

Giving for Life

Standing Orders and Envelope Schemes

Standing Orders or numbered envelopes provide church members with a way of giving regularly to the church. By planning your giving, you can put aside an amount each month or week for the mission of the church, whether you are there every week, or indeed, whether there is a service every Sunday. This is exactly in line with what St Paul said to the first Christians:

‘On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that contributions need not be made when I come.’ (1 Corinthians 16: 2)



Regular planned giving enables you to be consistent about your giving and enables the church to know what to expect, making it much easier to meet expenses and plan properly for the future.

Standing Orders

A regular Standing Order is the easiest way for you to give to your church. It can come out every month and you do not need to remember to draw cash out each week to put in an envelope for the collection plate, only for the Treasurer to pay the money in possibly to the same bank each Monday!

A Standing Order form can be downloaded from our Planned Giving Review Programmes webpage in the Planned Giving section of our website at <https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/parish-support/christian-giving-and-funding/planned-giving/> which you can use to set up or amend a Standing Order for your church, along with a Gift Aid Declaration if you pay sufficient tax.

Numbered envelopes

Numbered envelopes usually come with 52 (weekly) or 12 (monthly) envelopes in a set, each dated. Each church member has their own number printed on their set of envelopes.

The amount of your gift is known only to you, the person who keeps the records (usually the Treasurer, but sometimes a Gift Aid or Giving Secretary) – and God.

- If you are using envelopes, the person who passes the plate round cannot see how much (or how little!) you have put in.
- The people who count money after the service know that ‘envelope number 27’ contained (say) £10.00, but they do not know who has envelope number 27.

Encouraging generous giving

It is a good idea to prayerfully review your giving on an annual basis, so that it reflects changes in your income or your current circumstances, keeping your planned giving up-to-date.

You can encourage your church members to use Standing Orders or numbered envelopes as part of an annual planned giving review, so that people can pledge a regular amount, complete a Standing Order form/request a set of envelopes and complete a Gift Aid declaration all on the same form. An annual review provides an opportunity for the church to encourage every member to prayerfully consider their giving to the life of the church, through a sermon and other teaching opportunities combined with a personal letter and planned giving review booklet.

Getting the right envelopes

It is very easy to get supplies of envelopes which will suit your parish – contact us for details. The main firms offer several sizes of envelope. They can be plain and simple, or overprinted with the church name and a text. The cost varies with the number you order and with any overprinting, but most parishes find the envelopes pay for themselves because they increase the regular giving from church members. It is worth avoiding the very small envelopes which only hold a 50p coin – they encourage small gifts, and make it very difficult to give, or to count, £5, £10 and £20 notes!

Counting up after services

You will need to keep a simple register each week so that when the cash is counted, the counters can keep a log of how much has been given in each envelope each week. This is particularly important if people are using Gift Aid to increase the value of their gift.

Gift Aid

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Gift Aid is the Government scheme for increasing the value of gifts made to charities. It means that HM Revenue & Customs will add 25 pence to every pound which a taxpayer donates. Every taxpayer in the congregation should be asked to sign the simple Gift Aid Declaration, providing they pay an amount of tax during the tax year which at least equals the tax being reclaimed on all their donations to your church and other charities. Parishes in the Diocese of Bath and Wells receive a total of more than £2.7 million from the taxman in this way.

You can also use un-numbered yellow Gift Aid envelopes for gifts made by occasional worshippers and visitors. These are available from the Giving and Funding team at Wells.

For more information about Christian Giving and Funding, contact Sue Whitehead, PA to the Giving and Funding Adviser:

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<https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/parish-support/christian-giving-and-funding/>