



LIVING GENEROUSLY



YORKMINSTER.ORG



WELCOME

from the Dean of York, the Right Revd Dr Jonathan Frost

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As we look forward, in hope, to the future of our life as a community I am grateful to all of those who have worked so hard at the Minster in support of our work and ministry during the pandemic to enable our worshipping life together to continue. I recognize that this has been a difficult time for many, those who have been ill or bereaved, who have lost jobs and businesses. Here in the Precinct I am so sorry that we have lost valued colleagues and had to take the very sad decision to close The Minster School, as we began to meet the challenge of the financial consequences of lockdown for us. In the midst of this uncertainty the continued generous giving of time, talents and money from all of you has been a constant for which I am very grateful.

Standing in faith, on the site of nearly 1400 years of Christian prayer, we look forward to a better future – and it has been exciting to see so many engaging in our discussions about the Minster's new Strategic Plan. With our ideas as to how we 'Live Christ's Story' through prayer, service, stewardship and hospitality now coming together Chapter believes that there are exciting times ahead. We look forward to being able to see each other in person – and more often – in the near future and to rebuilding the strong sense of community and fellowship here which I know is one of the things most valued at the Minster.

You are all aware that the pandemic imposed great financial challenges on the Minster as an organization and that it will take some time for our income levels to recover. Now, more than ever, whatever you feel able to give will be crucial to our work together and will be used well, whatever your giving looks like. Our gifts combined help to shape the way we offer mission and ministry.

There is so much that is central to our life together at the Minster which our giving enables. I'm delighted that the Grand Organ is now restored and being played again as our musicians, led by Robbie and Ben, stand ready to make full use of it. We remain committed to musical excellence, working with our choir and choristers - now well cared for through our renewed relationship with St Peter's School. We hope to return to the healthy and growing attendance at our physical services, noted before lockdown, drawing in new people, whilst working to retain some of the virtual Minster which has sustained so many. Minster Mice and Sunday School are eager to return to the building – ministry for the future which will be one of our priorities. Our pattern of prayer and worship will be strengthened, and will in turn strengthen us.

Alex McCallion has worked skilfully with our neighbours in developing the Neighbourhood Plan to best conserve and present the Precinct to our millions of visitors, with new opportunities for hospitality which will benefit visitors, residents and our community – we're keen to get going on these plans.

Beyond the Precinct our work with and giving through charities continues. We live Christ's story at the heart of the diocese alongside our new Archbishop, supporting this wider mission is ever more important to resource parishes particularly those in areas of deprivation. As a cathedral we are glad to offer this support as together we steward our faith for current and future generations.

I am confident you will join me in reflecting on God's generosity and how best we can all respond over the next few weeks. I know that we have different circumstances, which for some may be radically different compared to fifteen months ago, and that our blessings take varied forms. May I encourage each of us to prayerfully reflect on our own giving, and consider if that giving may be increased. Planned Giving by Standing Order is the most effective means of giving, grounding us in a discipleship commitment, and allows the Minster to have greater certainty about what we have coming in month by month – where possible it would be a great help to the Minster if you could consider this means of giving if you do not already do so.

In prayer, as we continue this journey together.

The Right Reverend Dr Jonathan Frost
Dean of York



VISION FOR A GENEROUS CHURCH

'As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.' 1 Tim 6.17-19

Throughout Lent, we have been reflecting together as a community on how we live Christ's story through the strands of prayer, hospitality, service and stewardship. This process of conversations has been invaluable, as we have engaged in shaping how we live out our faith and invite people to experience God's love. All these strands together draw us into a vision for a generous church, as we seek to give of ourselves both individually and as the body of Christ in enabling God's mission.

Our vision for a generous church is one which is deeply connected to our discipleship, and therefore a journey which spans our whole lives. So as we take time this month to intentionally reflect on our own giving, there are three things which I hope might shape our thinking.

1. A vision for a generous church is one which is grounded in prayer

Prayer is at the heart of the Christian faith – it enables us to grow in relationship with God, teaches us to listen and shapes our lives as we discern what God is calling us to. In the context of giving, our own generosity should begin with prayer, and there is some further thinking on this later in this booklet.

2. A vision for a generous church embraces giving as an expression of love, joy and gift

As Christian people, we love because God first loved us, and we give because God first gave to us – because God's love is gifted love, our love needs to be expressed through giving as well. We see this so often when we give to one another. When we embrace this as a principle in the way that we give to our church, it then becomes a joy to give. Our vision for a generous church is ultimately grounded in an outpouring of love, bubbling over into the mission and ministry to which we are all called.

This principle of giving presents us with a very broad picture. As we live generously as a Christian community, we reveal the nature of God – giving of ourselves in the way we offer our time, hospitality, welcome, care, attentiveness, and our money. The offering of our money is often the most challenging, as we value our independence and tend to want to hold onto what we think of as ours. But the challenge of discipleship teaches us that our identity lies not in ourselves or our possessions, but in God through Christ. All we have and all we are is offered in the service of God, and we are called to respond to that challenge with joy as we see our gifts being used to grow God's kingdom on earth.

In the context of the Minster, we see this outworking in many ways – through our worship which lifts our hearts heavenward, our outreach in Minster Mice and other groups, our support of selected charities, our care of our buildings which speak of our faith, and many other ways. For each of us, we are moved to a place where it is a joy and **privilege to play our part in resourcing this ministry.**

3. A vision for a generous church challenges us to become more Christ-like, growing in sacrificial generosity, and receiving in order to give away
In the Church of England we talk about the five steps of nurturing giving, the five ways we go about thinking about money and possessions – and I wonder as you read them where you see yourself. This is a really helpful illustration of the journey we need to go on as Christians and the journey for us as a church.

1. 'What do I do with my money?' – this is mine, I've earned it, what do I want to do with it?
2. 'What do I want to do with the money God has given to me?', bringing an acknowledgement that God has given us those resources as gift.
3. 'What does God want me to do with what God has given to me?', bringing us into the mind-set that not only has God given us these gifts, but he might also have plans for them which we need to discern in order for us to live a generous life.
4. 'What does God want me to give from what God has given me?', moving us toward not only thinking about what we do, but how much we are willing to give away.
5. 'What does God want me to keep from what has given to me?'. We've moved from seeing things as ours, to being stewards of God's resources, called to reflect on how we are blessed in order to be a blessing, and are given gifts in order to give them away.

This last model of giving, of 'what does God want me to keep from what God has given me', is one which I believe we are called to journey towards, encouraging one another, an growing into that model both individually and as a church. Our vision for a generous church is one which receives in order to give away – grounded in prayer and joy, giving thanks to God, in Jesus Christ."



CELEBRATING GENEROSITY

'You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us.'

2 Corinthians 9.11

As we seek to grow as a generous church, we are encouraged and inspired by one another in the giving that we see around us. Each of us have our own giving stories, all of which we are invited to celebrate and give thanks for, and all contribute to the colourful tapestry of giving and mission in the Minster.

As you read a collection of stories from our community, it is worth asking yourself what your giving story is.

Why do we give? There are so many reasons, it's hard to articulate just a few!

The Minster stands proudly at the centre of our city, speaking so much of faith and history through art and architecture - a place of beauty and artistic creativity.

We're fortunate that week by week in prayer, music and worship it's at the centre of our life - offering us a welcome and community where together we're brought closer to God. As a community we have the chance to work with others, for example through our charities and the wider church.

All of this calls out to us to give in response to God's generous love to us both and as we see the opportunities for so much good to happen through him in this place.

Ben and Ali Fuller

We see it as a joyful way of returning a share of the great bounty we receive from God. In so doing we recognise the work and mission of the Church of England through what we experience at York Minster. We appreciate the interpretation of the Gospel, the prayer, the liturgy, the music and the fellowship we find within the Minster.

We believe that through Mission our contribution will enable the Minster to bring the good news to others who may also share with us in finding God's love.

Veronica and Martin Chapman

Over the years I have received so much spiritual support from worshipping at The Minster. The magnificence of place itself, coupled with the music and the teaching has sustained me. I have made friends within the congregation through the various groups, the walking group, coffee mornings, Sunday School and serving on the Community Committee.

But whatever I gain makes me want to give back in thankfulness. I am able to do that through the opportunities there are to be of service. Working with the children in Sunday School is one way to give - but I get so much out of the experience! The children are a delight and so perceptive. I enjoyed the challenge of organising the coffee mornings and received again by making new friends from the congregation and from amongst the visitors.

It seems that in whatever ways I wish to give - I also receive. A virtuous circle of generosity.

Sue Thompson



MONEY MATTERS

'For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.' Matthew 6.21

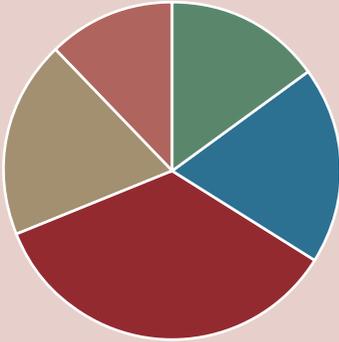
As with any act of giving, it's helpful to know where our money goes, enabling us to trust that our gifts will be used wisely.

What happens when we give?

All our giving is destined for the Minster's central fund, along with other forms of the Minster's income, before being distributed to areas of the Minster's life and mission.



Every £50 given contributes to:



- 15%, £7.50 towards ministry and worship, including music and choir
- 19%, £9.50 towards outreach, education and charitable giving
- 35%, £17.50 towards care of fabric
- 19%, £9.50 towards visitor operations and retail
- 12%, £6.00 towards Church House, including leadership, HR, finance, communications, IT and administration

This breakdown covers all income received in 2020, including giving as well as visitor income, property rent, grant funding and other sources.

Did you know?

All of our giving leads to mission! Our daily worship underpins all we do as a living church, welcomes us all to pray as a community and reveals the glory of God to those who join us. Our giving towards care of fabric helps to preserve our building which speaks of our faith, and develops our space of hospitality and welcome which we offer, whilst our visitor operations and central staffing enable us to engage well with those who visit us.

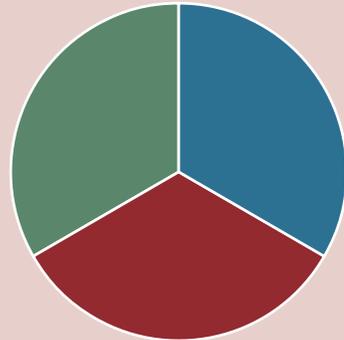
Facts and figures

As at March 2021, the Minster receives 116 separate individual gifts of regular giving through Standing Orders – this is roughly a third of people on our Community Roll. Excluding Gift Aid, our Average Weekly Gift in the Minster is £10.97. The diocesan Average Weekly Gift is £10.25, whilst the national average is £14.10.

Charitable support

As part of our commitment as a generous church, we give 10% of planned giving and Sunday cash giving each year to our three nominated charities – one local, one national and one international charity, chosen by the Social Action Group in consultation with the Minster Community, on behalf of the Minster Community Committee. Each term of charitable support is for a designated period of time, helping us to build relationships and offer prayer and support alongside our financial gifts.

Since 2017, we have been supporting York Neighbours, Homestart and Embrace the Middle East, each receiving an equal third of the following:



- 2017 - £13,389.60
- 2018 - £16,256.57
- 2019 - £16,755.51

= £15,300.56 for each charity over the three year period.

Maintaining value

Because of inflation, the value of our giving decreases over time. This is why it's important that we each regularly reflect on our giving – whether it is realistic, a reflection of God's generosity to us, and how we can best contribute to enable God's mission in our community. Could you increase your giving this year?

PRAYER CORNER

*'Rejoice always, pray without ceasing,
give thanks in all circumstances; for this
is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.'*

1 Thessalonians 5.16-28

Prayer is the foundation of Christian discipleship, as we grow in relationship with God and open ourselves more deeply to the transforming grace of God. In the context of generosity, prayer enables us to give thanks to God for all that we are blessed with, and helps us to discern what he is calling us to give.

As part of our journey of generosity as a community, we encourage you to pray this prayer in the coming weeks, as together we learn more of the generous nature of God and respond in offering our own gifts and resources.

PRAYER

God of abundance,
the author and giver of all good things,
grant us a gracious and humble heart,
that we may give you glory
through offering the First Fruits of our lives,
and grow more into the likeness
of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

At the end of his webinar on Living Christ's Story, the Archbishop of York encouraged us to ground ourselves in the Lord's Prayer, in particular focusing on the words, 'give us today our daily bread'. These words help us to remember that all we have is a gift from God, and our prayer asks for us to know what enough looks like. We pray for God to give us enough for today, and stop us from wanting more.

WAYS TO GIVE

'Freely you have received, freely give.'

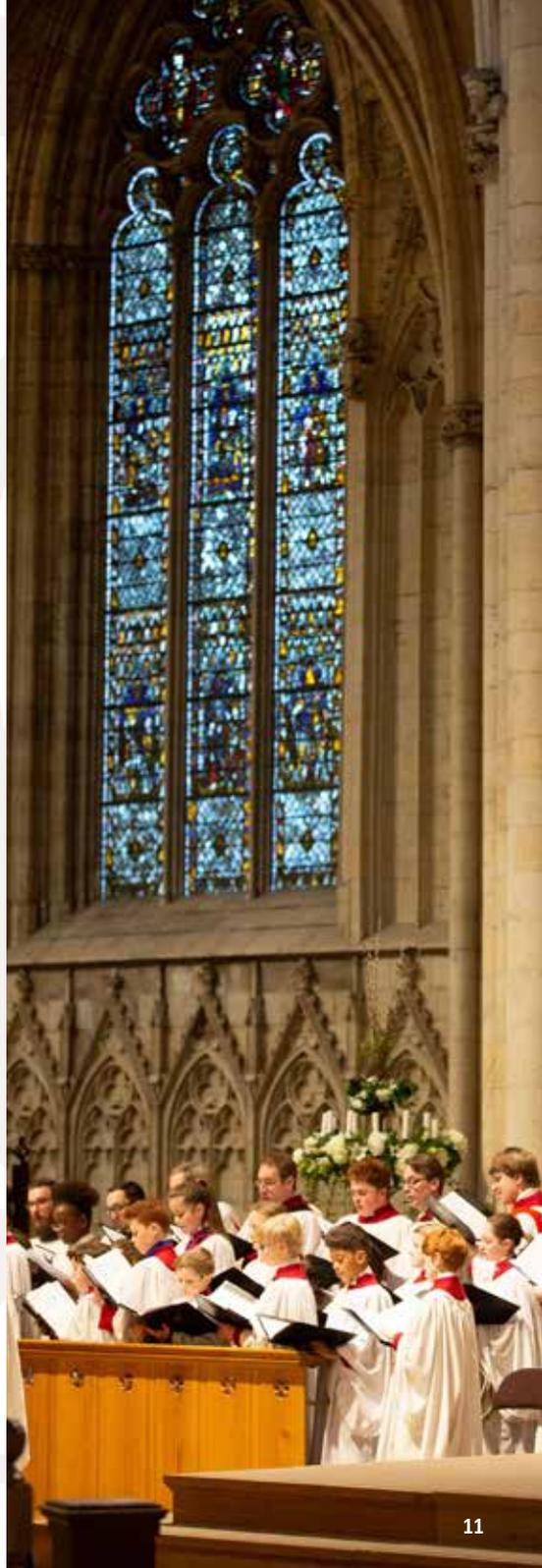
Matthew 10.8 (NKJV)

As disciples, we are called to give the very best that we can offer, as an outpouring of love and a response to God's generosity to us. It is often said that our spending reveals our priorities in life, and it can be helpful to use this to reflect on our discipleship commitment and how our faith is reflected in the way we live our lives.

The way we give matters because it impacts on other people, and the most efficient and safe way to give regularly to the Minster is by Standing Order. Having read the information in this booklet, and prayed and reflected, we encourage you to respond by increasing your giving if you are able, or setting up a new gift if you don't already give.

If you are able to increase your Standing Order, please arrange this yourself with your bank.

If you would like to set up a new Standing Order or if you would like to make a one-off gift to the mission and ministry of the Minster, please write to our Finance Team at Church House, 10-14 Ogleforth, York, YO1 7JN or email finance@yorkminster.org.



THANK YOU

Thank you for all you are able to give. Together, we help to resource the mission and ministry of the Minster, and grow in our discipleship as we continue to build a generous church.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Thanks be to thee,
my joy and my glory and my hope
and my God.

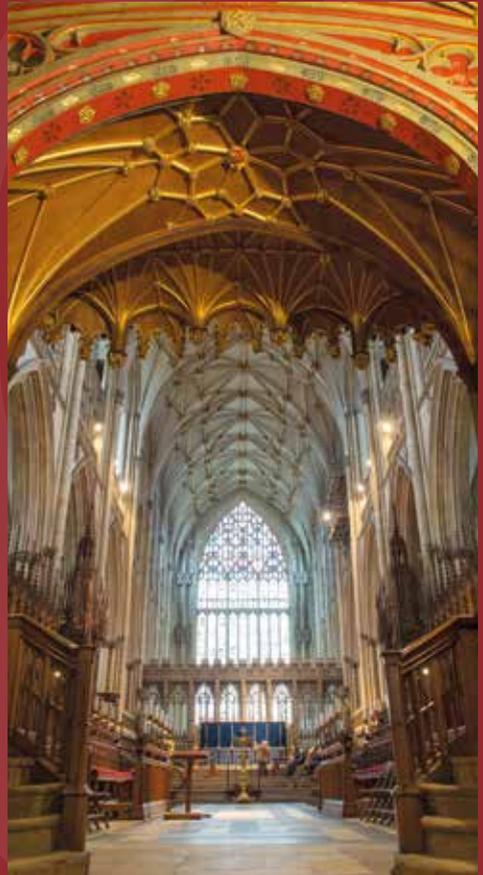
Thanks be to thee for thy gifts;
but do thou preserve them in me,
thus thou wilt preserve me,
and the things thou hast given me will increase
and be made perfect,
and I shall be with thee:
because even that I exist is thy gift.

If you have any questions about the ministry of the Minster, giving and generosity, or how your gifts will be used, the following people would be happy to respond;

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