

Planning a giving campaign



What's in this guide

This booklet will help you prepare for a giving campaign in your church, parish or benefice. Every church community is unique, so be prepared to tailor any activities to the experiences of your congregation. Some will be unable to give financially but giving is not restricted to money, and your campaign can include everyone's gifts.

Timing your campaign

Try aligning the campaign with the church calendar. Particularly good times to discuss giving include Lent, Pentecost and harvest festivals. Giving campaigns should last at least two weeks and may be up to four weeks, depending on your need. The higher the number of weeks, the more likely you will be to avoid missing people who don't come to every service.

Try to start planning around six weeks in advance. This will give plenty of time to prepare your message and to consider who will be doing what. It is very important to allow adequate planning time. If your campaign feels rushed it will be harder for people to engage.

Create a planning group

The planning group will work together to organise the campaign and get any materials ready. Best practice is to include representatives from both clergy and the congregation who reflect the diversity of your community. It's easy to fall into the trap of only involving those who are already committed givers; try to involve people of all ages and experiences of church life.



If you can, include someone under 25. Young people can bring a fresh perspective and will help you discern what might be of particular value to the next generation. This can both help you strengthen your messaging in advance of the campaign, as well as give younger members of the church the opportunity to get involved with setting a vision for the church.



Your vision for the church

Outline your church's spiritual vision and think about how regular giving fits into this. It is essential to be able to articulate the vision in a few sentences as this will be your reason for people to give to the church. Your vision will express what you, as a church community, are hoping to achieve through people's giving. In turn, giving enables donors to feel involved in the work and mission of the church.

With your vision in mind, assess your financial starting point – where are you? Why do you want this to change? Try to be qualitative and quantitative. For example, how do you want to change the giving culture, and by how much do you need to increase giving? For example, you could aim to have all regular worshipers give regularly or that Parish Giving Scheme income will increase by 10%. Your aims should be optimistic but also realistic.

Finally, ask yourselves *how do we get from where we are to where we want to be?*

Considering your audience

Who are you trying to reach? Targeting everybody (younger, older, families, retired people, non-congregants, etc.) with a generic set of resources risks failing to properly engage any of those groups. So, knowing whom you want to approach and what might motivate that particular audience is important.

Find more about motivation in our regular giving guidance.¹ The more personal your material, the more successful your programme is likely to be.

1. [oxford.anglican.org/regular-giving](https://www.oxford.anglican.org/regular-giving)

You might be trying to reach:

- Current givers – in this case you will want to express thanks, as well as ask donors to reconsider their levels of giving.
- New givers – if you are trying to reach people who do not currently give it might help to identify them beforehand, especially if they are congregants. Consider why they do not currently give and ensure that you make it as easy as possible to sign up to give regularly. Framing giving within the context of faithful commitment to the church's vision is important here.
- Younger people (under 40) – younger generations are just as motivated to give to charity as older generations. You may have to tailor your message for this age group and they may require more one-to-one conversations about giving.
- Young people (under 21) – you may want to speak to the youth and children of the parish about the importance of giving, but without asking them to give. This can lay the groundwork for their view of regular giving later in life, as well as engaging them in the vision of the church.
- Those outside the church community – consider carefully what might be most motivational for giving.

Structuring your ask

There are a number of off-the-shelf giving programme structures, and you can find links to them in the tinted box. Regardless of whether you use a structured programme, there are certain essential steps. First, you should structure the services around the request and response. Don't preach about giving without actually mentioning that you would like people to review their own financial giving. You can help people understand what it is you want them to do, and why, by including this as part of the sermon. The request and response should include:

- A leaflet about the campaign. The more attractive this is, the better. Provide an overview of the finances and vision of the church.
- A letter which is, where possible, addressed to a specific person. You may want to write different letters for different groups of people (e.g. families, non-congregants, etc.)
- A form that asks people to let you know how they feel they can give. Remember that giving is about more than money; it can include time

and skills, e.g. reading, preaching, cleaning, PCC membership, etc. You may also like to mention legacies, especially to those who are already committed givers.

- A Standing Order and Gift Aid form or, if your church is a member, a Parish Giving Scheme donation form.
- An easy way to give a one-off donation (e.g. online or via a QR code). There may be some people who cannot start or increase regular giving but would still like to support the church.
- An expression of thanks for considering the request.
- A timeline for responding. Allow time for consideration; you could give out the request in the first week and ask for the response form back in the final week.

Giving programme frameworks

There are several pre-existing frameworks for giving programmes which can help with both planning and running a campaign. These include:

The Generosity Week

A relatively new programme focusing on prayer and scripture
churchofengland.org/generosity-week

Giving is God's Way

A popular programme from the Diocese of Southwark
southwark.anglican.org/giving-is-gods-way

Giving in Grace

A successful programme suitable for all churches
givinginrace.org

A Parish Funding Programme

A programme designed to suit medium to large churches
parishresources.org.uk/giving/pfp

A Simple Giving Programme

A programme for small and/or rural churches
parishresources.org.uk/sgp

Give 10

A programme to encourage tithing
parishresources.org.uk/giving/give-10

Accompanying the ask



At this stage of your campaign:

- Add material to the newsletter, noticeboards, pew sheets, notices, etc.
- It is good to have a named person available to answer questions and even initiate (positive) conversations with people about the campaign.
- Allow time to present the finances and vision of the church and answer questions. Depending on your church's style, you may be able to do this over coffee or perhaps café church.

Don't shy away from presenting giving as a part of faith. There can be a temptation to create request and response packs, give them out and then not to mention them ever again. This can suggest that you are embarrassed by the topic of giving and that it's something that shouldn't be talked about in church. To avoid this, you can teach about giving in the context of Christian discipleship and generosity. Preaching by the incumbent is essential as it will help people take giving seriously as an aspect of faithful discipleship. If you are looking for support writing a sermon you could read our five suggestions for stewardship sermons². You could also consider inviting guest speakers, including the Generous Giving Adviser.

The practicalities of giving

Take these three steps to make it easy for people to give during the campaign and throughout the year:



Use QR codes for an immediate response

- Sign up to the free Parish Giving Scheme service³, which is the easiest way for people to start regular giving online, over the phone or by paper form.
- Whilst regular giving through PGS or standing order should always be the focus of your giving strategy, you can sign up for GiveALittle to access online donation links and QR codes for those who would prefer to give a one-off amount.⁴

2. See 'Planning a Giving Sermon' at [oxford.anglican.org/giving-campaigns](https://www.oxford.anglican.org/giving-campaigns)

3. [oxford.anglican.org/parish-giving-scheme](https://www.oxford.anglican.org/parish-giving-scheme)

4. [oxford.anglican.org/cashless-giving](https://www.oxford.anglican.org/cashless-giving)

- Try to avoid promoting cash/envelope giving. Some people may prefer to give by cash or envelopes, and their gifts should always be celebrated, but overall these are cumbersome and unsustainable for the church and for most givers.

After the campaign

- Personally thank everyone for their response, including those who do not increase their giving.
- Run a follow-up service a month or so later to communicate the results.
- Always be positive about the response, even if you don't make a material difference to your income. Remember to value giving that isn't financial. Also, the opportunity for people to learn about giving as part of their faith may have laid a seed that bears fruit in the future.

Giving shouldn't be something addressed once and then ignored until the next campaign. It can be a regular aspect of preaching, feeding into the culture of a church.

- Make giving the focus on at least one Sunday a year.
- Send annual thank you letters to all donors.

Contact Information

For further support with all aspects of giving please contact:
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