

Giving, funding and finance updates from the Diocese of Bath and Wells

Let's do Lent generously!

Welcome to the second issue of Church Money Matters, our newsletter for all those with a concern for finance, giving and fundraising across Bath and Wells.

Lent is just around the corner so, if you are still looking for some material for Lent reflections, we would like to recommend the Living Generously resources, a series of short videos suitable for small groups and individuals. The reflection is on the story of Mary anointing Jesus' feet with precious perfume. From this single action, deep strands of generosity are demonstrated, all arising from and feeding into the enduring theme of living generously in response to God's outpouring of love for us all. They can be viewed on the [YouTube Living Generously channel](#), back-to-back in about an hour, or accessed for group viewing on the [Church of England web page for Living Generously](#).

Other Lent tools to encourage your congregation and community to explore generosity include [40 Acts](#). Created by Stewardship, 40acts is a generosity Lent challenge that became a movement of over 100,000 people, on a mission to impact their communities by creating moments of radical generosity. Sign up to receive daily emails, providing 40 days of reflections and challenges aimed to inspire and invite you to spread the love of Jesus through acts of intentional generosity.

On 26 February we will be holding the first of this year's Money Matters gatherings, which is just for licensed clergy. In May we will be holding the first of three archdeaconry gatherings, with two more due to be held in the autumn. The sessions are designed to give us the opportunity to reflect on the fundraising challenge within our churches, draw on experience from across Bath and Wells, and together explore some of the ways in which their future sustainability can be secured.

You may also be interested to learn that [Bishop Michael will be raising the issue of finance](#) tomorrow (Friday) at General Synod, when he will be presenting a paper on behalf of Bishop Richard of Hereford Diocese on the redistribution of funds.

Giving & Funding and Finance teams

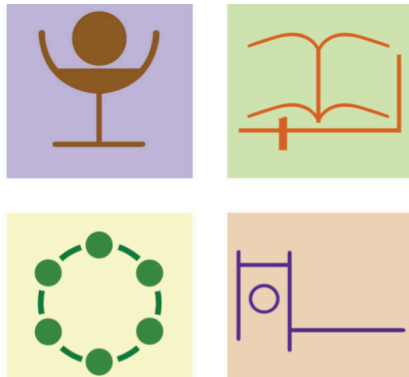
Diocese of Bath and Wells

Latest news

New expanded £5 million conservation fund for churches

Applications for grants to fund the conservation of special objects such as stained glass, paintings, bells, organs and clocks in churches is now open. It is part of an expanded £5 million scheme administered by the Church of England.

Parishes are being encouraged to apply for grants towards the conservation of historical and cultural heritage through the Church of England's conservation grants scheme which is supported by a £4.68million grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. [Find out more about the grant funding.](#)



Is it time for you to sign up to the Parish Giving Scheme?

At the end of 2024, 84 Bath and Wells churches had registered with the Parish Giving Scheme, 62 of which had successfully recruited new, or transferred existing, regular givers. A total of 4085 individual gifts were processed throughout the year, totalling £453,085 including Gift Aid.

The average weekly gift for the year was £20.72, more than £6 higher than the diocesan average and, whilst 87% receive gift aid, just under 50% of givers also opted to increase their gift annually in line with inflation.

Anne Hewett at Keynsham St John has been successful in moving some of their regular givers to the Parish Giving Scheme and explains in the video below some of the benefits.

Free fundraising packs available

easyfundraising is offering 250 free fundraising toolkits to help our churches raise money online.

Through easyfundraising, when your congregation shops with any of the 8,000 retailers, including Tesco, trainline, eBay, Argos, Sainsbury's, John Lewis, Asda and Booking.com, a donation is made to your church. To get your complimentary pack, [register your church with easyfundraising](#) for free and when prompted, schedule a call with a member of the easyfundraising team who will arrange your toolkit and explain how it works.

All you need to do is use the free packs to tell your supporters about it.

Visit the Diocese of Bath and Wells [easyfundraising page](#)

Watch Anne's video on
YouTube



Common Fund payment discounts update

A discount of 1.25% has been applied to payments made in full in January, in line with the commitment made to benefices at the end of 2024.

At their January meeting, members of the Common Fund Committee determined that as Benefice Share requests were calculated to reflect the level of costs that are incurred monthly, a discount to those who commit to pay their Benefice Share contribution monthly will not be offered this year.

If you are able to make your contributions either in full or monthly, however, that would still be appreciated as it helps us meet the monthly costs paid for by the Common Fund without the need to draw down on investments. This will help us maintain our investment income, which can help us keep the future ask for contributions into our Common Fund for our benefices as low as possible.

Later in 2025, the Common Fund Committee will consider what discounts may be offered in 2026.

Grant funding database

There was a great response to our invitation for parishes to sign up to Cornerstone, the new grant funding database in the first edition of Money Matters. If you would also welcome access to this tool, please [email givingteam@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:givingteam@bathwells.anglican.org).

Bath and Wells grants update

There was significant interest in the grant funding being offered for buildings and missional projects across Bath and Wells. While some churches have now received confirmation of the outcome of their application, a number of applicants are still awaiting feedback, or a formal offer of grant funding.

Natalie Wainwright, Giving and Funding Adviser says, "If this is the case for you, we thank you for your patience. Please be assured that all applications have been reviewed within a fortnight of receipt, however, in many cases we have had to request additional information from applicants to support their application. With this in mind, we would ask that any church with a buildings project, ensures that they have sought the advice of the Church Buildings Adviser, using the [Church Buildings Enquiry Form](#), before submitting an application for funding. If you have established a clear vision, have received advice and, if necessary, obtained relevant permissions for your project, we look forward to receiving your [expression of interest](#)."



Where is your church on their journey of generosity?

The Giving and Funding Team recommend that all PCCs complete [the Generous Church Check-up](#), a useful tool for establishing where you are on your journey of generosity. The simple tool asks 14 questions, exploring the current giving practice and culture within your church and helps PCCs to identify some priority areas for action and support from the Giving and Funding team.

Members of a PCC in the Wells Archdeaconry, who recently engaged in a facilitated Generous Church Check-up with Natalie said, "This is the first time that we have all engaged so enthusiastically in the subject of our church finances and giving." Others said how inspired they felt to refine and refresh what they were already doing and were encouraged by the support available from the Giving and Funding Team to take action.

Farewill - new year, new will

Legacy gifts provide key support for churches to help grow their ministries, support their communities and care for their buildings. These gifts can make such a difference to the life of the church and can be used for general or specific purposes as chosen by you. If you are yet to include a gift to your local church in your will, it is highly likely that other members of your congregation won't have either!

Not written a will yet? The Church of England has partnered with online will-writing company, Farewill to help you create a will, with a limited number of these being offered for free! It takes less than 30 minutes to complete. There is no obligation to

leave a gift to a local church, but we hope the prompt to consider this within the process will encourage people to think about how their gift could continue to make a lasting difference in their community. For more information, [visit the Church of England's Free Wills webpage](#).

Questions and answers

How has giving changed in your parish or benefice over the past three years?

To assist you in answering this question, you may wish to download your parish returns/dashboard. To join the conversation go to our new [Church Money Matters Facebook Group](#) or [email: moneymatters@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:moneymatters@bathwells.anglican.org).



Training

- 26 February 2025 - Church Money Matters (For clergy) – A Generous Church Clergy Training Day at Flourish House, Wells. Feel free to draw this to the attention of your incumbent and direct them to [the event page on the diocesan website](#) for more information and booking.
- 26 March 2025 - [Faith and Funding Conference](#), Central London.
- February & March - Data Developments hold training courses for church treasurers and fundraisers. [Visit the Data Developments website for details](#).
- **Save the dates**
Money Matters training days for all Friday, 23 May (in Wells archdeaconry), Monday, 15 September (in Bath archdeaconry) and Tuesday, 14 October (in Taunton Archdeaconry).



Reminders

- Parish Finance returns - accounts need to be signed off by APCMs and submitted to the diocesan Finance team within 28 days of the meeting. Should you have any questions or need support, please [email tricia.lumley@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:tricia.lumley@bathwells.anglican.org) who would be happy to help you.
- Common Fund request responses - thank you to all those who returned their responses by the end of December. We are eagerly awaiting the final 40% of responses to help us budget for the year ahead.
If you have not received the letter, which was sent to parish and benefice contacts in October, are yet to discuss with your PCC, or need any guidance in completing the form, please [email benefice-share@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:benefice-share@bathwells.anglican.org)
- Don't forget that the diocesan Finance and Giving and Funding Teams are available to attend Benefice and Deanery events. Please contact us if this would be of interest.
- Make the most of Gift Aid on all donations - Information on how to make a Gift Aid reclaim, or take advantage of the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (GASDS) where declarations may not have been received, may be found in our Gift Aid Guide, which can be downloaded from [the Gift Aid Page of the diocesan website](#). Further guidance can be found on the [Parish Resources website](#) and [HMRC Gift Aid webpages](#).



Coming together to raise much needed funds

After nearly ten years the Willis Monument, an 18th-century Grade II* listed structure in the churchyard of St. Edward's Church, Goathurst, has been restored. The project, which overcame numerous hurdles, reflects the dedication and teamwork of St



St John's Ambulance benefit from church fundraising efforts

At a recent service at All Saints with St Saviours in Weston-super-Mare, volunteers from the North Somerset Network of St John Ambulance were given a cheque for £1,600 by the Revd Brendan Clover. The donation came as a result of money was



A planned approach to funding mission at Crech St Michael

One of the primary goals of the Benefice of Crech St Michael is ensuring that their finances support the mission that God is calling them into.

Rector Lee Mullen says, "It's not just about maintaining the church but about ministering to the community with love and grace. Our mission is

Edward's church and community.

When concerns were raised about the monument's deteriorating condition a campaign to raise funds was started. Despite setbacks, from grant rejections to unexpected repairs for the church bells and roof, the Parish Church Council (PCC) and their supporters persevered. The team applied for local and national grant funding, sought advice and help locally where they could and worked closely with their local community to take part in fundraising events, such as the Heritage Open Days, which attracted hundreds of visitors and helped raise much needed funds.

Churchwarden Brenda Smith, says, "Nothing is too hard or impossible if it is in keeping with God's will and for His glory. Suddenly, 'doors' open, people are willing to help, and everything falls into place." [Read more about restoration journey.](#)

raised at the church's annual Christmas carol service, All Saints Annual Carols by Candlelight.

Brendan, who is also the county chaplain for St John Ambulance Avon, led the effort to coordinate the service and the generous donation, in collaboration with the town mayor and council.

St John Ambulance, a leading first aid charity in the UK, provides essential first aid services, health and safety education, and community resilience support. Its volunteers play a vital role by offering first aid in their communities, ensuring safety at public events, and assisting the NHS by responding to 999 calls.

to serve without counting the cost, though we must also be realistic about financial responsibilities."

After a visit from Natalie Wainwright, Giving and Funding Adviser, they managed to introduce new contactless devices into their church in time for Christmas.

Lee says, "Previously, we had smaller machines, but they were slow and inconvenient, leading to reluctance from donors. The new machines, which allow a simple tap donation, have been much more effective, particularly at large gatherings such as weddings and baptisms. We are also exploring other methods, such as QR codes for service sheets, to make giving easier."

[Read more about Creech St Michael's planned approach to giving](#)

Share your stories

Don't forget to share your success stories with the Giving and Funding team, we'd love to hear from you. [Email us at: givingteam@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:givingteam@bathwells.anglican.org)

Contact us

Finance team

Parochial Fee queries and Return of Fee Income forms: [email: fees@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:fees@bathwells.anglican.org)

PCC Year-end accounts statements: [email: pccaccounts@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:pccaccounts@bathwells.anglican.org)

National Church Returns (Finance Returns / Statistics for Mission / Energy Footprint): [email:returns@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:returns@bathwells.anglican.org)

Parish Share queries: Email: parishshare@bathwells.anglican.org

Giving and Funding team

[Email: givingteam@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:givingteam@bathwells.anglican.org)

Natalie Wainwright, Lead Giving and Funding Adviser. Email: Natalie.Wainwright@bathwells.anglican.org

Jonathan Philpott, Local Giving Adviser (Taunton and Wells archdeaconries). Email: Jonathan.Philpott@bathwells.anglican.org

Kate Mayo, Local Giving Adviser (Bath Archdeaconry). Email: Kate.Mayo@bathwells.anglican.org

Book a time slot to talk to the Giving and Funding team

The Giving and Funding team can provide support to parishes to maximise and diversify their income through the adoption of generous giving tools and resources, campaigns that enable wider community engagement and applications to grant making bodies. [Click to book an initial 30-minute conversation with a member of the Giving and Funding team.](#)

Useful links

- Join our new [Money Matters' Facebook Group](#) to connect with other church volunteers engaged in Church Finance and Fundraising.
- Diocesan website - [Treasurers' section](#)
- Diocesan website - [Christian Giving and Funding pages](#)
- [Parish Resources](#)
- www.acat.uk.com

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