

September 2020

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As the Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance 'the Board' and as a church treasurer, I recognise there is important work ahead of us if we are to survive and grow during and following the present crisis.

As you know, the recent months have been changeable and unpredictable but nevertheless the Board made careful and considered judgements that our churches and LMAs should have the full benefit of the initial packages of funding granted by the Representative Body of The Church in Wales 'RB'. This ensured that the payment of Quarters Two and Three of Ministry Share was not required. However, this cannot be a permanent arrangement and we must now work together to assess how we should proceed. The present approach takes no account of need, of diocesan financial strength or of the danger of creating unrealistic expectations of continuing financial assistance.

The RB met in early September to weigh up the cost of providing further support to the dioceses against the effect it will have on the Province as a whole. It decided that, because of the uncertainty surrounding how the pandemic might develop in the winter months, the trustees should examine Quarter Four of 2020 and Quarter One of 2021 as a single time period so that a more accurate and informative assessment of the financial situation can be made. It is understood that the RB will meet to do this in the New Year.

The RB also decided that no further funding support would be made to dioceses in 2020, but that in January 2021 it will consider needs based on the financial situations of all the dioceses at the end of 2020 taking the whole of the financial year into account when making decisions.

These decisions will obviously have an impact on the way that we can support our churches and so we ask that you re-commence your Ministry Share contributions for Quarter Four, so that Ministry and Mission can continue.

Some Churches were able to continue making their Ministry Share contributions over the last two quarters and in line with our previous commitments these payments will be credited against Quarter Four and where applicable Quarter One next year.

Together we must build a stronger future for the Diocese and to that end the Board is working to make savings, improve budgeting processes and our ability to adapt. The last months have shown that we can all realise these goals as we lay what must now be a new path towards the future.

COVID-19 has posed new and previously unimaginable challenges for us all and especially organisations such as ours which depend for their very existence on voluntary giving. But within every challenge is perhaps an even greater opportunity. Our capacity to seize those opportunities will be in direct proportion to responses to the request to resume giving.

Many of us may have thought we had 'done our bit' and facing new and significant challenges was for other, perhaps younger, people. On the contrary, this crisis has shown us that humanity must find every opportunity to show it values all its parts and peoples. Let us seize this moment to build on what we have learned, to embrace our new reality, to encourage and welcome new faces, and to find additional ways to shine. This is how we will have a continuing impact on the world.

I hope that you will be able to resume your payments in full or, if you are unable, to pay what you can afford.

If you have any concerns as to whether your Church can pay, please inform your Archdeacon, and contact Rev Jeff Thomas, the Diocesan Stewardship and Support Officer at jeffthomas@churchinwales.org.uk to enable support and assistance.

Yours in Christ



N Griffin
Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance