

DEVELOPING A GENEROUS CULTURE

A generous church

Whilst as a church we are mindful of our financial needs and want to encourage those who count themselves as part of our worshipping community to give generously, to meet our urgent and longer term ministry needs at both parish and diocesan level, it's important to do this in a way that also models our own church's generosity.

There are several ways we can do this. The parish may want to support charities and projects serving the local community such as food banks or debt centres. One local parish has a policy regarding weddings - to give half of any money donated by guests to a charity nominated by the bride and groom. The results show that giving more than doubled, so the church, through its generous gesture of donating to a charity nominated by the happy couple, actually found itself in receipt of more income than it had before.

Remember, it's easy to set up separate 'campaigns' on contactless giving machines and online giving portals to facilitate charitable giving and ensure donations are correctly accounted for.

A generous atmosphere

It can be tempting to want to raise money at every opportunity but this can sometimes be counterproductive, and if we're not careful, it might create a 'penny-pinching' environment which in turn produces a similar response.

If you are not already doing so, consider whether tea and coffee at Sunday meetings or other community events can simply be free of charge, and whether there is scope for other services the church offers to the community to be free as well.

Quite often, when services or facilities are provided free of charge, the recipient makes a voluntary donation that might be considerably more than we might have requested, and it also leaves the people around us with a positive impression of their interaction with the church. It's important though not to be relying on that response and to be truly generous in our intent.

Generosity begets generosity, so let's ensure the church, despite our own often pressing financial needs, is honestly modelling the attitude we aspire to nurture.

A generous person

If we are to preach on and nurture generosity in our own parish community, it is important to first pause and reflect on whether we are a generous person ourselves.

However, the extent to which we are generous personally is very much a private matter between ourselves and God. We would all wish to avoid the temptation of appearing to be generous in cases where our actions are likely to be visible, in a way that does not match our decisions and lifestyle choices in areas that are unseen.

Those that want to take further steps in exploring their personal generosity may wish to consider either facilitating or participating in a [Generosity Fika](#). If you would like to join a Fika that is being facilitated by someone else, please let [Dennis Fancett](#) at the [Generous Giving Team](#) know, so one can be arranged as soon as sufficient numbers have expressed interest.