

### A handout for home visitors

Thank you for being willing to visit members of our congregation as part of Giving in Grace initiative at our church. Your role is important and you will also find it to be a very enjoyable experience. Remember, you are not calling to beg or plead for support for the church; you are there to invite people to think on and respond to its ministry and mission.



The people that you are visiting are members of the church or good friends even if they do not attend. So this is not a cold visit or a hard sell. If you get questions you cannot answer, no worries. It is fine to say that you will get back to people – providing you do that! Anyway, the most important thing is not answers but you, your openness, your commitment to our church, and its mission in this parish.

#### Why are we visiting?

- We are the family of God, so relationships matter and we are looking together at our response to God's love and generosity to us
- Visiting shows respect for the giver and also demonstrates how much the church and its ministry matters to us as visitors
- People may want to ask questions. There are myths around money as well as anxiety, and people are often unsure about what they can and should do. So visiting helps both reassure and inform.

#### To encourage you as a visitor

- You are visiting members of your church family and they are expecting someone to call
- This is the Lord's work and your pastoral gifts are important and valued in this service
- You will be supported by prayer and you should ask another member of the congregation to pray for you and those you visit
- You will be asked to visit no more than 4-5 people
- You may like to visit in a pair with a friend.

#### Before you call: practical

The literature must be distributed. It may be by post or from the back of church but you may be asked to hand deliver to those on your visiting list. Experience shows that the more personal you can make things, the better it is. Therefore it is best to hand deliver but, if you can't, then leave it at the back of church and, if you can't, then post it. Beyond this:

- Make sure you know the name and the context of the person you are visiting – for example, are they on the electoral roll or a member of the Sunday evening congregation?
- Ring, call, email or Facebook email to arrange the date and time of your visit.
- Plan for around 30 minutes per visit and time in between. Don't rush things or make too many appointments, say, in one afternoon.
- Familiarise yourself with the case statement and other material in the visiting packs.

#### Before you call: personal

- Pray, for those you are visiting, and for God's help and guidance for you
- Make your own giving response first. You can only ask others to do what you have done yourself and you can't speak with conviction about something you have not done yourself



- Be ready and willing, if you are invited, to share your own giving journey and why this Giving in Grace initiative matters to you.

### At the house

- Introduce yourself and explain why you are calling
- Accept an invitation in – assuming you feel safe – and any hospitality offered. Relationships are important here. You probably know the people you are visiting at least by sight
- Explain you are there to discuss the Giving in Grace literature. You are not asking for money, wanting to know what they give but you will try to answer questions. Assure confidentiality.
- Ask what they think of the literature and the issues the church is trying to address. Listen attentively and try to respond to any issues and explain any misconceptions. Give people space if they need it. Don't try to fill any silence with conversation if they are thinking or reading.
- Speak to the response forms, pointing out that it offers advice on giving and also on ways in which people can give. You may need to show some of the supporting literature e.g. a Gift Aid brochure.
- **Make a clear ask.** Be clear that you want the person visited to (i) read the literature; (ii) consider their response and then (iii) make a response, returning the response form before the Thanksgiving Sunday. Don't leave the house without making that very clear invitation to act.

### After the visit

- Be prepared to call back if they (or their wider household) want to discuss it more with you or need your help in returning the response form
- Act on any promises or follow-up commitments that you have made
- Respect the confidentiality of the conversation
- Pass on any pastoral problems to the clergy – of course only if you have the person's permission
- Pray for those who have visited
- Let the visiting coordinator know you have completed your visits, or any visits not being undertaken e.g. people on holiday, in hospital, or refusals.

### Don't do this!

- Visit at times when people's attention is elsewhere e.g. when soaps, Everton football club, rugby league or X Factor is on TV
- Try to carry out the visit at the back of church
- Get involved in arguments or feel you have to defend the church
- NEVER accept monetary donations
- NEVER give advice about what you think they ought to do
- Pretend to know the answers to questions when you don't – say you'll find out and get back to them, and do!

