

Giving in Grace and Everton Football Club

In a few months *St N.* will be involved in a programme called Giving in Grace, which is all about our giving: what our giving is for, why we give, and how we can give to God's work in this church.

The collection plate isn't in our churches simply to pay the vicar or the gas bill! For committed church members our giving expresses our thanks to God for all he blesses us with. For our congregation it is also important that our giving enables our church to minister to our community and to help those in need. For many people giving is important to maintain this building here in our community.

People do sometimes think that giving is about fundraising- well it isn't. Christians believe in a loving and generous God who gives all we need, we are called to be part of this loving and generosity. Even if the church had lots of money Christians would still need to give - the fun would be deciding what to do and who to help. There are always people who need our help.

We never count the cost of giving when we really love someone - giving is an expression of that love which leads us onto football!

There is a true story of an Everton supporter who gave his cup final ticket to his daughter although he realised it meant that he would be standing outside the ground listening to Manchester United get beaten one nil by Everton. He loved his daughter even more than his football club!

The act of grace in this story continues because after he said goodbye to his daughter he waited patiently outside Wembley and asked everyone he met if they had a ticket. Eventually someone had a spare ticket and he saw the match. Giving in grace and love helps us to receive in grace and love too not that tickets are guaranteed of course!

Acts of grace are all around us when we give ourselves opportunity to receive. Open your hands to give and they will be free to receive.