



Annual Review

Areas of ministry

Why give?

One of the harsh truths around money in church or charity is that no one is interested in funding your past. Some will be interested in preserving your past as parishes with beautiful or historic buildings will readily be aware. Such support is often generous towards the building but more limited when it comes to day to day running costs. Very few are interested in funding your present either. A passive acceptance that the church is worthy of some support means that people will tip you but they will not give. And this motivation is most strongly found in an ageing donor base.

What motivates people to support you is your vision of the future, the belief that you are making a difference. What motivates the biggest givers is the sense that they are sharing in and forwarding the work of God in the church. People's giving is about change, about making a difference.

Money talks and the numbers do not lie! Money speaks loud and clear about the priorities of the church. What we plan and do with money will speak of our past, our present or our future. To add inflation to what we have always done will not inspire a review or a renewal of giving, still less sacrificial giving.

Seven areas of ministry

Seven broad areas of parish ministry are suggested as the basis for considering ministry goals. These areas offer a simple framework for discussion. These seven areas are essentially descriptive of church activities under fairly

traditional headings. While they reflect core areas of activity they are neither radical nor prescriptive. The seven areas are a starting point for consideration and churches may well wish to substitute their own framework. The point is to reflect upon areas of ministry seeking opportunities for development or areas that need review and attention. Be careful not to overload or overstate what the church can achieve or resource financially. Some of the items mentioned will not require significant financial input.

- **Pastoral Care:** resources for a bereavement group, training for Eucharistic ministers, worship in nursing homes, developing listening skills, child protection etc.
- **Administration:** new IT equipment, secretarial support, office resources etc.
- **Mission:** evangelistic materials, training, Alpha courses, baptismal preparation etc.
- **Community:** aspects of ministry focused around the needs of the local community and further afield.
- **Christian formation:** house group leader training, purchase of small group resources, local ministry team development etc.
- **Worship:** the provision of training and resources for the choir and/or music group; replacement of instruments all age worship, service sheets, hymn books, screen and LCD equipment.
- **Buildings:** distinguish between a budget for routine maintenance and specific larger scale works. Also between repairs and improvements



or re-ordering. Note that large scale repairs or improvements will fall beyond the scope of a revenue budget. It may require a capital fund raising project which would be presented to the congregation separately.

Making time

By its very nature as a wide ranging goal setting exercise this is the most flexible and open ended activity in preparing the Annual Review Document. Clergy should come to the meeting ready to discuss and identify ministry goals and prepared to own those things which are identified. The discussions can be very creative, touching on a wide range of issues and of course some of the ideas generated will not require significant financial input. Beware of overestimating what the church can achieve or resource within a twelve month timeframe.

Some review questions

- Are there areas of ministry where we have made clear progress towards our goals, but need to develop further?
- Are there areas of ministry where we are clearly failing or struggling to see growth or movement?
- Are there areas of ministry where we could stimulate growth by spending more?
- What is the current state and trend around parish reserves? Do we need to build them up or spend some? Is there a realistic reserves policy or are we just saving up for the “rainy day”?
- Do our church organisations have sufficient funding and provision for training for them to be effective and feel valued as part of the church’s ministry?

- Are we investing in the training of the existing and future leadership of the church?
- Are there arrears of the Parish Share which need to be addressed? Is there a commitment to play a full part in supporting the cost of parish ministry in the diocese?
- Is sufficient provision being made for supporting ministry and mission beyond the local church, in this country and overseas?

The priorities agreed and identified in the discussions should be recorded in Section 1 of the Annual Review Document. Wherever possible, long term goals should always be broken down into smaller steps that are achievable within the twelve month timeframe.

Recording the expenditure

The seven areas of ministry and the questions above are designed to stimulate creative discussion around resourcing ministry and mission in the church. The next step is to put an estimated cost to that ministry so that it can be a) communicated and commended to the church membership and b) provide the basis for management and monitoring by the treasurer.

For the treasurer

The Excel spreadsheet [The Review Plan](#) provides a simple framework for recording the expenditure on these areas of ministry alongside the core ministry costs of the church such as parish share, utility or insurance costs. Additional guidance, should it be required, is available for treasurers completing the parish plan at the web page [The Annual Review Document: the parish plan](#)

