

The suspension of public worship, whilst being a very necessary step for our country, has brought a lot of new challenges, not the least of which are financial. Here is some of the advice and support available to you and your churches as you grapple with the financial impact of Coronavirus:

Support to Parishes in Financial Distress:

We are aware that there will be many churches who experience financial distress due to the impact of Coronavirus. You may be worried about a number of income streams that are particularly vulnerable during this season (plate offerings, envelope giving, fundraising and hall rents). We recognise that without them you may worry about your ability to balance your books and fulfil your financial commitments. Above all else we would like to reassure and ask you not to panic as we all rely on God's grace.

Please be assured that we are here to support you as you face whatever may come. If you are concerned about finances then one of the Generous Giving Team is available to talk this through and will help you to explore what solutions or other advice might be available. You do not have to face these challenges alone, so if you're worried then give the Generous Giving Team a call (see phone numbers below).

Financial Decision-making:

If your parish has reserves then don't be afraid to use them in the coming months: this is precisely the kind of situation that reserves are kept for. Be careful, but not fearful, about using them. When this pandemic passes we can support you to rebuild your reserves again.

You may feel concerned and tempted to make quick decisions about your spending, but this can lead to some unwise choices. Take some time to consider your options and see what support (including from the government) might be available. You can call us to talk some of these things through.

Parish Contribution 2020 Payments:

Whilst we appreciate parishes will be facing difficult choices over their financial resources, our Diocesan finances are also likely to be significantly impacted. We have many responsibilities, including paying stipends and salaries, that we need to honour. Making large drops in Parish Contribution may seem like the easy solution to parish financial problems, but the diocese simply doesn't have the ability to cover large defaults in payment. **Therefore we are asking parishes, as far as is possible, to pay the amount they offered for 2020.** If you feel this is problematic please contact the Generous Giving team as soon as you can.

Parish Contribution 2021 Offers:

A couple of weeks ago you will have received information to assist you in making your 2021 offers, the deadline of which was set to be the end of June. Due to the unknown financial impact of Coronavirus we are halting this process and would ask that you **do not** decide your offers at this time. We will let you know when the rescheduled deadline is so that you can organise a PCC meeting to make your decision.

Help from the Government

You will probably have seen news about the ways in which the Government is offering help for charities and employers. Details are emerging, but if you want to know more, please email John.orrige@leccofe.org

Resources to Secure giving

There is a template email available on the website for you to use to help secure your regular giving during this time. This is primarily aimed at inviting those who give regularly to your church through the envelope scheme, and via cash on the plate, to transfer their giving to the Parish Giving Scheme, if you are registered, or to a standing order. Please do call or email one of the Generous Giving Team so that we can discuss how you might use this resource best in your context, and how to navigate any sensitivities or GDPR considerations.

For more information or for support regarding any of the above please contact:

Sally Bossingham	sally.bossingham@leccofe.org	07950 428829
Hannah Silcock	Hannah.silcock@leccofe.org	07539 808988
Philip Leech	Philip.leech@leccofe.org	07535 144416

Additionally there is some national financial guidance available [here](#): this is being updated as the situation develops.