

Writing a stewardship letter (making the case for support)

Below is an example of a letter to church members about regular giving. It does help if you don't have to start with a blank page, and I hope this will give you some ideas.

However, that said, I would always encourage you to **write from the heart**, as the power of your appeal will be in its authenticity and relatability. Write as though you are telling a friend. You might take inspiration from St Paul – the original letter-writer!

Follow this structure, adding in real examples that help tell the story:

1. What is the problem that we have identified? How did it come about?
2. What is our proposed solution? What are we aiming for?
3. What other funding is available to us – all and any ideas also invited!
4. How you can help – next steps.
5. Easy ways to give – supply the printed gift form, a QR code, telephone number etc. Giving is often an emotional response, and it must be as easy as possible.

I have drafted this letter, but it is just for illustration purposes!

Example letter

Dear friend,

For many years now All Saints PCC has prided itself on paying our parish share contribution in full. To do so we have been reliant on collections and our popular community fundraising events. The famous summer fair pays the church insurance – which you might be shocked to know is £X,XXX alone!

During the pandemic, when the church was closed and events were put on hold, we realised how vulnerable this made us. With none of us is getting younger, we are also worried about being so dependent on events, which take a huge amount of time and energy and can be scuppered by bad weather.

You will know, that there has been a number of church building repair and maintenance projects, and we are incredibly grateful to NAME for his hard work in securing grants – but these are restricted and cannot be used to help meet ministry costs or heating and insurance.

At the end of last year, we asked our treasurer NAME, to look into our financial situation in more detail, to help us understand where the risks were, and what income we could count on. **It does make difficult reading.**

The bottom line is that as a church we are not currently raising enough to meet our regular monthly outgoings and ministry costs.

However, there is hope! As the PCC, we feel confident that if we all make some small changes, reviewing our current giving, we will soon be back in a healthy financial position. We are asking all in the church to consider this request for help, and prayerfully consider how you could respond.

How can you help?

We are grateful to everyone who gives a regular donation through standing order or weekly envelopes. It is these donations that give us the security to plan ahead, safe in the knowledge that the funds will be there.

We are now looking to increase our regular giving, to raise at least 75% of our ministry costs from planned giving. This means increasing from £5,500 to £9,750 a year – an increase of £82 a week. (Not each! Altogether.)

1. We ask everyone who is giving regularly by Standing Order or weekly envelope, to please consider moving your giving to the Parish Giving Scheme. A form will be included with this letter. Please review the amount you give, and opt in for the annual increase if you feel able. Any increase is appreciated. Thank you.
2. If you are not currently giving regularly, please consider setting up a monthly donation via the Parish Giving Scheme. This can be done online, by phone or using the Gift Form attached. Thank you.

PGS is free to use, and 100% of your donation comes straight back to St George's, with the Gift Aid claimed on our behalf. This improves cash flow, and makes the life of the treasurer much easier!

We ask you to opt-in for the annual inflationary increase if you feel able. This helps your donation maintains its value year-on-year, and might prevent us from finding ourselves in deficit in the future.

Please be assured, that you will get a reminder before the increase – which you can choose to opt out. The PGS team is based in the Gloucester Diocese, and it is easy to pick up the phone to talk to them about your giving. Thank you.

All members of the PCC are available to answer questions about our Stewardship Appeal and to explain our financial position.

If you would like to discuss your own giving, in confidence, please contact NAME OF TREASURER. If you have ideas for fundraising, please contact NAME (eg of Churchwarden).

Thank you. (Signed by Treasurer or Churchwarden, or co-signed with the vicar).