

## Financial partnership appeal 2019: an update from the treasurer

At St Helen's we encourage everyone to be partners in the ministry. This has multiple dimensions: prayer, sharing the good news of Jesus, practical service, using time and skills to help the ministry, and encouraging brothers and sisters. For *some* of us, being a financial partner is also a way of supporting the ministry; we ask all those who may be able to give financially to the ministry to pray about doing so.

Many people already do this, but for those who may be thinking about this for the first time, this short update may be helpful.

### What does the Bible tell us about our money?

**That God gave first:** the Bible says 'God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son' (Jn 3:16). God has been exceedingly generous to us. Paul motivates the Corinthians to give by reminding them of 'the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become (spiritually) rich' (2 Cor 8:9). We give because God first gave to us.

**To serve God first:** Jesus warned that it is impossible to serve both God and money (Matt 6:24). One of the ways we demonstrate that we worship God and not our money is the way we use it. Paul refers to the financial gifts of the Philippians as 'a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God' (Phil 4:18). In other words, using our money for the gospel helps to serve and honour God.

**To support those who teach us:** While Paul occasionally worked as a tent maker (Acts 18:3), his calling was to preach the gospel. To enable him to continue his work, he received financial support from several partner churches (Phil 4:15-16). This enabled him to multiply ministry and to make and mature more disciples. He also told Timothy, 'the elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in preaching and teaching' (1 Tim 5:17). By financially supporting gospel work, we free up more people to multiply ministry and grow God's Kingdom.

Charlie Skrine and Aneirin Glyn share some thoughts in two short videos online: [www.st-helens.org.uk/get-involved/give/](http://www.st-helens.org.uk/get-involved/give/)

### How much to give?

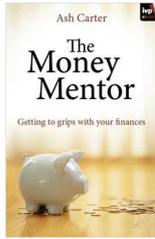
In the Old Testament, God's people were encouraged to give a tithe (10%) of their income back to him. This idea is first introduced in Leviticus 27:30. The New Testament never names a specific amount that we should give. Rather, it tells us to be generous in proportion to our income (1 Cor 16:1-2). This means that a widow's mite can be more generous than a rich person's gift, even if the widow's mite is a smaller amount (Lk 21:1-4).

In the New Testament, we learn God wants our giving to flow from thankfulness, faith and love for God and others. Rather than a rule to give 10%, we are now called to show generosity in response to God's unlimited grace shown to us in Jesus Christ (for some of us that could mean giving a little, for others it might be 20%, 30% or more).

As 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 reminds us, our giving is ultimately a matter for prayerful consideration before God. Our finances are just one of the many areas that we should bring before God in prayer as we consider how to serve him with all that he has so graciously given us.

### Practical tools

There are many practical guides available. Two books that stand out as being both practical and theological in their approach:



'The Money Mentor' by Ash Carter—looks at our daily financial decisions and shows us how such decisions can best serve God's greater purposes. It offers a godly yet simple model of Christian money management to establish good practices.



'Money Counts' by Graham Beynon—part of The Good Book Company's 'Live Different' series, the book uses the gospel to show how we can handle money well in our hearts, so we can handle it wisely with our hands.

Either of these books would be a great resource to use as individuals, as a family, as a small group or for a discussion with friends.

## Practical options for giving

### Tax efficient giving to St Helen's—adds 25% to the gift's value

If you pay UK tax then, once you have prayerfully decided to make a gift to St Helen's, you can maximise the impact of your gift to us by making it tax efficient, both for regular giving and one-off gifts. A Gift Aid declaration enables St Helen's to claim an additional 25p (the basic rate of tax you've already paid on your donation). So, for every £1 you give, St Helen's receives £1.25.

You can complete an online gift aid declaration online: [www.st-helens.org.uk/get-involved/give/](http://www.st-helens.org.uk/get-involved/give/) or use forms at the back of church.

If you want to check or amend a Gift Aid declaration please contact [giving@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:giving@st-helens.org.uk) To use Gift Aid you need to pay more in tax than the value of any tax that will be reclaimed from gifts under the Gift Aid scheme.



### Additional 25%+ relief for higher and additional rate taxpayers

If you pay UK tax at the higher or additional rate, you can also benefit directly from Gift Aid by claiming back the extra tax (over and above basic rate) that you've already paid on your donation. This amounts to 25p reclaim for every £1 you give if you're a higher rate taxpayer, or 31.25p for every £1 you give if you're an additional rate taxpayer.

To make a personal reclaim as a higher rate taxpayer, you need to include details of your giving on your tax return, or contact HMRC for a P810 form if you don't submit tax returns. If you pay tax through PAYE and are committed to regular giving, you can ask HMRC to adjust your tax code instead, meaning you will pay less tax each month rather than having to submit a reclaim at the end of the tax year.

If your income is variable and you prefer to wait until the end of the tax year before working out how much you can give under Gift Aid, then you can ask HMRC to treat a gift made in the current tax year as if it had been made in the previous tax year.

### Payroll giving and Give As You Earn

Your employer may participate in a scheme under which charitable gifts can be deducted directly from your salary. In this case the gift is deducted from your salary before tax, so you don't pay any tax on it and therefore don't need to submit a tax reclaim (though you may want to bear the tax benefit in mind when you decide how much to give to St Helen's since we cannot reclaim any additional tax).

### **Employer Matched Giving**

Some employers encourage charitable giving by matching some, or all, of an employee's giving through a payroll scheme. This can make a big additional impact. Some schemes have restrictions on the eligible charitable activity, but often they can support some aspects of our ministry. Please contact our giving team if you need guidance.

### **Stewardship Giving Account**

Stewardship is a Christian charity which promotes tax-efficient giving. You can use an online Stewardship giving account to manage your giving not only to St Helen's but to multiple other Christian and secular charities. Uniquely, they can help support qualifying individuals such as ministry trainees, mission partners and Bible college students.

For those giving larger amounts, the Stewardship Gold account offers benefits similar to having your own charitable trust, but without the compliance or publicity requirements.

For more information about Stewardship, please contact [rachel.steeden@stewardship.org.uk](mailto:rachel.steeden@stewardship.org.uk) (Rachel is a member of the 10.30am congregation).

## **Other useful to know information**

### **Gifts of shares to charity and other assets – a very tax effective gift**

If you give shares, buildings or land to St Helen's (or any charity) there is no capital gains tax to pay on them. In addition, you can deduct the value of the gift from your taxable income, reducing your income tax bill as well.

A gift of shares or other assets, especially if they are standing at a significant gain, may be much more tax-efficient than simply selling the shares and making a cash gift of the net proceeds under gift aid. It could reduce the cost of the gift by 20% or more depending on your marginal tax rate.

The arrangements apply to listed shares (in the UK or elsewhere), units in an authorised unit trust or shares in an open-ended investment company.

### **Leaving a legacy – inheritance tax exemption**

Leaving a legacy on your death may offer a good opportunity to make a substantial gift to St Helen's or other charities.

A legacy gift to St Helen's is free of inheritance tax. In addition, if you leave at least 10% of your estate to St Helen's or other charities, your other recipients will benefit from a reduced inheritance tax rate of 36% rather than 40%.

In order to leave a legacy, you will need to make or update your will. The formalities for making a valid will are strict and so it is usually best to use a solicitor or will writing service.

For more information about biblical, legal and tax considerations in making your will, please see Stewardship's briefing paper available at <http://bit.ly/2HdAxyy>

### **Gift out of an inheritance – inheritance tax exemption**

If you'd like to make a gift to St Helen's out of an inheritance you've received, you may benefit from using a deed of variation. This is a document by which you agree to change the will so as to redirect some or all of your inheritance to a charity or another recipient. The deed must be made within two years of death.

For inheritance tax purposes, the charitable gift is treated as if it had been made directly by the deceased under his or her will. This means that the estate can save the inheritance tax which would otherwise have been paid on the value of the charitable gift. Furthermore, if the charitable gift qualifies the estate for the reduced inheritance tax rate of 36% (see earlier), other beneficiaries may also be able to reclaim some inheritance tax.

### **Giving by dual UK/US taxpayers**

If you are a dual UK/US taxpayer, you can give tax-efficiently using a dual-qualified donor advised fund. This is a charity which is recognised both by HMRC and by the IRS, so your gifts are eligible both for gift aid and for a US federal tax deduction. The dual-qualified charity will receive your gift into a giving account from which you can request donations to St Helen's and other UK, US or overseas charities.

Current providers of dual-qualified donor advised funds include CAF American Donor Fund and NPT-UK. Stewardship will be launching its own dual-qualified fund later this year – for more information about Stewardship America, please contact [rachel.steeden@stewardship.org.uk](mailto:rachel.steeden@stewardship.org.uk)

For more information on these, or any other, giving topics please speak to our treasurer, Jeremy Anderson, or email questions to him at [jeremy.anderson@btinternet.com](mailto:jeremy.anderson@btinternet.com). For administrative help please email [giving@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:giving@st-helens.org.uk).

Please continue to pray for our finances and our stewardship of resources.