When the [2020 Parish Share booklet](https://www.blackburn.anglican.org/storage/general-files/shares/Resources/Parish%20finances/FINAL_Blackburn_Diocese_Budget_and_Parish_Share_2020_-_REVISED_DEC_4.pdf) was prepared during Autumn 2019, none of us could have predicted recent events. Although our buildings are gradually reopening for private prayer and, in time, we anticipate for public worship, some churches, particularly those with a high rental or fundraising income have had a significant drop in revenue.

Many parishes have already been proactive in responding and have taken action to review income and outgoings and prepare revised cash flow projections for 2020. We’ve asked all parishes to make maintaining Parish Share a priority. In his introduction to the 2020 Parish Share booklet Bishop Julian noted that ‘as a diocese with minimal historic assets, we can only meet the cost of stipendiary clergy if our people give generously just as Jesus has given so generously to us.’

As we move through this year, below is a checklist of seven stewardship steps all PCC’s should be taking to ensure that generosity continues to be encouraged and expressed. If you need help with any of these steps, our Stewardship Resourcing Officer stephanie.rankin@blackburn.anglican.org will be able to assist you. If you have carried out these steps and find that you need to reduce your Parish Share contributions, contact ruth.mcgaughey@blackburn.anglican.org if you have not already done so. Paul wrote to the Corinthians in 2Corithinans 8v13-14 ‘Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there will be equality. At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need.’

David Barlow
Chair of Diocesan Board of Finance

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **ACTION** | **RESPONSE** |
| 1 | How have you been regularly promoting the principles of generosity gift and grace as part of your online services? Have you made use of the [ready-made customisable animation](https://www.parishresources.org.uk/encouraging-giving-online/) suitable for adding to your website, A Church Near You page, Facebook page and [within your online services](https://www.parishresources.org.uk/encouraging-giving-online/) to encourage giving during the crisis? There is more guidance [here](https://www.blackburn.anglican.org/online-and-contactless-giving). |  |
| 2 | Have you made online giving options available? If not, you are advised to set up the extremely simple and cost effective SumUp solution from Parish Buying. There are more details on our website [here](https://www.blackburn.anglican.org/online-and-contactless-giving).  |  |
| 3 | Did you prepare a cash flow projection and are you regularly updating it? If you have not prepared one, a suitable template is available from our website [here](https://www.blackburn.anglican.org/covid19-advice-for-treasurers#heading-h2-1) |  |
| 4 | If your parish has access to reserves, have you made use of these? Reserves are for emergencies, but now is such a time. Many churches are using reserves rather than reducing Parish Share. All parishes should have a reserves policy and you can find more information about these including examples [here](https://www.parishresources.org.uk/pccs/managing-reserves/)  |  |
| 5 | If your parish has employed staff who have been placed on Furlough but will be returning to work, have you explored the option of combining part time employment with part time furlough from 1 July 2020. |  |
| 6 | Have you applied for anygrants or looked into online fundraising events? Ecclesiastical has created a [fundraising hub](https://www.ecclesiastical.com/church/fundraising/) containing information about emergency grants for churches [together with some suggestions for fundraising if your church relies on fundraising to meet outgoings.](https://www.ecclesiastical.com/church/fundraising/)  Some churches are also eligible for the [Hospitality Grant](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-youre-eligible-for-the-coronavirus-retail-hospitality-and-leisure-grant-fund) of £10,000k if they have a hall assessed for business rates, even if those are zero-rated. |  |
| 7 | Have you investigated letting your hall for emergency use to schools looking for additional space or for use by local council services? Is your hall space being advertised online, and at costs that compare well with other facilities in the area? |  |