



Communication Writing to the Core

Introduction

In the differentiated database the Core is functionally defined as those people who are in positions of leadership within the church. Shared Ministry Team members, home group leaders and other key people in the ministry of the church will usually be strong contenders to be included in the core. Make sure that you can justify on functional grounds why someone should receive a Core letter. It is *never* based on how much they give.

While the definition of leadership will vary from church to church it should always include the PCC who must take a lead in this area of finance as in all other areas. Sadly not every PCC member is a committed and regular planned giver but it is right and proper that the PCC should be both treated and challenged as leaders to take a lead in reviewing giving. Nor, of course, is it true that all committed, generous givers who review their giving are part of the church leadership.

The key characteristics of the Core

- They will be or have been in positions of authority and leadership in their local church.
- They will be involved in many church ministries or have been so in the past.
- They will have a passion for either the church or the gospel and often both.
- They will usually be longstanding members of the church or have moved from another church.
- They identify themselves very much as Christians and church members.

The key financial characteristics of the Core

In financial terms we can observe the following:

- Some core givers will be very generous, some will be giving sacrificially.
- Many will be influenced by biblical teaching about giving leading some to tithe their income and more.
- Most will review their giving regularly. This will not always happen automatically but they will be responsive to a request to do so.
- Most will be open to giving by standing order and where appropriate will Gift Aid their giving.
- Their financial giving will be matched by their willingness to give their time and talents.
- Some members will not match their commitment in time and talents with an equivalent financial commitment

The key message to the Core

The key giving challenge is to invite core givers to move to proportionate giving. The invitation is not just to review the amount they give but also to renew *the basis on which they give*. Proportionality, of course, lies behind the Biblical teaching about the tithe, giving 10% of earnings whether net or gross. While affirming its biblical roots Giving in Grace does not recommend or insist upon tithing but a commitment to meaningful, proportionate giving as one indicator of mature financial stewardship.

The majority of core givers will have high levels of investment of time, talents and treasure in the life and ministry of the local church. They are not passive givers but heavily identified with and involved in the vision and direction of the church. Invest time with the Core; they are key stakeholders so don't just write to them - visit them. The preparation of the Parish Case Statement enables a constructive process of consultation, sharing and casting a vision for the church with the core leadership.

Some Considerations

- Make sure that you can justify on functional grounds why someone should receive a Core letter. It is never based on how much they give.
- The key giving challenge is to invite core givers to move to proportionate giving. The invitation is not just to review the amount they give but also to renew the basis on which they give.
- Core givers have a sense of sharing in the work of God in the parish and are passionate about “their” church; they are not passive givers.
- The Core letter should be the culmination of a process of PCC discussion, personal conversation and genuine consultation around the case statement. It should not come as a surprise to them!

