

## 'INSPIRING' GIVING CONFERENCE A BIG HIT

The 'Leaping into the future of giving' conference, which took place on Saturday 29 February at King's House Conference Centre, was a massive success with over 250 attendees from churches across our diocese. People also travelled to Manchester from across the UK with representatives from our National Church, other Anglican Dioceses, Roman Catholic Archdioceses and other faiths.

Attendees had a busy schedule with interesting keynote speakers, detailed workshops on specific topics, and an exhibition space with a variety of stallholders. We are very grateful to CCLA and Ecclesiastical Insurance for their financial support which made the day possible.

The feedback from attendees was very positive,

and one response summarised the feelings of many people: "I attended today feeling quite despondent regarding the uphill struggle to keep our church alive and habitable. Following a very industrious day and being among many, many, like-hearted and like-minded people, I now feel more positive about the future of our faith and church. I found the workshops inspiring and uplifting."

### Distributing speakers' slides and workshop presentations

All of the documents have been received from all of the speakers and workshops leaders. The plan was to get this information uploaded to a page on the Diocese's website and provide everyone with the link details via email. However, for now, we have been overtaken by the coronavirus pandemic events. When they are ready we'll be promoting this via email, newsletters, social media pages and e-Newsletter.

### Other requests and giving trials

Those asking for copies of the Diocese's literature and other templates to be sent to them directly should have received them directly via email.

If you expressed an interest in joining one of our giving trials or Gift Aid Lite, we'll be in touch again once things have started to return to a form of normality.



## CARRYING ON DURING CORONAVIRUS

The rest of this newsletter will focus on providing assistance, hints and tips to all Churches in the Diocese as we all try to adapt to the lockdown situation we are all facing. Some of this content will be directly relevant to Gift Aid Lite members only, but it will be useful to everyone.

Not all of the contacts we work with regularly regarding a Church's finances are online and have an email address. Some Treasurers and Gift Aid Secretaries are only contactable via post. Therefore, we'd be grateful if you share this information directly with them via telephone, if necessary.

All Church House staff are working remotely from home for the foreseeable future. Phone messages will reach us, but, if possible, please contact us via email only (our addresses can be found on the back page). If you do need to speak to someone directly, or need training or support, this can be arranged and provided remotely.

As Church House is closed, it is impossible to process paper claims and one-off envelopes sent to us in the post. If they cannot be scanned and emailed, they will be processed and claimed once the office reopens.

# HOW CAN MY CHURCH CONTINUE TO RECEIVE DONATIONS WHEN IT IS CLOSED?

This is a major concern for us all. There are a number of ways to continue to promote giving and receive donations. Please do not be tempted to go around collecting envelopes from your parishioners' houses. It is important that we give our donors the opportunity to make their donations in an easy way and using methods which eliminate the need to deal with cash and cheques at this time.

There are a number of safer alternatives, which are outlined below:

## Online BACS payments and Standing Orders

A quick solution is to provide your Church bank account details and a Standing Order form to download from your Church's web or A Church Near You sites. This will facilitate those using online banking services to contribute in that way. Those who donate via Gift Aid, should be advised to ensure they state an identifiable reference, i.e. initial and surname or even their Envelope number, i.e. Env123.

The bank account information can also be used by your donors to create new Standing Order payments. Template forms can be requested from your bank or can be downloaded online.

## Freewill offering envelopes

Please urge participants, if they do not have access to online banking, to continue to fill their envelopes which can at some stage be handed in. For envelopes from non tax payers, it should be noted that once they reach £30 in all envelopes, the donations will not be able to count under the GASDS (Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme). Please do not collect envelopes from people's homes.

## New supplies of freewill envelopes

Many Churches use April to start their new envelope year. If this is the case and donors are unable to follow our suggested BACS payments method, they will have to use a receptacle at home store their offerings until they can be taken safely to Church again.

## Online 'donate now buttons'

The Diocese has been working with easyfundraising to offer a number of ways for our Churches to fundraise from their congregation and local community. They are an organisation that works with a variety of good causes across the UK, so enabling them to raise money via their supporters' online shopping and web search activities.

easyfundraising have kindly offered our Diocese the opportunity to be an early adopter of their newly-launched online donations facility. Our Churches now have an option to add a 'donate now' button to their web or A Church Near You sites.

Churches can be a registered or excepted charity to join. Your Church does not need to be a Gift Aid Lite member. It uses your own bank account to receive the donations, and records online Gift Aid declarations too.

If your Church is interested in using this, please contact Paul Bailey using the email address on the back page.



# HMRC AND SUBMITTING TAX CLAIMS

Our contacts at HMRC have advised us that payments will continue to be made provided there are no issues with the claim.

It is suggested that if you are making a submission to HMRC, claim the Gift Aid and GASDS separately (provided that the total of donations exceed £400 net for each scheme). Gift Aid tends to go through

without too many issues, unless there is a significant difference in the amount claimed from usual.

With GASDS, there tends to be more of an issue if you are claiming for more than one Community Building, i.e. multiple Churches and often these are extracted for scrutiny. Claiming the two element separately will at least avoid your Gift Aid tax being delayed.



# BITS AND BOBS

## Gift Aid quarter end dates

This year's quarter end dates are:

- Sun 5th April
- Tues 30th June
- Wed 30th September
- Thurs 31st December



## Online support and training

Although working from home, the Gift Aid Lite team can still provide advice and support via email or by using a number of online tools, and they include:

- RealVNC is used to remotely access your computer using a piece of software you have already downloaded. It is encrypted to ensure the safety of both users. You have to provide permission each time, and our staff can provide you with a unique nine digit code to input into your PC.
- Zoom is used for audio and video calls using a computer, tablet, mobile or landline phone. It allows online meetings to be scheduled in advance. The free version allows two people to speak without a time restriction. A meeting with three people or more can last for up to 40 minute in the free version.
- 'Giving, fundraising and finance' Facebook group has been created to allow Churches within our Diocese to ask question connected to the name of this publicly accessible group. The questions could be answered by Diocesan staff or members from other Churches.

## Parish Buying and Parish Resources websites

The Church of England's Parish Buying website is an excellent way for your Church to access a variety of resources at reduced costs compared to a seller's normal prices. This could be particularly useful in the current 'lockdown' environment we are experiencing.

It can be found at [www.parishbuying.org.uk](http://www.parishbuying.org.uk)

Parish Resources is an excellent online website for all administrative, stewardship and financial information connected to the management of Churches. It is has a dedicated section focusing on COVID-19 advice.

The site can be found at [www.parishresources.org.uk](http://www.parishresources.org.uk)

## Advice for Gift Aid Lite members

The team are working as usual with processing claims and dealing with queries. Please note, the current March month/quarter end runs until 5th April 2020. Please do not send in claims until this date has passed.

Although services at your Church have not taken place recently, it will still be in receipt of Standing Order and other digital donations. Therefore, the donations received up until 5th April should be included, and, once your claim has been verified and checked, it will be submitted to HMRC.

If you are planning to send out letters/emails to your congregation to thank them for their giving, please wait until your claim up to the end of the tax year has been processed before doing so. It is important that any letters contains all giving up until 5th April 2020 (see user guide GAL 19).

## Gift Aid Lite members using paper returns

As Church House is closed for the foreseeable future, we will not be able to send out post out paperwork to a Church's Gift Aid Secretary in the useful way. Instead, the Gift Aid Lite team is planning to send out this paperwork via email to enable a Church representative to print this out and distribute the documents to the correct person, as appropriate. This will be sent to the Incumbent, Priest in Charge and/or Treasurer only, as soon as possible after the year end.

Please ensure all claims are up to date to assist with your Church's cashflow.

## Reconciling your claim against what your Church has received in donations

Please ensure you complete this reconciliation process before submitting. Either check against your Treasurer's or your own running totals.

**Please don't forget to follow us on social media or join our Facebook group:**



@manchesterdiocesegiftaidlite



@giftaidlite



@mandiocese\_giftaidlite



[www.facebook.com/groups/diocesefmanchestergiving/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/diocesefmanchestergiving/)

# FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOLLOWING COVID-19

At a time when the Covid-19 outbreak and the measures to contain it have had an immediate and massive impact on all our lives, the Church continues to pray for our nation and to provide pastoral support to people in parishes and chaplaincies everywhere. The containment measures and the closure of all our church buildings have led to new ways of praying and worshipping collectively, but they are also having a serious impact on the general finances of the church.

As many of you will be aware, we have already been providing regular updates on the wider changes for our church – this note is more narrowly focused on the financial challenges facing us all, the actions we all can take in the short term and the key next steps.

We know how much pressure everyone is under just now and we want to thank you all for your continuing support and the work that is going on to ensure the future health and survival of our churches.

## Financial pressures

Amongst other things, we are all only too aware of the financial pressures that we are all facing.

At parish level, weekly congregational giving via envelopes and plate offerings is already being affected, following the closure of our buildings. For many churches, rental and other commercial income will also be hit, along with the reduction in fees for services. Many of our parishioners will themselves be facing financial hardship and anxiety.

We recognise that this is likely to affect the ability of some parishes to meet their Parish Share commitments. This will have a direct impact on the Diocese's own finances, as will the reduction in fees for services. The Diocese's own rental income from Church House and its properties in Bury Town Centre has already reduced substantially. Some of these commercial rents may not recover in the foreseeable future. Ultimately this loss of income at Diocesan level will affect our ability to cover key costs in the Diocese including - most importantly - clergy stipends.

## Immediate action being taken

We therefore need to take immediate action to reduce the financial impact of the current crisis and to ensure we are able to move to a sustainable financial position once the current restrictions have been lifted. It's more important than ever that we work together and plan our way through as best we can, using all the tools available to us.

We believe in a generous God, a God who gave us

everything we could ever need. Giving and generosity are inextricably linked with the living out of our Christian faith.

Below are some of the steps that can be taken now to build our financial resilience in these uncertain times.

## Parishes:

- In your virtual services and worship, remember to ask people to continue to support the church financially, even when they are not able to be there in person
- Encourage those who normally give weekly in cash to set up Standing Orders instead – either as part of your normal worship or by writing to them directly
- Where people are not able to switch to Standing Orders, remind them to set aside their weekly donation so this can be handed in at a later date
- Consider setting up an on-line 'donate now' button to your website or your 'A Church Near You' site – email Paul Bailey for more information - paulbailey@manchester.anglican.org
- Review your expenditure and financial commitments and take steps now to make savings wherever possible
- Where appropriate take action as soon as possible to access government support for your parish, such as the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

## Diocese:

- At Diocesan level, we are looking at ways in which we can take advantage of government measures. We have already taken the decision to furlough a small number of DBF staff and we will keep this option under review.
- We are taking every opportunity to reduce our costs following the closure of Church House and are actively reviewing our activities and financial commitments over the coming months to identify further savings.
- We must also thank the Church Commissioners for the efforts they are making to support dioceses with the offer of loans and the early payment of grants due to us later in the year. We will be accessing this support over the coming months. However, it's important to understand these are not additional funds.

## Parish Share

We cannot overstate our Diocese's reliance on the regular receipt of Parish Share. Parish Share comprises over two-thirds of the income we generate and without the current levels of receipts, ministry would have a significantly different shape in our Diocese.

We know that this will be challenging, but we hope that all parishes will look at their own overall cash position and try to pay as much Parish Share as possible, as soon as possible.

It's important also that we have a good understanding of where parishes are experiencing difficulties to enable us to provide support where we can, as well as helping us with our financial forecasts. If it is the case that your parish is likely not to be able to pay its Parish Share, then please contact David Weldon, Director of Finance, as soon as this becomes evident – [finance@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:finance@manchester.anglican.org)

These are challenging times, but as Easter people we live in the knowledge that by God's grace we will be born again into new life. This is as true for our church as it is for our personal salvation.

With every blessing

**Bishop David Manchester**

**Canon Phillip Blinkhorn**

Chairman, Manchester Diocesan Board of Finance

# SOME OF THE GUIDANCE AVAILABLE TO SET UP ONLINE DONATIONS



- 1. Register your Church as a cause with easyfundraising**  
Go to [www.easyfundraising.org.uk/diocese-of-manchester](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/diocese-of-manchester)  
It's really quick and easy to register and it's completely free.  
[Register now](#)
- 2. Watch this short video to see how it works**  
It's useful to understand how easyfundraising works, even if you don't have anything to buy. Watch this short video explaining how you raise with easyfundraising. This will help you explain how it works to others.  
[Watch video](#)
- 3. Talk to a fundraising coach**  
After you have registered your Church, you can talk to one of our friendly fundraising coaches who can guide you around the website and advise on how to make easyfundraising work for you. Causes who talk to our fundraising coaches raise over twice as much!  
[Register now](#)
- 4. Tell friends, family and support!**  
Use the **ready-made marketing tools** to let this simple way to help your Church. Add it to the ready-made social posts, emails, flyers  
[Get tools](#)



### GAL26 – Setting up a new easyfundraising account

easyfundraising is a simple way for members of your congregation and local community to raise funds whilst shopping online. It is a straightforward process to set up an account and this user guide will take you through this step-by-step.

You'll need some information from your Church's Treasurer before you start this process:

- Name of the account from the statement
- Bank account sort code
- Bank account number

#### 1. Setting up an easyfundraising account

- Step 1



In the search bar at the top of your browser's screen, type in [www.easyfundraising.org.uk/diocese-of-manchester](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/diocese-of-manchester)

This will take you to the Diocese's dedicated page where you can create your account.

Type in the name of your Church in the box. Please ensure it is easily identifiable (e.g. St Michael's Church, Flixton). Click on the register button.



### GAL27 – How to make an online donation via a Church's easyfundraising account

easyfundraising is a simple way for members of your congregation and local community to make a one-off donation, including a Gift Aid declaration if the donor is a taxpayer. This guide takes you through the process involved from the donor's perspective.

- Step 1

Once a supporter has been directed to your Church's page this is what they'll see.

They'll need to click on the donation button to proceed.

- Step 2

The donor is able to select one of the pre-set amounts or to enter a donation of their own choice.

They can choose for their name and/or donation amount to remain anonymous. If they wish, a personalised message can also be sent.

Click on next to continue.



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