

# **DIOCESE OF WINCHESTER GIVING STRATEGY: 2022-2025**



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**WINCHESTER**

# Diocese of Winchester Giving Strategy: 2022-2025

## I. Principles of Generosity

### A. A Biblical Truth

The central truth of Christian giving and generosity is that it is based upon our relationship with God, and our understanding of his generosity towards us. Generosity can take many forms, and is exemplified throughout the Bible; with Jesus speaking about money and possessions frequently:

<sup>41</sup> Many rich people threw in large amounts. <sup>42</sup> But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents. <sup>43</sup> Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, “Truly I tell you; this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. <sup>44</sup> They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.”

*Mark 12*

God looks to our hearts, to what we have given up and to what we have held on to. Enabling giving in our lives requires disciplining and developing a spirit of generosity, where we freely give of ourselves and what we have.

A model for developing our own Christian giving is the “Six Steps”:



Generosity is a journey. In encouraging self-reflection, each of us can review our own attitudes, motivations, and commitment to giving to God and our Church; continuing to develop our personal understanding of why and how we give.

Whilst we want to highlight that generosity is not solely focused on financial giving, this strategy looks to increasing our capacity and effectiveness in resourcing this area of ministry within our diocese.

## B. Enabling Mission and Ministry

Giving is first an individual response to our generous God. The “Six Steps of Christian Giving” speaks into the role that different motivations have in our Christian giving at different points in our own lives. Part of the motivations for giving should be directly linked into what the practical process of giving financially enables our parishes to do.

Attitudes to giving money across our diocese differ drastically, with many of our clergy reluctant or unable to relate the importance of giving financially to both personal discipleship and the need and impact giving has on our parish’s outputs – their ability to serve their communities and congregations. Many may see money as a “means to an end” to pay utilities or the Common Mission Fund, but the principle of giving sacrificially to support how we enact Christian fellowship and to reflect the person of Jesus is integral.

The aim of this strategy is to enable us to grow as individuals, parishes, and a diocese, in an understanding of the generosity of the God who loves us, to enable us to increasingly show our generosity in response to this. In building on this, this strategy also serves to highlight and emphasise the importance that Christian giving plays in enabling our mission and ministry across the diocese.

## II. Context

### A. Diocesan Context

The Diocese of Winchester’s vision is split into four strategic priorities. The overarching strategy to deliver this vision seeks to achieve *sustainable growth for the common good* through various frameworks and projects.

This Giving Strategy looks to enable two of the four strategic priorities:

1. We grow authentic disciples, going out as individuals passionately, confidently, and courageously sharing their faith, and coming together as creative church communities of prayer and worship that live out Kingdom values.
4. We belong together in Christ, practicing sacrificial living and good stewardship of all that God has entrusted to us. We will combine radical generosity, care, and capacity building with a clear focus on directing finance into the mission of Jesus. Sharing and multiplying local good practice, using people, buildings, and other resources wisely, we will seek to boldly prune, plant, and invest in building for the Kingdom.

Through our giving and generosity, we as Christians look to develop our understanding of what is to walk closer with God. Our journey of discipleship is bound by our journey to develop our personal understanding of what it is to give, both financially and practically of ourselves.

This Giving and Stewardship Team will use the Diocesan Vision as a foundation. For the Giving Strategy to be successful, it looks to attune itself to the common characteristics of the diocese, striving for a shared goal of unity, mutual accountability and the common good.

The Common Mission Fund is the embodiment of financial and spiritual generosity within our diocesan context. This Giving Strategy aims to develop better practice and personal understanding of generosity and giving, for the overarching financial picture of our diocese to be improved, via an improved image and return of the Common Mission Fund.

## 1. National Financial Pressures

This strategy is being written at a time when the cost of living is of real concern across our nation. This, in turn, will affect our current and prospective givers, and our churches. The pressure on household and charity finances will be great.

As a diocese we need to be very aware of this context. Giving may suffer, as individuals wrestle with what to do with less “disposable” income. The diocese may then see a knock-on effect, of parishes being unable to commit to consistent levels of Common Mission Fund payments.

Although this context is sharp, we as a Stewardship Team are committed to supporting parishes with giving practice and resources. We need to impart sensitivity around this topic, but not shy away from the importance of personal generosity and giving. Our churches will need the continued backing of givers to be able to continue support congregations and communities, and to continue ministry and mission.

## 2. The Tension in Developing a Generous Diocesan Culture

The culture of generosity at diocesan level is held in tension between the importance of upholding financial prudence and good management, versus existing within a culture of faith-based generosity; mirroring the relationship between these two aspects found within parish life.

Trustees, directors and staff that work for the diocese through its role as functional and administrative organisation, as well as charitable enterprise, have a responsibility to ensure that ‘the books are balanced’ and that there is evidence of fiscal growth in order to both achieve the charitable aims it sets out, as well as to sustain.

In a consistently difficult financial context, the challenge to the diocese remains how much importance is found in upholding a culture of faith-based generosity and attitude relating to the outputs of our financial management. This tension could be summarised as a balance between looking at the financial implications through the lens of ‘Faith’ or a lens of ‘Risk’, or more appropriately, considering both lenses in relationship to one another more often.

## B. National Giving Context

A five-year National Giving Strategy was developed in 2019. This Strategy presents its own context as such:

- Overall giving has however fallen behind inflation, and for The Church of England to meet its aspirations for ministry and mission, then the voluntary income of parishes needs to rise in real terms. Increasing regular giving is by far the most cost-effective way to do this, and the most likely to succeed.
- Increasing giving is achieved through parishes adopting good practice. Improving the adoption of good practice, which has been shown to increase giving significantly in many churches, is more efficient, effective, and economical than developing new income streams.
- To develop a generous culture, this partly involves encouraging giving to the church (giving practice) but it is much bigger and is fundamentally an issue of discipleship, how living a generous life is integral to the living out of our faith.

The National Giving Strategy looks to tackle these challenges by accomplishing the following objectives:

- Improve the quantity and quality of Giving Advisors support for churches
- Embed contactless giving within 50% of parishes
- Improve support, guidance and training for clergy, parishes, and dioceses.

In using the foundation of the National Giving Strategy, the Diocese of Winchester's Giving and Stewardship team will develop a series of aims and objectives to drill down into the specific challenges we face in our diocese, in order to be as effective as possible in supporting and resourcing our individuals, parishes and communities.

To start this process, in March 2021, the Diocese of Winchester hired a Generous Giving Promoter to join the Diocesan Stewardship Advisor in supporting our parishes in their giving and generosity practice. This role is partly funded by money made available in direct response to the National Giving Strategy, via the Giving Advisor Fund.

### III. Giving and Generosity Background

Data available enables us to understand the current state of giving and generosity within the Church of England, and more specifically, the Diocese of Winchester.

#### A. The National Picture

The Anglican Giving Survey, which was conducted by nfpSunergy in 2020 forms an important aspect of the National Giving Strategy, and resulted in the following key findings:

1. A third of Anglicans do not give to their Church.
2. 40% of Anglicans have never been asked to give regularly.
3. Nearly half of Anglicans have never been asked to review their giving.
4. Only half of Anglicans have heard a sermon on giving in the past 12 months & 60% said it didn't change their thinking on giving if they had.
5. The most popular reason to give to their Church was to help keep the building maintained.
6. Twice as many Anglicans have been asked to give by collection envelope (60%) compared to direct debit (31%).
7. Anglicans are three times as likely to leave a legacy to charity than they are to church.
8. Only 27% of Anglicans view their church's need as 'very important'.
9. 49% feel they would be motivated to give more if they understood the impact of their giving.
10. Less than a third of Anglicans say they are regularly thanked for their giving.

These findings are striking and can help us understand where opportunities lie in improving our practices and implementation.

## B. The Diocesan Picture

### 1. Generous June

In 2020, the Stewardship Team introduced a diocesan wide initiative that sought to engage individuals and parishes with the theme of generosity, in partnership with the Diocese of Sheffield. Generous June has since been repeated in 2021 and 2022, building upon the multitude of resources for church leaders to use to help develop the conversation around building a generous culture. Generous June also looks to purposely engage with individuals through a series of podcasts, so that even if own church community is not engaging with the materials, individuals can still be a part of the programme.

The Generous June 2022 report is attached an appendix to this Strategy and details the positive impact the initiative is having across the diocese, both anecdotally and statistically. After its third year, a complete review of Generous June was undertaken. The Stewardship team spoke directly to over 30 incumbents to get their feedback on the programme. This has been built into plans and aims for 2023's iteration of Generous June.

Please see the full Generous June 2022 Review in [Appendix 1](#).

### 2. Giving Statistics

*All figures as of 2019*

*Average Gift:* The Diocese of Winchester has an average weekly gift of £16 per person per week, which represents 8<sup>th</sup> place in the country. Although Winchester would expect to be behind outliers such as London and Southwark, we are placed behind Sheffield (with their average gift of £17.50), which is a much more deprived diocese.

*Percentage of Worshipping Community as Givers:* A more striking statistic. 43% (~9,000) of our worshipping community give to their church. This represents 22<sup>nd</sup> place in the country, a long way behind Bath and Wells who have 60% of their worshipping community as givers.

*Regular Giving's Significance in the Diocese of Winchester:* 34% of all income in the Diocese of Winchester comes through regular giving and 34% of all Common Mission Fund income comes from regular giving. This emphasises the huge significance regular giving has within our diocese.

### 3. Parish Giving Scheme

*All figures as of September 2022*

The Parish Giving Scheme remains the most utilised platform for regular giving with the Diocese of Winchester. It has been available to sign up to since 2012.

There are 205 communities registered with the PGS within the Diocese of Winchester, representing 81% of all parishes. This places Winchester 3<sup>rd</sup> in the country for registrations to the PGS. There are currently 4,728 active givers within the Diocese of Winchester using the PGS, which represents 40% of all the givers in the diocese, placing Winchester 1<sup>st</sup> overall in the country for percentage of active givers using the scheme. Significantly, the average gift for those using the scheme is £19.92 per person per week, £3.92 higher than the average regular gift across all forms of giving. This emphasises the PGS's significance in engaging individuals and parishes with the importance of regularly reviewed giving.

#### 4. Legacy Gifts

*All figures as of 2016*

The mean legacy income across the entire diocese over a seven-year period was £947,530 per annum, which represented 21<sup>st</sup> in the country (2009-2016). The mean number of legacies per annum was 106 (12<sup>th</sup> in the country), however the average legacy gift size was well down when compared to other dioceses in the country at £8,903 (34<sup>th</sup>).

As an affluent area, the Diocese of Winchester would expect to receive larger legacy gifts in comparison to other dioceses across the country.

##### **Farewill Project: Free Online Wills**

Between May and August 2021, five parishes within the Diocese of Winchester were involved in a pilot project that aimed to encourage parishioners to acquire a free online will through Farewill. 39 individuals made new wills, with £39,350 worth of legacy gifts being pledged to the parishes. 28% of those that completed wills committed to giving legacies to their local parish. Throughout 2022, these free wills have been offered across the diocese.

##### **Batt Broadbent: Free Wills on Offer**

In 2022, the Diocese of Winchester has also partnered with law firm Batt Broadbent to offer parishioners across the diocese a chance to write a will for free. This has been part of an annual push to communicate the importance of will writing as both part of Christian stewardship and the significance of legacy gifts to the church.

#### 5. Digital Giving

*Information taken from the '2021 digital giving report'*

Four different services are currently being used by parishes across the Diocese (as of 2021): SumUp, GiveALittle (with contactless new for 2021), GoodBox and Thyngs.

Total income for 2020 from digital giving was £76,298. 2020 saw 3,998 total transactions. Total income for 2021 was considerably more £175,205, with a total of 13,032 donations. This is a significant increase in the amount our parishes are utilising card readers and getting hugely positive results.

As of December 2021, 37% of parishes in the diocese have a digital giving account with one of the above-named services.

Average donation values:

	2020	2021	National Average
<b>SumUp</b>	£25.78	£21.02	£14.67
<b>GAL (Online)</b>	£29.94	£53.27	£39.58
<b>GAL (Contactless)</b>	N/A	£9.86	£10.62
<b>Goodbox</b>	£6.12	£6.20	£5.94
<b>Thyngs (QR Codes)</b>	£22.18	£37.62	£30.07

The Diocese of Winchester's averages have steadily increased across most devices from 2020 to 2021. There is also a positive reflection in what our parishes receive in relation to the national averages.

This is clearly an area of great advancement and growth for our parishes. We aim to build upon this by introducing this avenue of giving to more of our churches so that donors have frictionless options to give.

#### 6. Stewardship Survey Response

A Stewardship Satisfaction Survey was distributed to Incumbents across the Diocese of Winchester in October 2021.

Please see full results summarised in [Appendix 2](#).

The overall feedback received was positive. It is encouraging to see the majority have viewed the Stewardship Team as very good on several aspects of the work provided as well as an interaction rate of 73% for Generous June. It is great to see that many are utilising the resources and engaging with the communication provided by the Stewardship Team.

There is clear recognition of some of the challenges presented through 2020-2021, mainly Covid and Diocesan upheaval. Individual feedback will be taken on board when considering future planning, whilst resources are developed to reach as broad an audience as possible.

Our aim will be to continue to proactively work with those who welcome interaction, whilst always engaging with those that seek out support based on their own contexts and needs.

#### **Actions points from Survey Results:**

1. Create and circulate a resource that communicates the Diocesan Budget in a clear way, including sources of income and a breakdown of clergy costs.
2. Ensure there is a dedicated page on the website that presents giving trends and statistics, updated at regular intervals.
3. Ensure that the latest Parish Dashboards are available on the Diocesan Online Directory.
4. Develop and improve communication around the Six Steps of Christian Giving and the practical implications for understanding our parishioners' different motivations for giving.

## IV. Previous Strategic Framework

*Fig 2*, below, outlines the previous framework for understanding and developing a strategic approach to improving giving and generosity practice across the diocese.

It is helpful in providing a platform on which to build and move forward, to establish the priorities in developing a coherent and effective strategy.



The questions of Why, What, Where and How, are interwoven within the approaches outlined below.

## V. Strategic Aims

- To develop a generous culture that embodies Christ across our diocese.
- To increase the levels of giving and the number of givers in our parishes to sustain and grow mission and ministry.
- To improve clergy confidence and competency in leading on developing generous churches.

### A. Objectives

#### 1. Qualitative Objectives:

- Build diocesan culture to achieve a sense of mutual accountability and support, with church communities understanding and investing in a common goal, which then cascades down the diocesan structures.
- Increase clergy confidence and competency to preach, teach and model generosity within parishes.
- Emphasise the personal link between Christian discipleship and attitudes towards finance and giving at an individual, parish, and diocesan level.
- To enable individuals, churches, and communities to move forward on the “Six Steps in Christian Giving”.

#### 2. Quantitative Objectives:

- Increase the number of regular givers from within our Worshipping Communities by 10% - from 43%-53%.
- Increase the average gift per week per person within our diocese by 25% - from £16 - £20.
- Increase the number of regular givers that fall within the 18-35-year-old demographic – which can only be done through working with our treasurers to identify these demographics.
- Increase those parishes using the Parish Giving Scheme by 5% - from 81%-86%.
- Increase the value of legacies given to parishes per year by 25% - from ~£9,000 to £11,250 – and the frequency – from 106 to 132.
- Increase the amount of churches utilising digital giving from 37% to 50% (see baseline data above).

## B. Implementation

### 1. Develop Clear Lines of Communication:

- *Parishes:* Work personally with more churches face to face to discuss how to develop a generous culture, establishing MINT and IDEA principles, see Fig.3.

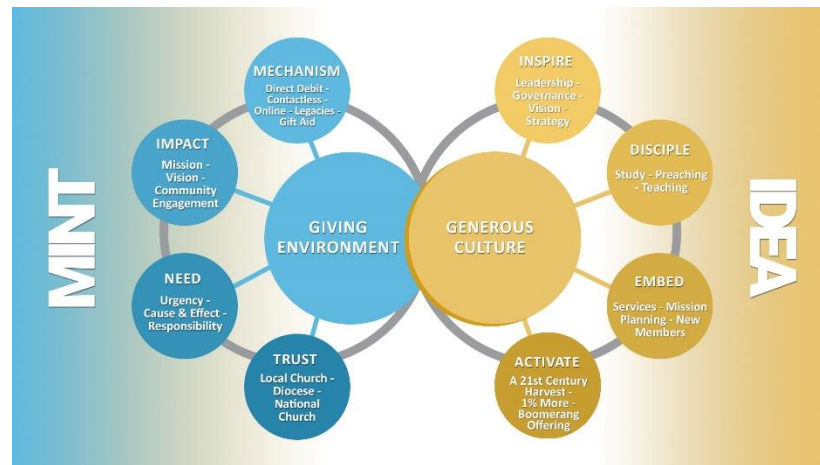


Fig 3. Building a Generous Church Model

*Personas:* Establish audiences within our diocese that we can speak to directly through social media and digital initiatives, to support development of their own personal understanding of generosity and giving.





### 2. Spend More Time Directly Supporting Clergy:

- The Bishops will host a Bishop Study Day for all clergy to engage with their own individual approach to generosity and to inspire them to focus on giving in their own parishes.
- Increase Clergy Ministerial Development programmes and engagement.
- Increase Initial Ministerial Education engagement – including a preaching schedule for all curates in IME 3, which has been introduced as part of Generous June 2022.
- Proactivity work with identified parishes who appear in the 'Silent Third' or 'opportunity parishes' - who are neither excelling nor failing but have an opportunity for immediate growth.
- Increase time spent working face to face with new clergy to help them understand their parish context.
- Establish a Stewardship Development Forum that seeks to engage with clergy challenges on the ground and communicate effective solutions and tactics for various contexts.
- Encourage systematic Annual Giving Reviews and Triennial Giving Programmes whilst providing hands on support in maximising their efficacy.
- Highlight that thanking givers is integral and should be systematic and celebratory.
- Identify with specific parishes the relationship between fundraising and giving, understanding the 'blurred line' between the two, and the part resilience plays within this relationship.

3. **Provide High Quality Programmes and Resources:**

- Develop a series of high-quality annual projects and programmes that engage both individuals and parishes, *see Fig 4*.
- Produce and promote high quality resources for personal and parish engagement, including Diocesan and National case studies.
- Create a positive and generous Social Media presence that welcomes interaction and two-way communication.

Quarter	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>1</b> Feb-Apr	Legacy	Legacy	Legacy	Legacy
<b>2</b> May-July	Generous June	Generous June	Generous June	New Generosity Campaign
<b>3</b> Aug-Oct	Strategy Development	Card Readers	Young People	Parish Giving Scheme
<b>4</b> Nov-Jan	Common Mission Fund	Common Mission Fund	Common Mission Fund	Common Mission Fund

	Programme		Project		Tentative		Upon Review
<i>Fig 4. Project Calendar</i>							

## VI. Appendix One: Generous June 2022 Review

Generous June has just had its third iteration since starting in 2020. Each year in which this initiative has been undertaken there has been somewhat of a turbulent context within the Diocese of Winchester. Generous June originated during the COVID-19 pandemic and aimed to support our parishes with digital resources as our churches were closed to the public throughout the national lockdown. 2021 saw diocesan upheaval considering leadership and structural changes that affected Generous June's approachability and suitability as a diocesan-led resource. Generous June's most recent programme has been received in the context of a busy church calendar (The Queen's Jubilee) and an emerging cost of living crisis. Having said this, Generous June has been widely used and appreciated by our church leaders and parishes.

After a three-year cycle of this Diocesan initiative, we have attempted to carry out a full review of the last three years to understand Generous June's continued effectiveness from the point of view of our clergy, and if there is any insight into adapting or changing our current model to improve our offering. In addition, this year introduced a project where curates are invited to preach on giving in a neighbouring parish under the Generous June banner, with encouraging results.

This report comprises:

- An overview of feedback received through direct clergy communication.
- An overview of the Curate Project first undertaken in 2022.
- An overview of statistical analysis of the Generous June website interaction, social media and direct email interaction, feedback survey and PGS data from 2022's programme.
- Conclusions and plans for the future of Generous June.

## 2022: Clergy Feedback

The Diocesan Stewardship Team phoned 85 incumbents, and ended up speaking to 37 directly, either on the phone or by email, specifically with reference to their participation and review of Generous June 2020-2022. We have broken down the questions asked, and the responses received to capture recurring themes and feedback.

### **Have you engaged with Generous June over the last three years at all?**

- Approximately 55% of those that we spoke to have engaged with Generous June over the last 3 years in some capacity.

### **If yes, when did you use Generous June?**

- The overall picture of feedback from those we spoke to suggested that few had used the Generous June resources every year.
- Many we spoke to had used Generous June in 2020 and 2021, but not 2022, or did last year but not this. One or two had used it every year so far.
- Some feedback noted that they did not use the resources in June, but later in the year when the theme suited their church context more appropriately.

### **If not, why not?**

- Some mentioned that they have their own pattern for giving campaigns and had no need to engage with the resources.
- Some said that the subject matter is inappropriate at this time due to the current cost of living crisis and the pandemic.
- One clergy person said that they do not need to talk about giving because *"our finances are fine."*
- Often, we got the response that a giving campaign is unnecessary or not how *"we do things"*, as *"generosity is built into the culture of everything we do so we don't need to focus on it as a specific theme."*

### **What resources did you use, and what was most helpful?**

- Bishops' sermons and videos were considered very useful. People commented that *"people appreciate hearing from the Bishop"* and *"meant that I could rely on the Bishop for the sermon that week"*, and the videos provided a chance to get the Bishop's voices heard directly speaking to the congregations.
- Readings and plans were considered useful by some for crafting services around.
- Some used our resources as inspiration or the foundation to create their own more specifically to be used within their contexts.
- One clergy person mentioned the podcasts were useful for them personally and they publicised these to their congregation.
- A few mentioned the use of the website generally being positive.
- The overall picture from those we spoke to is that most did not use all resources but chose to use those that were most helpful to them.

### **Are there any resources that were missing?**

- A couple of incumbents mentioned that further resources explaining wider financial information about the Diocese and the Church of England would have been helpful, including averages and comparisons to other parish's giving.

- The mention of more testimony and case study material as being helpful in the future.
- More promotional materials.
- Templates for giving appeals/letters.
- Song suggestions.

#### **Is June the best month for a Diocesan wide generosity campaign?**

- There was quite a divide across the feedback as to those that thought that June was appropriate, or *"as suitable as any other time in the year"*, and inappropriate, due to *"other things going on"* in June.
- There were some comments that this year the calendar was too full, due to the Queen's Jubilee celebrations and a later than usual Pentecost Sunday.
- Numerous comments suggesting that September/October and the harvest time was when they focus on giving and generosity and that is a more appropriate time for this kind of event, with another clergy person suggesting January is the best time due to casting vision for the year.
- Some commented that a whole month was too long to focus on this, or that being attached to a specific month is not ideal.

#### **Would you consider doing Generous June again, or at all if you have not before?**

- Many said they would engage again and reflect on the updated resources.
- Most who have not engaged before said they would be unlikely they would in the future - *"More unlikely than likely."*
- Some said that they will keep it in the calendar and will do it again.
- *"Yes - I think it is helpful to have a yearly time when we focus on it."*
- *"Yes, Generous June provides a focus for us."*
- *"We are looking to do a stewardship campaign in the near future and will use GJ."*

#### **How would you reflect on your congregation's engagement, do you have any stories to share?**

- Many vicars said they had not really engaged with feedback from their congregation but had not necessarily heard anything negative.
- Some received feedback that money is a difficult topic and now might be the most appropriate time to discuss it.
- Some perceived negative feedback considering the diocesan context of *"clergy reductions and long interregnum."*
- Others mentioned that it *"raised the profile of giving."*
- One reported that it helped *"fund a family's minister."*
- *"We had 5 people join the Parish Giving Scheme and our financial position has improved."*
- *"The bishop's message was well received."*

#### **Any other comments?**

- *"The website could be easier to navigate."*
- *"The Bishop's sermons could have more of a call to action and be more challenging."*
- *"Could the resources be more tailored and specific?"*
- *"The resources could be broader."*
- *"There are too many resources, they are demanding and time consuming and stretch over too long a period."*
- *"Too long, rather do it over one week."*
- *"There were too many pressing things to deal with at the time and I was not greatly impressed by the resources."*
- *"It's a win win."*

- *"I appreciate the Generous June resources to share with the congregation here very much. It takes the load off us providing something ourselves. And stewardship is something it is not always easy to talk about."*
- *"Giving is a hard topic to broach so am thankful to have the resources to start the conversation."*
- *"Didn't know we could use it outside of June."*
- *"Material is well put together and the variety is very good."*
- *"A real blessing for me."*
- *"Surely it is something we should be talking about each year."*
- *"It is great to have the backup of the Bishops."*
- *"Stewardship remains an area where the diocese is strongest and is getting things right."*

## Curate Preaching Project 2022

In 2022, eleven curates from across the diocese preached in a neighbouring parish on the topic of generosity. Each of the participating parishes and curates were invited to do so by the Bishop of Basingstoke, coming together under the banner of Generous June, supported through Winchester School of Mission. Most of the parishes were in vacancy, so that the curate was offering help and support at a time of interregnum.

Part of the Diocesan Giving Strategy is to improve our training and resourcing of clergy in preaching and leading on finances and giving, and this project was part of this resourcing. Each of the curates was invited to an afternoon of training and were provided with other resources.

Here is a snapshot of the feedback from our participating parishes and curates:

Feedback from parishes:

- *"It was a genuine pleasure to have someone else to preach..."*
- *"People appreciated a different 'voice' I believe and were moved by her sincerity..."*
- *"I would warmly recommend this venture and hope that you do the same thing again next year."*
- *"I have heard lots of positive comments from the congregation about the way she spoke and the challenge she was able to bring as an outsider."*
- *"If you were to repeat it again for next year, we would definitely be happy to have a curate come."*
- *"I received lots of positive comments from the congregation including - Can he be our new Vicar?"*
- *"However, the talk focused on giving money... On the whole this initiative achieved very little, if anything, as far as our church was concerned."*

With the exception of one parish, all of the other parishes that participated had positive feedback relating to their curate visit. The outlier was possibly not informed well enough as to the aims of the project. It was hugely encouraging to see our curates elicit such positive responses.

Feedback from curates:

- *"...thought I had prepared well in the light of this. However, despite this preparation I found it quite different to my expectation..."*
- *"I found it a little daunting talking to a congregation of people I don't know about money, so started my talk in that vibe and it seemed to go down well. It was good to experience a church more traditional than what I am used to..."*
- *"...it is harder to preach to a congregation you don't know about generosity when you don't really know how generous they are."*
- *"From a curate training and development point of view it was great to get experience in a different place, learn a different tradition and get to meet other local Christians."*
- *"The excuse of Generous June to do this was a welcome one!"*
- *"I wonder if a learning point for the future would be around sending curates to parishes that are planning to partake in Generous June rather than those in vacancy?"*

On reflection, our group of curates have been such an encouragement. They went into this pilot process to learn and experience something new – speaking about money in most church contexts is a

challenging thing to do, so we have been so impressed with their willingness to step out of their comfort zone. The feedback here positions this process as a challenging thing to approach, and indicates some learning points:

- Curates should be given more time to prepare and communicate with the church they are visiting to understand the context as well as they can prior to their visit.
- The churches involved in the project could have expressed more engagement with Generous June so that presentation of a curate matches in with the theme with more focus.
- The opportunity to learn from other traditions is very valuable and should be encouraged as much as possible.

Overall, in conversation with Winchester School of Mission, there is an appetite to repeat this project in 2023, due to the experiences and training opportunities it offers our curates.

Chris Hill, IME2 and CMD Officer at the Winchester School of Mission writes:

*"The Generous June curates preaching project pilot was an innovative idea that has proved to be a wonderful success in many ways. The project provided further targeted training for our curates in areas of generosity and the preaching enabled them to act practically upon this; reflecting theologically upon the training they received and often their past observed experiences.*

*The project has also been shown to help our curates develop in various wider practical skills crucially researching the community they were to preach in to understand the wider context of the church, the congregations and the parish. For the curates invited to participate who were coming towards the end of their curacies this experience will help them as they look for new posts and in the first year of their new posts. It will certainly be something we wish to form part of the IME2 program going forward."*

## Generous June 2022: Statistical Analysis

### Overview

Generous June 2022 has seen a reduction in the overall volume of participation but a continued take up in the quality of participation. 2022 has seen a reduction in the overall level of participation including visits to the website etc due to running this campaign without the Diocese of Sheffield. We have seen a reduction of approximately 55% across the board.

For 2022 we were able to reflect upon the previous two years to work on improving the content and the delivery of the content.

Three areas of significant improvement this year based upon last year's feedback and reflections were as follows:

1. This year we were able to provide a much higher quality of sermon video download. This increases the quality of the videos being played on large screens in services.
2. A download all button was added to the website, enabling visitors the opportunity to download all resources at the touch of a button.
3. This year we removed the weekend podcasts as these were typically far less listened to.

So far from our findings, there are a couple of areas of significant success in 2022:

1. Our audience has a much wider and more even spread in age demographic, with under 45s being the majority.
2. Despite the reduction in traffic due to the loss of Sheffield participation, we have managed to keep bounce rates and session duration in an optimal zone.
3. 95% of people who responded to our survey answered they would consider taking part in Generous June again.

For Generous June 2022 we decided to remove The Expression of Generosity Competition after a lack of take up from last year.

### Website Resources Downloaded

The following information relates to the resources available on the Generous June website. These resources are made up of a mixture of material types including Sermon Videos, Service Plans, Service Presentations, a Reflection Booklet, Youth and Small Group Sessions and a Generous June Asset Pack. The resources available were created by the Diocese of Winchester.

Winchester provided 20 different resources. This year there were two resources that unfortunately were not tracked correctly, the Reflection Booklet and the download all button. Both of which had been anticipated as potentially two of our best performing resources, with the Reflection Booklet being our most popular resource from last year. The following figures do not include these two resources.

Total downloads – 371 (Last year total resource downloads were 1469)

There were approximately 83 downloads prior to June.

May 29<sup>th</sup> – June 4<sup>th</sup>: 66 total downloads

June 5<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>: 82 total downloads

June 12<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>: 59 total downloads

June 19<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>: 50 total downloads

June 26<sup>th</sup> – Onwards: 45 total downloads

## Most Popular Resource Downloads

Sermon Resources – Week 1

6 Steps in Christian Giving

Youth Sessions

Feeding The Five Thousand Service Plan - Week 2

Sermon Transcript The Way of The Cross – Week 3

In contrast to last year, we have seen a few different types of resource present themselves to be most popular. Youth sessions didn't feature in top downloads last year, but it is great to see this more downloaded this year. This year we did not create an updated asset pack which was well downloaded last year. This may prove useful in future years and should not be missed.

As with previous years, downloading resources bypasses the need for website revisits to gain access to materials. It is worth noting that a church that downloads a resource has the ability to print several copies of the document, making it difficult to gain an accurate picture of total number of users.

We can assume that the Reflection Booklet and the Download All button would have made a marked increase in our download figures, and it is a shame that we cannot report fully on these findings.

## Daily Reflection Listenership

Our reflections this year were posted in Podcast format on our website, Spotify, Google Podcasts and Apple Podcasts. Like previous years we added an intro and outro for each podcast. This year we again changed the jingle to freshen up the content and change it from previous years.

Total Events: 3836 (Last year – 8623)

Top Podcast 6th-of-June-Gordon-Randall.mp3: 563 events (Top podcast last year – 1<sup>st</sup> June David Williams – 621 events)

Each Podcast had an approximate average daily event total of 127 per day. (Last year's average – 287 per day)

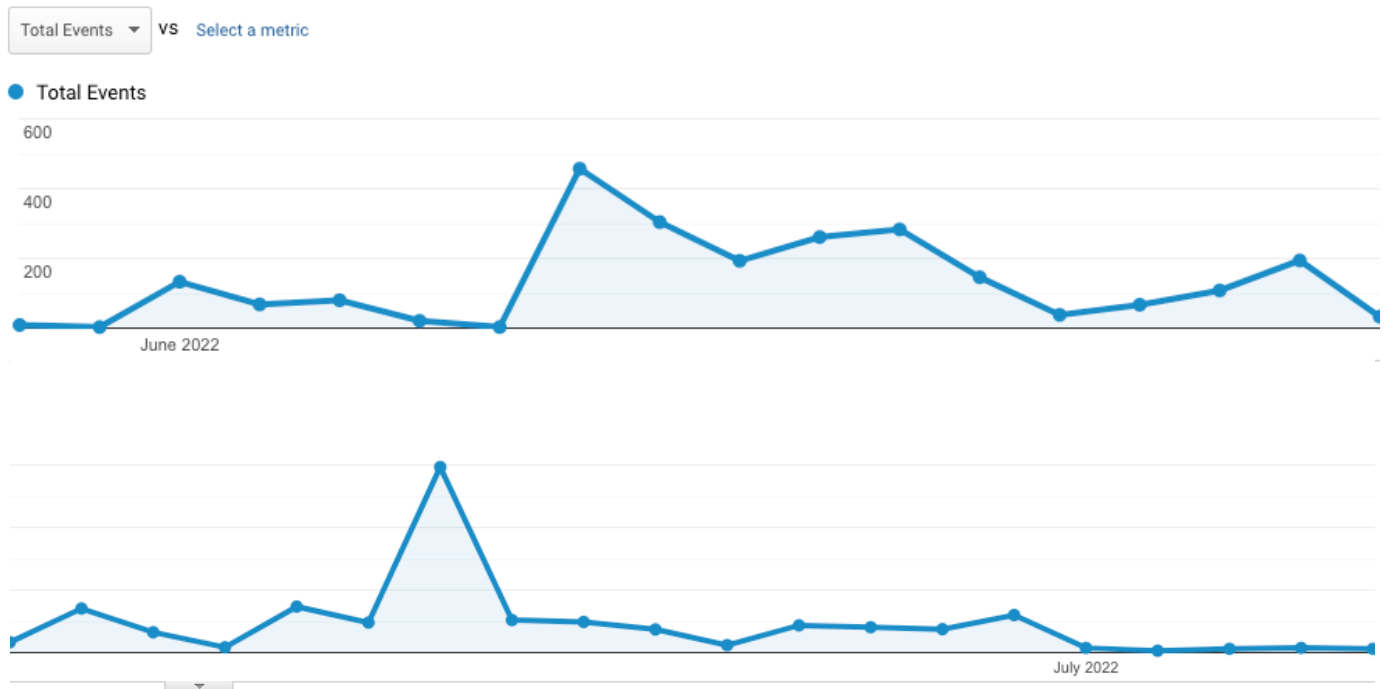
Pentecost and the Queen's Jubilee clashed with Generous June this year and do seem to have skewed the figures somewhat in comparison to previous years. In previous years we would expect to see June 1<sup>st</sup> to be the most listened to podcast however, this year, the 6<sup>th</sup> of June was the most listened to podcast. The 6<sup>th</sup> being the first Monday after the other calendar events.

In a similar fashion to last year the 6<sup>th</sup> podcast generated double the 7<sup>th</sup> day of podcast events. as people were perhaps intrigued as to the idea of what Generous June involved. After day 7 and 8 the podcasts seemed to show a steady trend of listeners, slowly declining throughout the month.

We would estimate that we also received somewhere between 250-500 plays from media platforms Spotify, iTunes, and Google Play. Again, we cannot be accurate with these figures as we do not have access to the account information for each streaming service as it was originally set up by Sheffield Diocese.

We felt that the number of Podcast events is an accurate representation of the number of listeners we should expect. Last year we generated just over 8000 events and this year without the participation from Sheffield we have just under 4000.

The following line chart shows the total events throughout June. From this data we can see consistent dips on Sundays. We can also notice the overall downward trend through the month of June. We can see a clear peak on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June. This could be due to the podcaster sharing their podcast widely.



*Sadly, we do not currently have access to the media platforms Spotify, iTunes and Google Play and therefore not include the listenership from these sources. Several attempts to regain access have been made and still are currently underway.*

### Website Visits

The data below is for the months of May, June and the first two weeks in July.

- 1324 unique visitors (Last year – 1763)
- 4286 page views (the number of individual pages visited in total) (Last year - 10,981 page views)
- Average session duration – 3:22 (June and July) (Last year– 3:40)
- 45/55 split male/female visiting
- Most popular Page: Home Page 2020 Page Views
- Age Demographics – See graphs below

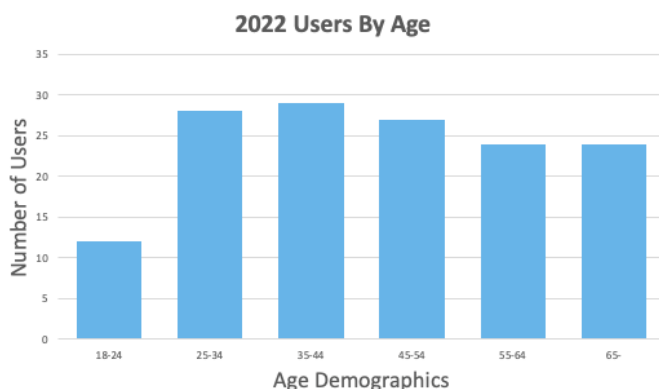
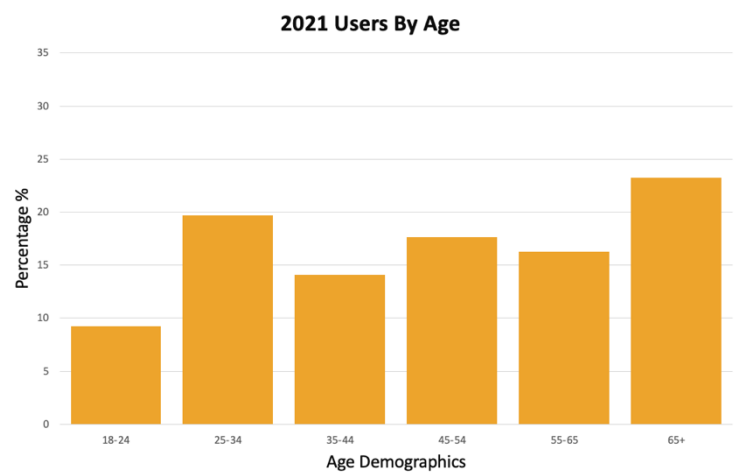
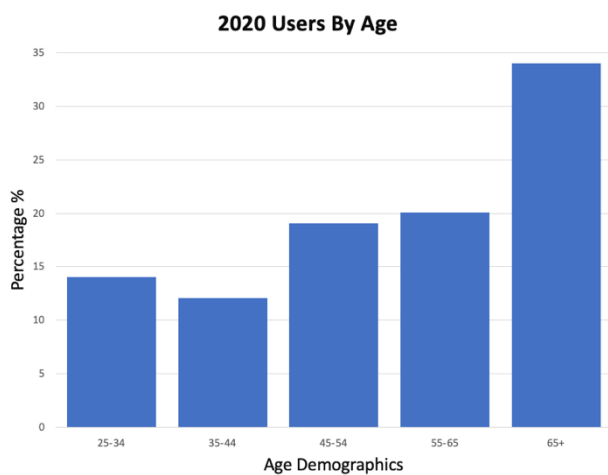
Throughout the month of June and the first week of July, the website had on average 20 sessions per day. This reflects a loss in daily visits by approximately 55% compared to last year. Likely owing to the loss of involvement from Sheffield Diocese. However, the bounce throughout June remained optimum at 35%. According to google a bounce rate between 25-40% is optimal, so it is great to see our bounce rate in this region again this year.

From this we have surmised that this year we have had less traffic but a similar rate of engagement.

*It is worth mentioning that this information is based upon what google analytics can share with us as each user has the right and ability to withhold this type of information based on their preference.*

### Age Demographic Comparison

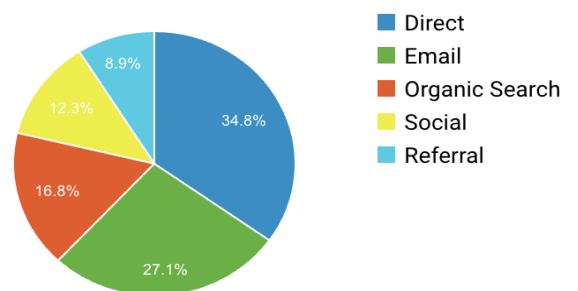
From the graphs below we can see a few differences between users from this year compared to users from the last two years. 2022 has the most even spread of age demographics we have seen with a noticeable drop in the 65+ age bracket. The 18-24 age bracket remains significantly low similar to 2021 but there has also been a surge for 35-44-year olds which has also been noticeably lower in previous years.



### Audience Acquisition

Across some of May, June and the first week of July we have had many sessions acquired from various sources. From the graph on the right, you can see that more than half of our audience came either directly to the website or from our emails. Throughout June we sent out a weekday email to all of those signed up to our Generous June mailing list.

### Top Channels



## **Email Interaction**

Over the course of June and the build-up we sent approximately 5200 emails. This was by way of a daily email every weekday throughout June to our initial audience of 186 signed up members. These emails were created and scheduled in advance. Growing slightly from 2021 this year saw a small improvement on the number of sign-ups, starting the month off by sending 186 emails, this number grew to around 200 and dipped back down to 189 by the end of the month. This shows a trend of people wanting to receive the email as the month started and as interest dropped off during June, people began to unsubscribe.

Our aim again was to create a daily email to highlight each day's reflection and who contributed that podcast. The email also included some generic information, links to the website as well as other stewardship programme information.

From the emails sent per day, on average they received an engagement of around 6% per day, equalling around 15 clicks per email. These stats were marginally better than last year's stats. This is likely due to better email design and less weekend emails going out. There was a clear trend with our email campaigns showing a slow and steady drop off in engagement over the course of the month with excitement and buzz Generous June slowly declining over time.

Over a 7-week period (16<sup>th</sup> May – 8<sup>th</sup> July) Emails contributed to 27.1% of total website traffic

## **Social Media**

### ***Best performing Post***

Bishop David Behind the Scenes photo on the 13th of June

Likes and reactions – 20

Shares – 4

Link clicks – 13

### ***Average likes per social media***

Facebook – 2/3

Instagram – 2/3

Twitter – 0/1

Last year's best performing social media gathered only 4 likes and reactions suggesting this year we produced a more engaging type of post. Overall, we posted significantly less than 2021 posting only a couple of times a week rather than daily. This seems to have had positive effect of people enjoying the posts despite their being fewer throughout the month.

We have seen a significant drop off in the number of Twitter likes this year as well as social referrals.

Over a 7-week period (16<sup>th</sup> May – 8<sup>th</sup> July) Social Media contributed to 12.3% of total website traffic which was very similar to last year (12.8%). Facebook provided 90% of this traffic.

## Post Project Survey

After June we publicised our online feedback survey across our social media and email channels.

- 21 total survey responses
- Only 15% voted Generous June as 2 star or less.
- 10 people engaged with Generous June as a church.
- 12 people engaged with Generous June as an individual.
- 1 Person engaged with Generous June as a small group.
- 3 People engaged in another manner.

### Where people heard about Generous June?

- Many said through diocesan comms.
- A few said through church.
- Some said they knew from previous participation.
- Some said social media.
- One persona said through clergy briefings.

### Overall how useful have you found the resources?

- The resources were ok - 7
- Very useful - 6
- We did not use the resources - 4
- Not very useful - 4

### Which type of resources did you find the most helpful? (Please tick as many as appropriate)

- Podcasts - 8
- Service plans – 6
- Sermon Videos – 5
- Service Power Point – 4
- Reflection Booklet – 4
- Youth Sessions – 2
- Small group Sessions – 3

### Were there any resources that could be improved or that could be added for next year?

- Open-source document versions.
- More bishop sermons.
- *“A simple booklet, sharing the principles of giving, along the lines of the Treasure Principle, would be great. Something that's accessible, that people can relate to, would be great.”*

### Is June the most appropriate month in the year to explore the topic of generosity?

- 67% People said **yes**
- 33 said **other** but did not give a preferred time

### Would you be interested in engaging with Generous June again?

- 62% said yes
- 33% said maybe
- 5% said no

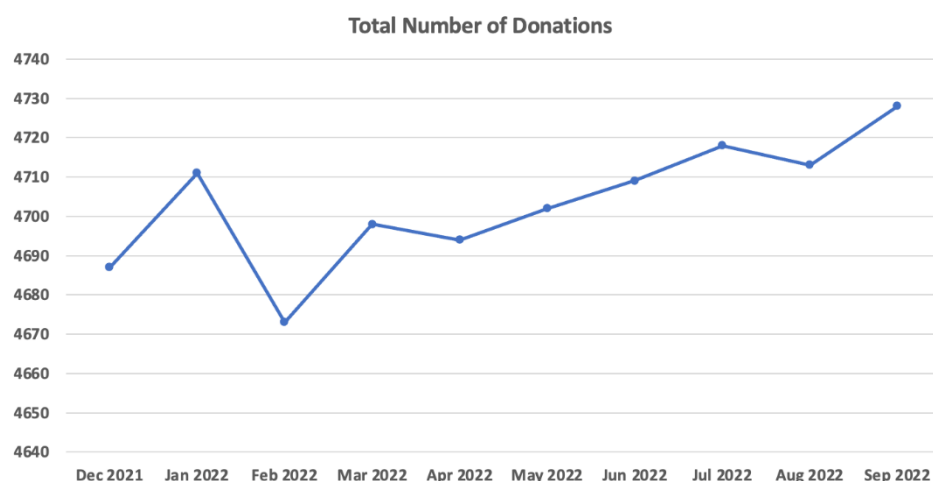
### How people found the frequency of communication regarding Generous June? (Email, social media, word of mouth)

- 62% - Just Right
- 14% - Too often
- 10% - Did not see any communication
- 14% - Not often enough

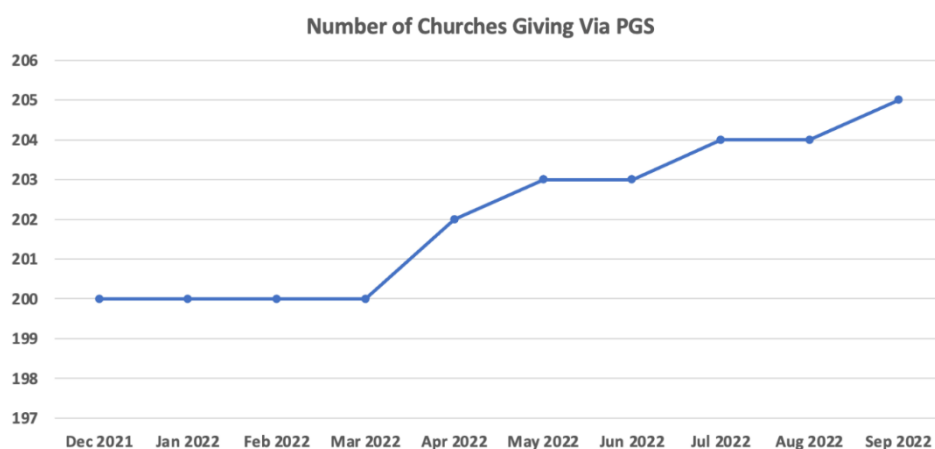
### Any other feedback?

- *"Well done team!"*
- *"Why does the church always want more money when it has £10bn of assets?"*
- *"For most parishes, a month a year is too much. We did this for two weeks, which was about right."*
- *"I am not convinced the messaging gets to grass roots as much as you would think."*
- *"We were keen to explore generous June but didn't feel that the resources matched what we were looking for."*

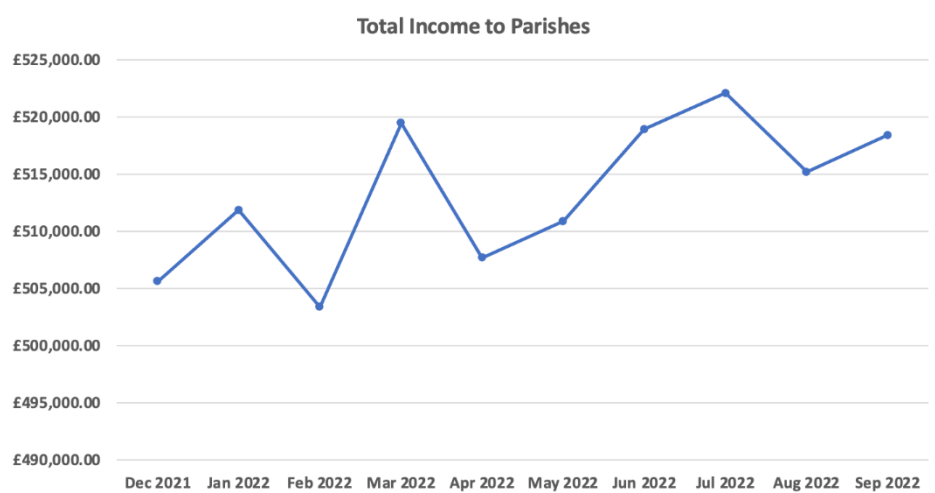
### Parish Giving Scheme Statistical Analysis



This graph shows the number of donations received through the Parish Giving Scheme between the months of December 2021 and September 2022. From the data we see a general trend of rising donations. We can also see that prior to June the table shows a slightly more erratic up and down movement of donations. From June we see a steady and stable rise.



This graph shows the number of churches giving through the PGS between Dec 2021 and September 2022. This graph shows a steady increase in the number of churches choosing to give through the PGS.



This graph shows the Total Income to Parishes between December 2021 and September 2022. Although this data is more erratic than the previous graphs, we have seen an overall increase in income. We can also see a positive trend following June with two months of increases not seen in previous months, with a slightly less dramatic decrease in August.

Whilst we cannot guarantee a direct causality between Generous June and the increases summarised above, we believe it gives a good indication of positive giving trends throughout the diocese.

## Planning for the Future of Generous June

The Stewardship Team undertook a day of evaluating all the feedback and statistical analysis with the support of the Regional Giving Advisor from the National Giving Team, Jim Barker. We looked at the entire structure of the programme and scrutinised the resources and the communication processes of the initiative, including what was still going well and what could be improved.

Three Areas of Focus were identified:

1. Timing and messaging
2. Resource effectiveness
3. Curate Project

### 1. Timing and messaging

- There is a significant tension between the Local – Diocese – National agendas.
- It was a challenge to get out GJ messaging when we were ‘competing’ with Pentecost, Ukraine and a Diocese which was still finding its feet after recent challenges.
- There is still a challenge that a significant number of churches keep to their own agendas and can’t/won’t incorporate GJ into their schedule at this time.
- There are big questions around the length of time for the push “4 weeks is too much”, and too long to give significant and sustained communications attention too.
- Looking forward to timing in 2023 potential challenges – Pentecost, and possibly the King’s Coronation.

#### Priorities moving forward:

- Restructure Generous June in 2023 to make it shorter and sharper:
  - 9 days (two Sundays and mid-week podcasts)
  - Take over the Diocesan Comms for a week to emphasise the importance of the programme
  - Emphasise the message of the programme not just being for June
  - Be aware of competing calendar events and adjust proactively.
- In 2024: ‘De-couple’ June from initiative – rebrand so that the resources can be used more flexibly and be incorporated more appropriately for churches.

### 2. Resource Effectiveness

The question arose: Are we communicating to our target audiences well enough so that the resources are engaged with?

Our target audiences are:

- Parishes
- Personas – individuals

**Priorities moving forward:**

- Getting Bishops out there
- The payoff we get from the Podcast - enabling a greater focus on quality
- Pushing a 'Download All' button
- Continue the digital push maintaining the 'digital first' focus

Next year:

- Less podcasts, but each of them longer and more premium
- Streamline our current offering to build quality
- Adapt the website to make it more user intuitive, including the podcast page
- Emphasise the podcasts and Sunday Sermon materials
- Simplify the way in which people download the resources:
  - Sunday One
  - Sunday Two

**3. Curate Project**

The curate project was a BIG success for 2022. Moving forward we will be:

- Building this into IME programme
- Building confidence and competencies among clergy
- Building partnerships in the Diocese through stronger inter-team collaboration

One of the big challenges has been participating churches and we need to consider how to select the best churches, and ensure that we're able to maximise value from participating churches ensuring that we're not just filling slots for Vacant Churches, but that we are training incumbents.

**Priorities moving forward:**

- Build upon 2022 in June 2023.
- Create a Curate Sunday as one of the Generous June Sundays – with the Bishop Sunday the second.
- Offer further training and encourage stronger preparation.
- Work on a better approach in selecting participating churches.
- In 2024 decouple from "June" but build into IME programme.

**Confirmed future approach****2023: Last year as a "branded offering"****A shorter and stronger programme:**

- Change to 9 days (two weekends and one week)
- One curate day with video sermons and visiting curates
- One Bishop day with sermons
- Longer more in depth podcasts – "headliners"
- Clearer segregated resource offerings – a simpler website design
  - Sunday One
  - Sunday Two

**A stronger and more purposeful communication strategy:**

- Diocesan Communications take over to provide focus
- New Head of Communications Input will be valuable
- Focusing on approaching target audiences in effective ways:
  - Parish
  - Persona

**A focus on a time fluid offering:**

- The Coronation 6th May
- Pentecost Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> May
- Generous June is NOT just for June

**2024 – Something different, a less specific resource**






**Decoupling of “June” to make it more flexible**

**Maintaining a fresh suite of resources and engaging materials**

## Appendix Two: Stewardship Satisfaction Survey 2021






In November 2021 we gave clergy the opportunity to provide feedback on several areas concerning the Stewardship Team and the resources provided. What follows are the questions posed and the answers received from the 26 completed surveys. Where written responses were asked for, we have provided a selection of differing views and opinions that encompass the feeling of all of the responses given.

We asked: 1. How often have you sought advice/support/engagement from the Stewardship Team?

Single Select	Completed Result
Infrequently	 42%
Once a year	 27%
More than once a year	 19%
Once in 3 years	 8%
Never	 4%






Infrequently suggests that clergy either do not consider they require support from the Stewardship Team at least once a year because they are capable of running stewardship campaigns and talking about generosity confidently without frequent support, or that they do not engage with the Stewardship Team as they do not focus on the topic at least once a year, which is not best practice.

We asked: 2. Thinking about your interactions with the Stewardship Team, please tell us how you would rate your overall satisfaction:






Single Select	Completed Result
Good	 35%
Very Good	 31%
Excellent	 23%
Fair	 8%
Poor	 4%

**88% of clergy rated their stewardship interactions as good to excellent.**

We asked: 3. How would you rate the clarity of the guidance and advice provided by the Stewardship Team?






Single Select	Completed Result
Very Good	 31%
Good	 31%
Excellent	 19%
Fair	 15%
Poor	 4%

We asked: 4. When you have raised queries with the Stewardship Team, how would you rate the speed and timeliness of response?

Single Select	Completed Result
Very Good	 31%
Good	 31%
Excellent	 27%
Fair	 8%
Poor	 4%

**88% of clergy rated the responsiveness of the stewardship team as good to excellent.**

We asked: 5. How would you rate the communication of resources on offer for your parish to engage with Stewardship?

Single Select	Completed Result
Very Good	 31%
Good	 27%
Fair	 23%
Excellent	 15%
Poor	 4%

We asked: 6. Did you engage with Generous June?

Yes	 73%
No	 27%




If **YES** responses:

- *Yes, in June 2020 - we used the video sermons, and focused our services round it. We didn't feel it right to repeat this year (2021), so soon after we'd returned to Church.*
- *We used the pre-recorded sermons in 2020. This year we did our own programme Generous July as a stewardship campaign.*
- *Personal daily podcasts, sermon material for Sunday worship.*
- *Reflections shared every day. One sermon used as a basis for a talk.*
- *very limited - made people aware of the daily emails/blogs.*
- *Preach every Sunday. Some home groups used the material and youth group did.*

If **NO** responses:

- *We have been addressing giving regularly and our giving during last 18 months has risen.*
- *I am utterly worn down by "Deakonesq" jargon. Stewardship is about engagement with Jesus not alliteration.*
- *Not to be well received in light of Diocesan upheaval.*
- *Doesn't quite fit here.*
- *I was building up to a giving day in September.*
- *Diocese upheaval; Covid season; our church calendar.... However, we do cover the material at other times,*

We asked: 7. To what degree would you be happy to invite the Stewardship Team to your PCC to speak about Generosity and Giving?

Single Select	Completed Result
Yes, when the time is right	 62%
Definitely	 31%
Not at this time	 8%
Perhaps	0%
Not at all	0%

**The results show that timing is key to interactions with clergy. Interactions are often triggered by a specific need or proactive engagement from the Stewardship Team.**

We asked: 8. Do you have any suggestions for areas of improvement?

- Generous June was completely inappropriate for my parishes during Coronavirus, as households have been struggling to keep their heads above water financially. We felt it was insensitive to ask them to give money to the church whilst they were struggling. One parish nonetheless persisted in using Generous June as a theme for one of their monthly Cafe Church services.*
- Share insights without us having to request them. If there are trends or comparisons, we won't know until we ask...*
- I was hoping you had a simple 1-page explainer about the breakdown of 'clergy cost' as part of Parish Share. You didn't have one when I asked at some point in 2020. Since then I've realised it would also be helpful to indicate how this is likely to change over time. If my sources are correct, then the amount going to Pension will go down, not up.*
- More engagement with Deanery Synods.*
- A lot of the literature seems to project the idea that loving God makes the choice to give to church an obvious decision, whereas that seems not obvious to most of my people, either because they assume the CofE has lots of money, or because they don't understand the way the diocese and local church intersect. I think that central resources need to target these common misperceptions and help people make a natural leap from "I want to do some good with my money" to "giving to the church is the most efficient way to do good in my community".*
- Most of the questions I get about Diocese and only are about (1) what the money gets spent on; and (2) who is in governance positions looking after it?*
- No but please be encouraged that your ministry is vital to the development of stewardship in the diocese. Without it we will be unable to fulfil the mission we are called to.*

We asked: 9. In what ways would you prefer to be contacted by the Stewardship Team (tick all that are appropriate)?

Multiple Select	Selected Count
Direct Email	21
General Diocesan Updates	12
Diocesan Social Media	3
Direct Telephone	3
Not At All	1

**Direct email remains the main channel of communication between the Stewardship Team and clergy.**

We asked: 10. Are there any other comments or feedback you would like to raise?

- We are grateful for the positive ways of encouraging giving: addressing how it's spent will increase confidence to give more.*
- It would be helpful to have sufficient lead time out to parishes when you launch diocesan initiatives. As an example, my benefice parish magazines work 3 months in advance of publication, so any copy for January needs to be submitted by the end of November.*
- Keep up the good work!*
- Thanks for all the good work are doing in this vital area of our ministry. We need as much help as possible in the parishes.*
- Really appreciate your encouragement and efforts to help, but there's only so much one can do to get existing people to raise their giving. The bigger problems are the general decline in church attendance and the increasing cost of maintaining ancient buildings.*

**Summary:** The overall feedback received is positive. It is encouraging to see the majority have viewed the Stewardship Team as very good on several aspects of the work provided as well as an interaction rate of 73% for Generous June. It is great to see that many are utilising the resources and engaging with the communication provided by the Stewardship Team.

There is clear recognition of some of the challenges presented through 2020-2021, mainly Covid and Diocesan upheaval. Individual feedback is helpful and taken on board considering future planning, whilst resources are developed to reach as broad an audience as possible.

Our aim will be to continue to proactively work with those who welcome interaction, whilst always engaging with those that seek out support based on their own contexts and needs.

**Actions points from Survey Results:**

1. Create and circulate a resource that communicates the Diocesan Budget in a clear way, including sources of income and a breakdown of clergy costs.
2. Ensure there is a dedicated page on the website that presents giving trends and statistics, updated at regular intervals.
3. Ensure that the latest Parish Dashboards are available on the Diocesan Online Directory.
4. Develop and improve communication around the Six Steps of Christian Giving and the practical implications for understanding our parishioners' different motivations for giving.