not people attend that Sunday. Many churches operate planned giving schemes, encouraging people to give

"On the first day of every week, each of you is to put aside and save whatever extra you earn, so that collections need not be taken when I come"
– 1 Corinthians 16:2



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in weekly envelopes or by standing order. Giving by standing order reduces administration for the finance team, often increases the amount given to a church and is more convenient for the donor. However, some people like to put something in the plate each week or may have reasons for not wanting to set up a standing order gift to charity, so regular envelopes may be an alternative.

iii. Proportionate giving and tithing

Proportionate giving is based upon biblical principles that those who are blessed with more have a responsibility to support those with less (2 Corinthians 8: 11-14). We are encouraged to assess our financial giving annually as a percentage of our income. The Church of England's General Synod encourages church members to give proportionately: 5% of their net income to and through the church and a further 5% to other organisations that help to build God's kingdom.

As a rough rule of thumb, 5% = £1 per week
for every £1,000 of annual income.
For example, 5% of an income of £10,000 = £10 per week

Another way to help people understand proportionate giving is to include a table in your brochure. This may challenge people to connect their income and giving, and help to combat static giving. By using the proportionate giving chart you can encourage people to find:

- the nearest figure to their weekly net income
- the nearest figure to what they give now on a weekly basis.

They can discover:

- what they give as a percentage of their net income
- what they need to give in the future to increase that percentage.

Giving per £1	Weekly take-home pay				
	£50	£100	£200	£500	£1,000
1p	50p	£1	£2	£5	£10
3p	£1.50	£3	£6	£15	£30
5p	£2.50	£5	£10	£25	£50
20p	£5	£10	£20	£50	£100



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For many Christians the biblical tithe of 10% of income is their standard and so you might invite everyone to tithe, or to work towards tithing, their income.

iv. Everyone asked to contribute the same

With this method, everyone is asked to increase giving by, say, £2 per week. If you have a target figure to raise for your mission and ministry costs it can be helpful to calculate an average figure as guidance for each member of the electoral roll or the usual Sunday attendees or planned giver. However, you should be pastorally sensitive – we recommend that somewhere in your brochure you should state that you recognise not everybody can afford the same.

v. How else do we spend our money?

It can often be useful to compare our giving to the church with some examples of what we spend on other items. A couple of illustrations of this can help put giving in perspective. Choose the items that are most relevant to your church's situation, perhaps a meal for two at a local restaurant, a coffee out, a subscription TV package or a phone upgrade.

How do you value what you receive from your church?

- Sky TV costs from £21.50 - £65 per month
- A pint of lager in a pub costs £3.30
- A cinema ticket costs at least £7.00
- A packet of cigarettes costs almost £8.00
- A takeaway pizza costs around £6.00
- Nike trainers cost almost £100!

This can help your church members to question their financial priorities and whether they are making giving to God's mission a priority and not the spare change (1 Corinthians 16:2, Deuteronomy 26: 2-3, 2 Corinthians 8:5).

vi. Everyone asked to increase their current giving by the same percentage

With this method, everyone is asked to add 25p to each £1 they currently give in order to fund the church's vision. Alternatively, you may ask people to consider an increase in line with inflation to help keep pace with rising costs.

vii. Using a gift array

Gift arrays, such as the one by Southwark Cathedral on the right, can be a helpful way of encouraging generosity by offering people a range of gift options and helping them to see how their gift can contribute to the whole community and really make a difference.

This many people	Increasing their weekly gift by	Equals this much extra weekly income
5	£10	£50
10	£5	£50
15	£2	£30
20	£1	£20

This amounts to 50 people giving an extra £150 a week – £7,800 a year!
[Alter to fit your £x]



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Step 3: design your brochure

Your *Giving is God's Way* brochure goes to all your church congregation, and sometimes members of your electoral roll and the wider community. It therefore needs to appeal to a wide variety of people and communicate your message clearly. Please consider who your audience is and try to ensure that your brochure has a clear, appropriate message, with key facts about your church's present financial situation and ideas about the future. If you have people with design and/or writing skills in your congregation then it is a good idea to enlist their help.

The brochure also sets the tone of rest of your literature so we recommend that they should all tie together with the same logo, colour schemes and typeface.

Below is some general guidance on designing your brochure:

- be careful with its tone and feel. As the same brochure will be sent to everyone it needs to be engaging and reflect people's different reasons for giving. Some will be motivated by understanding the vision or financial needs of your church while others will give in response to biblical teaching on generosity or tithing. Equally, people absorb information in different ways so present your information in a variety of formats, including words, pictures and graphics such as charts
- ask a sample of people who reflect the different parts of your congregation to comment on your brochure before you go to print
- share your church's mission and vision. According to *Giving for Life*, produced by the Archbishops' Council in 2009, "People give more generously where there is a clear vision – it helps to stimulate enthusiasm and joy in giving. If you don't have a plan or vision, writing one should be your first priority"
- connect people's giving with the ministry and mission that it resources, so donors understand the difference that the church is making in the local community. Illustrate the ministry you are able to offer because of people's generosity both now and in the past, including some specific examples that your church members will recognise, such as Messy Church, supporting young people with mental health issues and providing shelter

***"The way
in which you
make 'the ask' sets
the level of their
gift: ask for a little and
that is what you will get"
– Giving in Grace,
Diocese of
Liverpool***

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- for the homeless or training hearing champions for the elderly
- include a simple summary of the financial situation in your church; generally it is better broken down into weekly amounts. Do not put in too much detail – but make the detail available to anyone who requests it
- don't overdramatise your financial position even if you feel you are in a crisis. You need to promote feelings of opportunity, excitement and hope, not ones of desperation
- if you are asking for people to donate their time and talents as well as a financial contribution, be very clear about the roles/jobs for which you are asking them to volunteer and where to find more information about what is involved
- give practical guidance on financial giving; be clear on the different ways in which people can give, such as standing orders or envelopes, and don't leave people wondering about how much they should give. Some ideas on how to do this are included in the sample brochure template that is one of the [supporting documents for Part 3](#)
- include clear instructions on how (and by which date) you want people to respond
- emphasise that people's responses, and especially financial responses, are confidential
- the use of quotes from members of the congregation about why your church is special or a particular testimony can also be helpful.

In addition to the sample brochure template which you can adapt for your own circumstances, the [supporting documents for Part 3](#) include examples of other leaflets produced by Southwark parishes from which to source ideas:

- St Luke, Battersea 2017
- Southwark Cathedral 2016
- St John, Waterloo
- a poster looking for volunteers from All Saints Blackheath.

Templates from other stewardship programmes are also available on the web – find a list of giving programmes at www.parishresources.org.uk/giving.

Step 4: Writing your 'ask' letters

Whether you include a short letter from your vicar as an introduction to your brochure or decide to send each church member a separate letter along with your pack, people welcome the personal approach. The letter written

***“We are not asking people just to think about or consider their giving to the church; we are asking people to act”
– Giving in Grace,
Diocese of Liverpool***



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to each member of the congregation from the clergy has one purpose: to ask church members to respond prayerfully to your stewardship initiative. If you are in an interregnum then you should discuss who should write the letter; usually it would come from the churchwardens.

The following are some elements of good practice you should consider when writing your 'ask' letter.

i. Don't be afraid to ask

Clergy and lay leaders should not be frightened of asking for resources, including money. We are inviting church members and friends of the church to fund the mission of our churches. We should ask with confidence, not as if we are making an apology. More especially, we are asking people to respond to what they have learned from the Bible studies about God's generosity and love for them.

ii. Make your letters personal

The 'ask' letter is a personal letter so it must look, read and feel like something being sent from one individual to another. You may find the golden rules listed on the Giving in Grace website helpful: bit.ly/AskLetters.

Example 'ask' letters to church leaders, regular churchgoers and friends of the church are available as [supporting documents to Part 3](#), but please edit these so you are using your own language and approach.

If you are not sending a separate letter you could consider including an introductory letter in your brochure and signing that by hand – one vicar signed more than 400 as a way of personally thanking his parishioners.

***“In the Lord's Prayer, we are told to ask for our daily bread. If we can confidently ask our heavenly father for what we need, we should not be anxious about asking for the resources our church family needs”
– Giving in Grace website***



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iii. Keep the letters focused

Ensure that the 'ask' letter makes a specific request of the recipient. It should be clear about what response you would like the recipient to make and thank them for their participation – people like to feel appreciated. Your letter should also emphasise how the donor's gift will make a difference and how church ministry changes lives – people need to feel that their contribution will achieve something. It is also a good idea to focus on day-to-day running costs rather than on bills.

iv. Be clear about what you are asking

The discipleship of time and talents is included in the *Giving is God's Way* stewardship programme and you may wish to encourage people to donate their skills as well as money. However, try not to dilute your financial request unintentionally. Encourage prayerful and thoughtful reflection and ask people to act and to give financially as well as of their time and talents.

“Now as you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you – so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking” – 2 Corinthians 8: 7

v. Maintain confidentiality

It is important to mention confidentiality somewhere in your literature. Some people feel uncomfortable about their vicar knowing how much they give to the church. Of course, if people give by standing order or envelope and allow the church to claim Gift Aid then someone needs to know. However, it is usually only the Planned Giving or Stewardship Secretary or Treasurer who would handle this confidential information.

It is therefore important that your literature states, either in the 'ask' letter or somewhere in the brochure, that, while the clergy will know who has responded to the initiative so they can thank people, only the Treasurer or whoever receives the financial response forms will know the amount donated by individuals.

It may be helpful to mention who will see the responses and to ensure that the response forms and reply envelopes are addressed to that person.



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Step 5: Create a response form

The response form encourages people to record the action they are going to take in response to your appeal. Therefore the form(s) need to be tailored to your individual church's request: in other words a financial focus, an appeal for volunteers or both.

Certain tips are common to both:

- add a return date – be clear when you want a response by
- make it clear how to return the forms. You need to tell people to whom they should address their replies and how, for example by e-mailing the Treasurer, returning the form to the church office or posting it in a box at the back of church. Alternatively, you may like to include a stamped addressed envelope or Freepost prepaid envelope in the packs
- tell people who is reading their responses and processing the data to alleviate any concerns about confidentiality
- let people know how they can ask for further information or share suggestions
- put copies on your website in case people lose their forms or prefer to engage online.

Financial response form

A financial response form deals with the amount people are committing to pay. You will need to ask for key information from the donor: their name and contact details, the amount they are choosing to pay and how (by standing order or envelopes, and monthly or weekly).

It is useful to give people a choice of responses when they are filling in their forms, including keeping their financial giving at the same level. You may also wish to give people the option for one-off gifts, especially if you have some one-off costs.

Your financial response form can be expanded to encourage church members to pay regularly by attaching a standing order form, and tax-efficiently by attaching a Gift Aid form.

The image shows three overlapping forms. The top-left form is titled 'Confidential Response Form' and 'Gift Aid Declaration'. It includes sections for 'Please return to the Cathedral by 31 February 2012', 'I wish to start giving a regular sum of...', 'I wish to increase my giving to...', 'I wish to decrease my giving to...', 'I wish to give by Standing Order through my bank', and 'I wish to give by Standing Order through my bank. Please update your giving by completing the Standing Order form attached'. The top-right form is titled 'Giving to St John's' and includes a red header with a cross icon. It contains the text 'I want to support the work of God's Church here in Waterloo. I intend to give an offering as follows', 'Amount (including any existing commitment)', 'Method of giving', 'Standing Order / Envelope Scheme', 'I would like this to be Gift Aided - please give me a Gift Aid form to sign', 'CAF BANK, 21 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Sussex, PO19 4RZ, A/C number: St John's Waterloo, A/C no: 0862276, Sort code: 40-53-40', and 'THANK YOU VERY MUCH. Please return this form to: Alan Mowatt, St John's Waterloo, Waterloo Road, London SE1 8JY.'

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(Some churches prefer not to include these in the information pack as a request for a Standing Order form or Gift Aid Declaration provides an opportunity for personal contact. However, it may be that you feel this adds an extra layer of work that is not necessary.) You might also like to include space for people to ask for further information, for example on legacies.

A sample financial response form and a sample Gift Aid Declaration are among the [supporting documents for Part 3](#). You can also download Southwark Cathedral's combined Response and Gift Aid form, and St John, Waterloo's brochure which incorporates a Response Form.

For more ideas, you might also like to consult the Parish Resources website at bit.ly/ParishResources and the Giving in Grace website at www.givinginrace.org/Response-Forms.

Time and talents response form

Make sure you are clear about what roles you are asking members of your congregation to volunteer for and think about how you will manage if you get too many or unsuitable volunteers. The roles you are looking for people to fill should fit with the church's vision and plans for the future and now may be a good time to review, or develop, job descriptions – especially for the more demanding roles – so people have a clear idea of what they are being asked to undertake.

Make sure that your 'time and skills' form only asks for volunteers for activities you plan to carry out in the near future. It can be disheartening to volunteer your time and then find you are not needed. If you know you only need a certain number of people to do a particular role, tell people so they will understand if they are not asked.

Some churches hold 'Time and Talent Sundays' where people are available to talk about their roles, to give people the opportunity to explore time commitments and ask questions.

A sample 'time and talents' response form and All Saints, Blackheath's colourful approach to recruiting volunteers are among the [supporting documents for Part 3](#).



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Step 6: review

If you have completed all the steps to your satisfaction, you are ready to move on to [Part 4: Giving thanks](#). Use the checklist below to review where you are.

		Notes
Step 1	What is going in your stewardship pack?	
Step 2	Notes on presenting your financial position	
Step 3	Notes on designing your brochure	
Step 4	Notes on your 'ask' letters	
Step 5	What other forms will you include?	

