

✖ CASE STUDY ✖

An example of the positive response came when in their 'Gift Array', they stated that they needed an extra £192 each week (post Gift Aid), and they had promises from 70 families and individuals totalling £192 per week exactly, plus some one-off donations. "This we believe to be a manifestation of God's grace working through many people," said John.

"This amounted to an increase in planned giving of just under 20% (but there will likely be a small drop in 'on the plate' giving). Our Gift

Aid recovery percentage of planned giving was already about 21%, around maximum, given that some people do not pay tax."

"We are now able pay, from income, our parish share which we had increased deliberately without being

able to pay for it, in an act of faith. But we are now also able to pursue our Vision, much of which does not require a great deal of expenditure. We have money to spend on training, and more on work with children and young people.

"The Giving in Grace programme has worked the best for us in over 20 years of stewardship initiatives. The rigour, the comprehensive nature, the accessibility on the website and the insight through prayer, making a case study, putting together a brochure, and differentiation were all most powerful."

John added, "We set off seeking a shift in culture; and giving time, talents and money a much higher profile in our church. One goal is to set up an annual 'rhythm' of thanksgiving and review – making it more of a 'way of life' for the church. We are still not there yet, but we are planning how we continue, and follow up. We may decide to revisit some things we did not use in Giving in Grace the first time."



St Philip's Church Kelsall

Location:

growing rural village
– mixture of old and new families

Congregation:

80

Started

Giving in Grace:
March 2012

Giving in Grace has
become an
important tool in
our church vision
up to 2020

St Philip's Church, Kelsall, used Giving in Grace as part of their wider vision for their church community and in planning for the future.

John Diggle, Giving in Grace Co-ordinator said: "In 2011 we put in place Vision 2020 – a vision for what we want our church to be like by 2020. One of the outcomes of putting this in place was the need for resource - of money, time and talent, and Giving in Grace, which we incorporated into our own vision, provided the tools to help us communicate that message."

...some people admitted that they had never thought about the impact that their giving could have but would take steps to redress that.

St Philip's incorporated the Giving in Grace principles that suited them most into their Vision 20/20 agenda – and so into every aspect of church life. They produced a written case statement which was agreed by the PCC and which formed the basis for powerpoint presentations for use in church, which shared the wider 'Vision 2020' and detailed the first priorities to help achieve it. They also produced prayer cards, one set asking the congregation to pray for the work of the Stewardship group, another focussed on the wider vision, with new cards focussing on a different aspect every six weeks.

Clergy and readers also began a preaching series on the theme of giving. The church also set up a significant



'Time and Talents' aspect, asking everyone to prayerfully review the time and skills they gave to the church, and make a pledge either carry on, volunteer, or swap their role for something new.

"A big turning point was also making people aware that we had a £10,000 shortfall in our budget, which we did through a presentation in church," said John. "Most people said that they had had no idea about it. This, combined with all of the other work, really seemed to bring home the connection between being church and giving, and some people admitted that they had never thought about the impact that their giving could have but would take steps to redress that."

St Philips also found that the opportunities for differentiation between groups was a key to its success. "Differentiation was perhaps the most powerful principle for us," said John. "Everyone needs to be approached individually, according to who they are and where they are in their relationship with St Philip's. One example of the way in which we did this was to send a letter signed by the vicar, which was personalised reflecting the connection such as 'regular worshipper', 'regular giver', 'recipient of the parish magazine', 'member of the walking group', 'parent of a child baptised'. This action also allowed for the assembling of a database for future use."

John added, "Giving in Grace differs from a general fundraising drive in that it is rigorous from beginning to end – something which encouraged us to have the same attitude. We also used the Gift Array for the first time and put a strong focus on prayer."

Everyone needs to be approached individually, according to who they are and where they are in their relationship with St Philip's.