

The big picture

Whether a parish is rich or poor the contributions made by each parish to the Common Fund are shared out to all parishes so that a witness to Christ's presence is assured in every community across our Diocese.

The Common Fund encourages us to see ourselves as part of the 'big picture' of the Body of Christ, giving generously and sacrificially to the mission of God both locally in our own parishes and further afield across our Diocese.

Making our contribution to the Common Fund might seem mundane, a financial transaction between us and the Parish Support Office at Church House in Derby.

However, the **Apostle Paul considered the support provided by individuals and churches in theological terms.**

In providing support to the church in Corinth Stephanas is **'devoted ... to the service of the saints'** (1 Cor. 16.15) while the support provided by the church in Philippi is **'a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God'** (Phil. 4.18).

Our contribution to the Common Fund can be as much a part of our worship of God as our regular Sunday services.

Through the Common Fund we are joining with individuals such as Phoebe, Gaius, Epaphroditus, Onesiphorus, Prisca and Aquila, Stephanas, and Philemon and with churches such as those in Macedonia and in Philippi in serving the people of God and in worshipping God.

Our Common Fund prayer



God our Father, make us to think more of what we can give to life and less of what we can get out of it. May we be mindful that we hold our gifts, our talents, our possessions, our life itself, in trust for you and the service of all people. Save us from thinking only of our own needs and desires; and help us to remember that it is more blessed to give than receive, according to the teaching of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

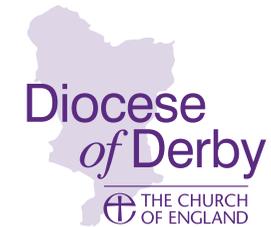
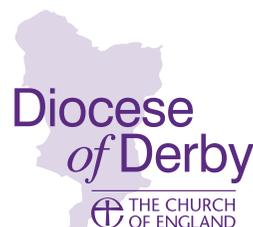
Information & resources

We have a wide range of resources to help parishes review planned giving. For more information, please contact the Archdeacons or the Parish Support Office.

Contact

Email: enquiries@derby.anglican.org
Telephone: 01332 388650

Christ's presence in every community
Growing • Outward Facing • Learning • Healthy



Living generously

"Delivering a witness to Christ's presence in every Parish through the Common Fund."



The Common Fund:
A theological reflection

Living generously

The Common Fund provides the resources which enable a witness to Christ's presence in every community - through our churches, our schools, our ministries, and our service and outreach into the community. **Our commitment to contribute to the Common Fund binds us together** in a generous way of living for the sake of others, locally, across the Diocese and beyond.

Everyone gives, everyone receives

When we contribute to the Common Fund we are contributing to the costs of mission and ministry across the whole Diocese - everyone gives and everyone receives.

It's about every parish seeing itself as part of the wider picture, giving generously to the mission of the church both locally and further afield. Wherever you live or worship, you help fund places where people contribute in amazing ways, but do not necessarily have the the level of financial resources.

Living generously: a theological reflection

Apostle Paul on Generosity

In his letters the **Apostle Paul names individuals who, through their generosity and hospitality, have supported his missionary activities.**

These individuals have also supported their local churches, enabling them to be a witness to Christ's presence in their communities. Additionally, the Apostle Paul also received support from a number of churches.

Each year every parish is invited to make a contribution to the Common Fund and every parish receives from the Common Fund. The most obvious form in which a parish receives from the Common Fund is the stipendiary clergy. Additionally, every parish receives support offered by the Diocesan Officers and the training and development opportunities available for lay and ordained leaders.

It is clear that the Apostle Paul expected churches to provide material support not only to those like him engaged in missionary activities (1 Cor. 9.1-14; 2 Thess. 3.9) but also to their leaders (1 Tim. 5.17). This expectation reflected Jesus' statement to the disciples he sent ahead of him: they deserved their wages (Matt. 10.10 // Lk. 10.7) and so, without their own money, they were to accept the hospitality offered them as they travelled from village to village.

Rich or poor: partners

The amount that each parish is invited to contribute to the Common Fund reflects the relative affluence or poverty of the parish. The intent is not to burden parishes; **it is to ensure that regardless of whether a parish is rich or poor there can be a witness to Christ's presence in that community.** More affluent parishes can be partners with poorer parishes in their witness to Christ's presence.

The support provided to the Apostle Paul allowed him to undertake missionary activities in other places.

The support provided by the churches in Macedonia allowed him to work in Corinth (2 Cor. 11.7-8); that provided by the church in Philippi allowed him to work in Thessalonica (Phil. 4.16).

In the case of Corinth, the support provided by the churches in Macedonia meant that the Apostle Paul was not a burden on the church in Corinth, something he appears to have been keen to avoid not only in Corinth (2 Cor. 11.9; 2 Cor. 12.14) but also in Thessalonica (1 Thess. 1.9; 2 Thess. 3.8).

Ironically, the church in Corinth was more affluent than the churches in Macedonia (2 Cor. 8.1-2), and yet the churches in Macedonia were eager to support the Apostle Paul in Corinth.

