



Diocese of Lincoln

Living Generously

Issue 1: June 2023

Welcome to the first in a series of occasional newsletters which aim to provide support, information and ideas to help develop generosity in your church.

Meet the Team

The Revd Simon Dean: Generous Living & Covenant Lead

Simon leads the Generous Living Team, in particular on the delivery of the Diocese's Generous Living Strategy, as well as focussing on the theology of generosity and how, as Christians, we can respond to our generous God. As part of A Time to Change Together, Simon has also been leading on the change from the old formula-based Parish Share system, to the new Covenant Pledge Scheme, enabling churches to work together to support one another with the provision of stipendiary ministry within LMPs as an expression of our generosity towards each other. Additionally, Simon is Priest in Charge of the parish of Waddington.

Hugo Cobham, Generous Living Advisor

Hugo supports parishes with creating the best environment in which to encourage generosity, in response to God's generosity to us all. His work focuses particularly on good giving practice, through building trust with givers/potential givers, communicating the need for giving and the impact that it will have, and advising on the range of different mechanisms, (such as contactless, online, Parish Giving Scheme, legacies etc) to make it easier for people to give to the church. Hugo is also your contact in relation to your parish's Covenant Pledge.

Andy Wright, Generous Living Advisor

Andy supports parishes and LMPs as they seek to develop generosity in all its forms, as an expression of our discipleship and in response to God's generosity. His work focusses on a holistic approach to developing a culture of generosity, covering areas such as time, skills, talents, and hospitality, as well as money. Andy welcomes invitations to meet with clergy, parish officers, LMP leaders and anyone in a position to encourage generosity in their church.



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Developing Legacy Giving in Your Church

Online sessions with Eleanor Stead, Deputy National Giving Advisor

According to the 2021 Anglican Giving Survey undertaken by the CofE, Anglicans are three times as likely to leave a legacy to other charities as they are to church. One of the reasons for this may well be as a result of one of the Survey's other findings; that only 15% of Anglicans have ever been asked to leave a legacy to their church. Of those who have, the most common reason for doing so was that they had been asked. That being the case, it is important that people are asked. A significant part of that is providing information about why legacies are needed by our churches and communicating this to our members.

With this in mind, Eleanor Stead, Deputy National Giving Advisor, will be leading a one-hour online session to explain how to encourage and develop legacy giving in your parish, how to develop policy on the use of gifts left to the church in this way, and also about the Church's partnership with [Farewill](#), a free and professional will-writing service. This session will be held twice, on different days and at different times, in the hope that as many people as possible will be able to join and benefit from Eleanor's experience of how to encourage legacy giving to your church.

To book a place on one of these online sessions, select one of the links below:

[Monday 26th June 7pm-8pm](#)
[Wednesday 5th July 2.30pm-3.30pm](#)

Treasurers' Days

We are also planning a series of support sessions for PCC treasurers and others at different venues across the Diocese. These sessions will cover a range of topics relating to this important area of parish development. You can book a place by clicking on one of the links below.

[Wednesday 11th October 10am-3.30pm \(Horncastle Community Centre\)](#)

[Thursday 12th October 10am-3.30pm \(Bourne Church Hall\)](#)

[Tuesday 17th October 10am-3.30pm \(Barton on Humber Church Hall\)](#)

[Wednesday 18th October 7pm-9pm \(Lincoln, Edward King House\)](#)

Parish Giving Scheme:

NEW: One-Off Giving Capability

With far fewer people carrying cash with them nowadays, it is important that churches are able to offer other ways in which people can give to the church. While many members of the congregation like to give in a planned and regular way, often direct via their bank and therefore not while they are physically in church, conversely, occasional visitors are more likely to want to make a single one-off gift whilst they are at the church building itself. This may be during festival services, such as Christmas or Harvest, at baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals, or just while popping in to look around the church during the day while it's open.



In response to this need, the Parish Giving Scheme is now able to receive and process one-off gifts on behalf of your church. Up until very recently, PGS has only been able to receive regular, planned gifts (monthly, quarterly, or annually) and it was necessary for the individual giver to register with PGS first in order to set up their regular gift.

Now it is possible for givers to make a one-off gift to their church via PGS without the need to register an account. They can do this either via a link on your church website/A Church Near You webpage, or by using their smart phone or tablet to read a QR code specific to your church. Either way, this takes the giver to your church's PGS landing page, where they can then make their one-off gift.

Your church's QR code can be placed on your service sheet, onto a pew card, or made into a poster for display, either inside or outside, to enable people to give to your church, both during services and at other times. It is also possible to make one-off gifts via PGS's dedicated phone line.

PGS claims, on your church's behalf, any eligible GiftAid on the one-off gift, just as it does with regular gifts, and transfers it to your church's bank account.

In order for your church to be able to receive one-off gifts in this way, it will need to register with PGS, so that they can transfer the value of the gift, plus any GiftAid, directly to your church's bank account. The registration form can be found here. Registration and use of PGS is free for all parishes and churches within the Diocese of Lincoln.

The PGS office is finding that the ability for givers to make a one-off gift is proving to be an easy, non-threatening entry point to the idea of becoming a regular giver to their church. To date, nationally, 6% of those who have made a one-off gift to their church through PGS have subsequently become a regular giver.

The Generous Living Team is available to support you, including answering any questions your PCC members may have about PGS, processing your PGS Registration Form, helping you access your church's QR code, and promoting one-off and regular giving to your church.

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Generosity: A Reflection

Our God is a generous God. We may hear these words often said in services or in talks we may have listened to, yet we might not always think about what that means for us as individuals and as a church. Generosity is a key characteristic of God and, because we are made in the image of God, it's a key characteristic we also have. God's generosity is seen in all sorts of ways, yet so often generosity is associated with money. Being generous with our money is important, yet we often miss out on other ways to be generous when our focus is completely on finance.

The Generous Living strategy that has been adopted by the Diocese also goes beyond just money. At its heart, the strategy is designed to encourage churches and individuals to live generously in response to the generosity we receive from God. There are five areas where, both as individuals and as churches, we can think about ways to be generous.

- Time - how can we give of our time?
- Talent - what talents and skills can we share with others?
- Treat - how can we treat people with a generosity of spirit?
- Table - how might we open our doors to welcome the newcomer, feed the hungry and support those in need?
- Treasure - how can we bless others with our money?

The Generous Living team is here to help and support churches and individuals to think about how they can develop cultures of generosity in different ways. Please do get in touch.

Generous Living Enablers

Generosity is a core value of the Diocese of Lincoln and forms a key part of the Time To Change Together (TTCT) vision to be a sustainable church that is generous, collaborative and growing. It is our intention to support and resource parishes in a renewed culture of growing generosity, both individually as disciples and collectively as the People of God in that place. We wish to build a team of people, located within Deanery Partnerships supported by the Generous Living team based at the Parish Support Office, to promote, encourage and support local churches to develop cultures of generosity and to provide practical advice and help in increasing their income.

One of the ways in which we hope to do this is by recruiting and supporting a team of volunteer Generous Living Enablers. Generous Living Enablers will be a local contact point for churches and will play an important role in the delivery of the Generous Living strategy. In brief, this team would:

- Support churches and parishes as they develop and grow a culture of generous living
- Advise churches to enable giving; be involved in local covenant meetings
- Be part of the Deanery Partnership Steering Groups
- Support LMPs to make covenant pledges when required
- Promote a commitment to Generous Living and be a local advocate
- Share best practice and stories of generous living, giving and stewardship
- Contribute to the wider Generous Living network

If you are interesting in contributing by becoming a Generous Living Enabler, know someone else who might be interested, or just want to find out more, please get in touch using the contact details below.



Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks to our generous God for all that He has provided for us.
- Pray for a generosity of spirit, that the church might flourish and grow always and in all ways.
- Pray that all might give and not count the cost.
- Teach us to be kind in heart, so that love, grace, and charity flow forth like a river.

The Covenant Scheme

90% of parishes have returned their Covenant Agreements. A big thank-you to all of those who have done so by making your pledges towards the cost of stipendiary ministry. It makes it possible to budget much more accurately and to plan for the deployment and pattern of ministry across the Diocese. The current indications are that, once Low Income Community (LInC) Funding and parishes' Covenant Pledges are added together and, having made some statistical assumptions and extrapolations based upon the 90% who have pledged, as a diocese we may get close to being able to afford the 100 stipendiary posts that we aspire to by 2025. This is encouraging, but it is important that momentum is maintained if we are to achieve that milestone.

Together, we now need to see through to completion the good work that has been accomplished to date. Without the remaining 10% of 'the jigsaw', it is proving difficult for the Deanery Partnerships and the parish support office to conclude the planning for the deployment and pattern of ministry.

If your parish has not yet submitted its Covenant Pledges for 2023, 2024 and/or 2025, please would you have the discussion with your PCC and then send your completed Covenant Agreement to Hugo Cobham on covenant@lincoln.anglican.org as soon as possible.



A Time to Change Together

Resourcing Sustainable Church

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