



February 2010

Martin Bishop
Financial Secretary

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Dear Treasurer,

Parish Share Account

I enclose an updated statement for your parish, showing the position as at **12th February 2010**. This includes all remittances received up to this date and also a debit in respect of the first quarter's parish share for 2010.

Porch Card

In the case where your parish has met its parish share in full for the year, including amounts received up to 29th January, a porch card has been enclosed. (If you have received this letter by email then the porch card, where applicable, will be sent out in the conventional post to you shortly).

Diocesan Common Fund Outturn 2009

The total requested from parishes last year was **£10,664,423** (2008 - £ 10,286,648) of which **£9,921,218** (93.0% of the amount requested) was received by the end of January (2008 - £ 9,501,073 – 92.4%) and therefore will be included in the annual accounts as received for 2009. In addition to this, a further £162,000 was received from parishes during 2009 in respect of 2008 and earlier years. On behalf of the Board of Finance I would like to thank parishes for their ongoing contributions to the Diocesan Common Fund which in turn supports the parish mission and ministry in this diocese.

Many of you now pay some or all of the parish share by regular monthly transfers from your bank. If you do not already do this and would be in a position to do so, then please contact a member of the Accounts Team, who would be pleased to help you set this up.

Stipends Letter

Please find enclosed a copy of the annual letter from the Diocesan Secretary that was sent in last month's "bundle" to Stipendiary and Clergy and Lay Ministers

(<http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/Information/The-Diocesan-Handbook/Section-G/Section-G2>)

“Investing Your Reserves”

(<http://www.parishresources.org.uk/charity/investingreserves.pdf>)

is the title of a recent short guide produced by the national Stewardship Officer. I enclose a copy for your interest and reference. This guide does NOT make any specific recommendations to PCCs as to where and how their reserves should be invested, but seeks to make PCCs aware of some available options.

Geoff Fletcher, Stewardship Adviser, is always pleased to be in touch with parishes enquiring about stewardship and other resourcing issues and initiatives. He can be contacted on gletcher@stalbans.anglican.org and on tel 01727 818141.

Trustees Annual Report

I enclose a brief guide, published by the Charities Commission on the contents of the Trustees Annual Report.

(<http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/Resources/Finance/Circular-letters-to-Treasurers>)

As well as the ACAT Handbook, further guidance can be obtained from the following publications which can be obtained by contacting Ron Upton in our Resources Centre:

- (i) The Charities Act 1993 and the PCC (**3rd edition**)
- (ii) The Charities Act 1993 and the PCC - Preparing Receipt & Payment accounts (SORP 2005)

Newsletter from ACAT

(http://www.acat.uk.com/acat/January_2010.pdf)

This recent newsletter includes an article on music copyright and licensing. In connection with this, the following announcement from Christian Copyright Licensing International, (CCLI), may also be of interest:

Date : Dec 17th 2009

Changes in Copyright Law

As you may have heard, a government consultation, set up to review Sections 67 and 72 of the Copyright Designs & Patents Act 1988, has recently concluded.

This has sparked a lot of interest among charitable and not-for-profit organisations. Consequently CCLI is receiving enquiries from churches and Christian organisations wishing to find out how any proposed changes might affect them.

At this stage, nothing has been finalised and we understand that any recommendations have yet to be debated by Parliament. Once a final decision is made, CCLI will provide an update about how we believe churches will be affected. This will be made available on www.ccli.co.uk.

Archbishops Council Budget 2010

I enclose for information a leaflet about the 2010 Archbishops' Council Budget.

(<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/info/finance>)

Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme and Gift Aid

(A note from Frank Cranmer Secretary, Churches' Legislation Advisory Service, Church House)

The current Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme came into effect on 1 April 2001. Between its inception and 31 December 2009, some £81 million has been returned in grant to churches in England to offset VAT on approved works, of which over 90 per cent has gone consistently to the Church of England.

Unless the Scheme is extended after 31 March 2011 it will be lost. Unfortunately, the Government's attempt to include the repair and renovation of listed places of worship in the EU's approved list of reduced and zero VAT rates was rebuffed at the ECOFIN meeting in March 2009. The Secretary General of the Archbishops' Council proposes to write to the PM asking him to support an extension.

Charities and other charities making Gift Aid repayment claims are currently entitled to Gift Aid transitional relief relating to qualifying donations made in the tax years 2008–09 to 2010–11. Across the sector generally, HMRC's latest figures show that Gift Aid claims by charities were worth £967 million in 2008–09 and the projected outturn for 2009–10 is £911 million.

The impact of this on the Churches is difficult to assess. However, the major denominations are particularly effective at getting their donors to sign up to Gift Aid (and I suspect that the Church of

England is the largest single recipient of Gift Aid repayments). Therefore, even on an extremely conservative assumption that only five per cent of the total annual Gift Aid repayments to the voluntary sector as a whole goes to the Churches collectively, the ending of the transitional relief could create an annual shortfall in Church incomes across the board of £4 million.

Charities and churches are having detailed discussions with the Treasury and HMRC on reforming Gift Aid to make it easier for charities to administer. In the meantime, however, if there is a message for the Churches in all this, it is to redouble their already considerable efforts to get people signed up to regular, Gift-Aided giving.