

CHURCH LEGACY

A lasting gift to your church



Gifts of Faith,
Hope and Love

A guide to writing your will, to reflect your Christian Faith

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

www.churchlegacy.org.uk



We are privileged if we can leave a mark of our passing, to be remembered by those people and causes we've cared for in life. A gift in your will to your church is one of the most valuable and lasting ways you can continue to support its mission and ministry.

As a Christian, and a member of your local church, many of us have been giving regularly to the mission and ministry of the parish. Our generosity is a response to God's abundant grace and is demonstrated through our lives and the lives we share with others.



Making a Real Difference


All churches rely entirely upon the support of generous Christians. Our giving is vitally important and helps sustain mission both here in this country, and overseas.

For example, through our church buildings and parish clergy and our wider parish ministry; as measured by every ill person visited, every confirmation course run, every assembly taken, every bereaved family comforted, every baptism celebrated, every sermon preached, Eucharist celebrated, and every person shown the love of Christ through our care, comfort and compassion.

Your Gift

Beyond our regular lifetime giving a gift in your will can be a final and powerful expression of your gratitude and thanksgiving towards God, and can help transform your local church's future.

We pray that as you plan how to distribute your estate, you will feel encouraged to remember your church family and we invite you to consider how a gift in your will could help the Church meet the needs of future generations.

A group of people, including children and adults, are dancing in a church. The scene is captured in a candid, slightly blurred style, suggesting movement. The dancers are dressed in casual to semi-formal attire. The church's interior features high, vaulted ceilings and stone walls. In the background, a wooden altar area is visible with a floral arrangement and a speaker. The overall atmosphere is joyful and communal.

“ But those who hope
in the LORD will renew
their strength. They
will soar on wings like
eagles; they will run and
not grow weary, they will
walk and not be faint.”

ISAIAH 40:31

“Where your treasure is,
there your heart will be also.”

LUKE 12.34



Writing your Will

For nearly 500 years the Church of England has encouraged people to make a will. The Book of Common Prayer instructs clergy to remind those who are sick:

“Let him be admonished to make his will... for the better discharging of his conscience and the quietness of his Executors. But men should often be put in remembrance to take order for the settling of their temporal estates, whilst they are in health.”

Making a will and updating it regularly is the only way to make sure your wishes are carried out after your death, giving you peace of mind that you can continue to support the family, friends and causes you love.

Why every Christian should have a Will

We are God's stewards, entrusted to use His gifts for the good of our loved ones. In thanksgiving, we should also take will writing seriously – setting our affairs in order, and stewarding them wisely to the end of our time on earth and beyond.

Free will writing and Discount Schemes

Wills are legal documents, and as small errors can cause big problems, it's vital to have someone legally qualified to draft it.

There are a number of low cost wills, or individual and charity based schemes available. To find out more, please visit www.churchlegacy.org.uk/lowcostwills

Making your will is simple!

1

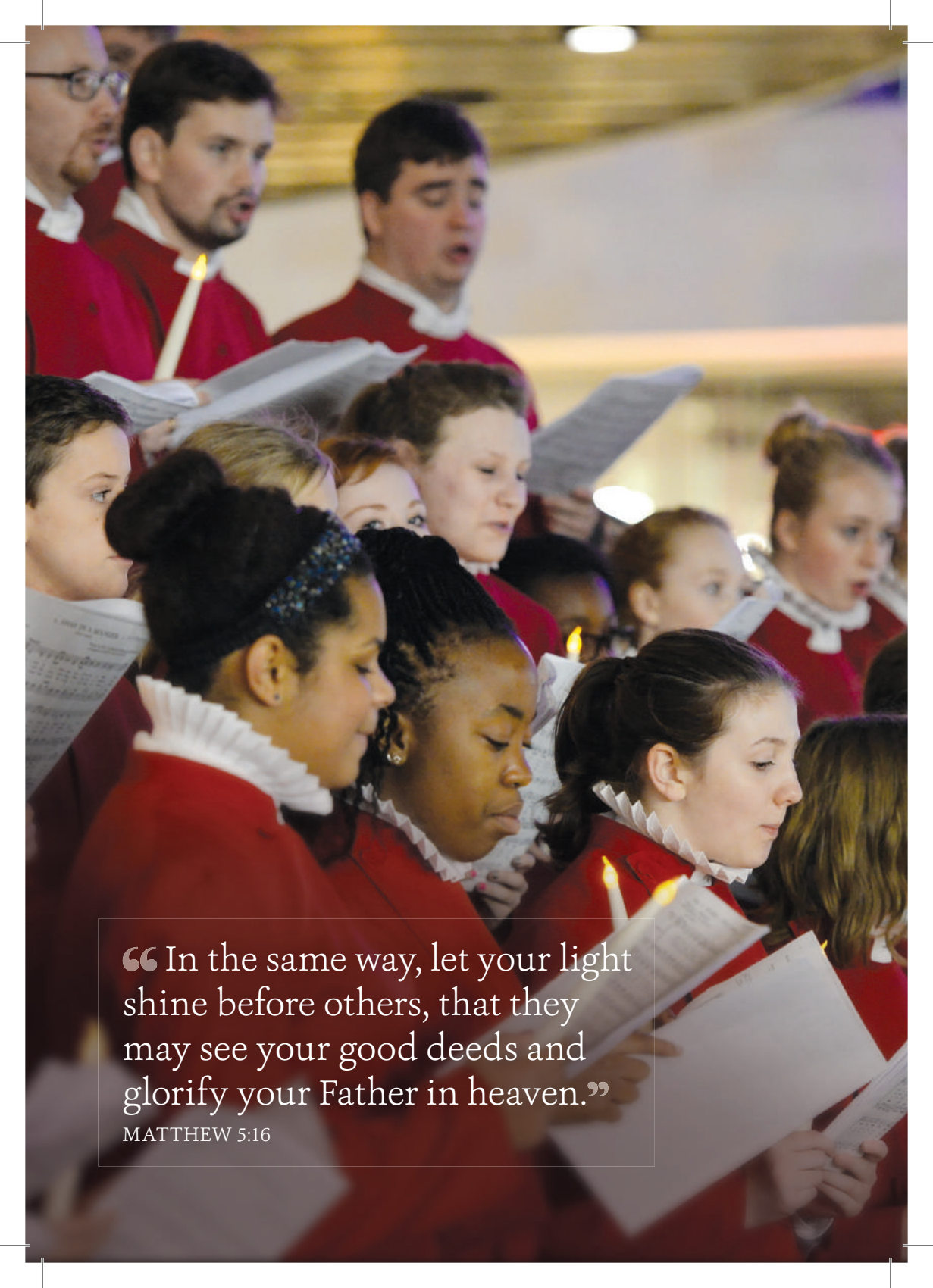
Use the 'Preparing to visit your solicitor' form to help plan how you would like to divide your estate and other important decisions.

2

Find a Solicitor – ask your family/ friends for local recommendations or try searching on www.lawsociety.org.uk


3

Make an appointment to see your solicitor and take this pack with you.

A photograph of a choir performing in a church. The choir members are wearing red robes with white ruffled collars. They are holding sheet music and lit candles. The scene is lit with warm, golden light, creating a solemn and reverent atmosphere. The choir is arranged in several rows, with some members in the foreground and others in the background. The background shows the interior of a church with a high ceiling and some architectural details.

“In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

MATTHEW 5:16



“Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendour, for everything in heaven and earth is yours.”

1 CHRONICLES 29:11

Your Church, Your Gift

The Church of England is not a single charity, but a gathering of the faithful and this is reflected in its institutional structure as a family of related charities. There are many ways you can support the work of the Church with a gift in your will.

To your Local Church

A local parish church enables engagement in every community. A gift in your will could make a lasting difference and help to further the mission and ministry of your church.

To your Cathedral

A Cathedral is often the most historic and architecturally important building in its city. A gift to a Cathedral would help preserve this beautiful building for future visitors, worshippers and pilgrims from near and far.

To your Diocese

Many Dioceses make grants to parishes. Your gift could enable churches in poorer parts of the region or help them to engage in projects they believe God is calling them to do.

To the Church of England

Gifts can be left to help the work of the Church nationally; to help support retired clergy or fund special projects such as the Weddings, Baptism and Funerals Project.

The Church Legacy Service

This is a free service offered, to make it easier for you to leave a gift to the wider work of the Church or to multiple church recipients. By inserting a single clause in your will to the Archbishops' Council and completing a letter of wishes, we can channel your gift to enable the work you want to see happen.

The Archbishops' Council (Registered Charity Number 1074857) will administer your gift/s on behalf of the Parish Church, Cathedral, Diocese or Christian Charity you would like to benefit from your estate.

You can change your mind about where you would like your gifts to go at any time - by simply writing a new letter of wishes, and without having to change your will.

For more information please visit
www.churchlegacy.org.uk/churchlegacyservice

“Command them to do good,
to be rich in good deeds, and to be
generous and willing to share.”

1 TIMOTHY 6:18-19



“Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

2 CORINTHIANS 9.7



Generous God,

you have given me so much.

In response to all your blessings,
I pray for grace to continue to be
a means of blessing in the lives of
others. Grant me the wisdom and
generosity of your Spirit to make
appropriate provision for those
I love and care for, and gifts of
thanksgiving to the causes and
concerns you led me to care about.
Amen

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

JOHN 3:16



An Amazing Gift

No matter how large or small, gifts in wills create amazing opportunities for mission. Here are some examples of projects that have been made possible through a legacy gift.

Child Size Chasubles and Stoles

St Michael and all Angels, Thornhill received a £300 legacy left by a parishioner. The church commissioned a full set of child size chasubles and stoles, which are helping children learn about the significance and wonder of the sacraments.

A Place to Gather

A legacy of £20,000 helped St Mary's, Stoke D'Abernon fundraise for a new church hall. The new social space has become a great asset to the church providing a church office, meeting room and outdoor community café.

Supporting New Mission Projects

St John Lee, near Hexham received a generous legacy from a former member of the Parochial Church Council. The gift has made a huge difference to the pastoral and mission projects of the church – supporting Messy Church and paying for ministerial development training.

How to make a Lasting Gift

No matter how large or small, every gift can make a difference.

To leave a share of your estate (Residuary Bequest)

This is the gift of all or part of the value of your estate (after debts, other legacies and liabilities have been met). This has the advantage of automatically keeping up with inflation.

To leave a fixed sum of money (Pecuniary Bequest)

You can choose to leave a sum of money, which you can arrange with your solicitor to be increased in line with inflation.

The suggested wording for a bequest is:

“I give _____% of my residuary estate **OR** I give the sum of £ _____ pounds only free of all taxes to the Parochial Church Council of the parish of _____ (registered charity number if applicable) in the Diocese of _____ for its general purposes, and I declare that the receipt of an officer of the Parochial Church Council shall be a sufficient discharge to my executors and trustees.”



“O Lord our God,
all this abundance
that we have provided
for building you a
house for your holy
name comes from
your hand and is all
your own.”

1 CHRONICLES 29:16

Frequently Asked Questions

How might I divide up my estate?

When deciding how to divide up your estate, it may be appropriate to consider thinking in ‘percentages’ rather than specific cash amounts. This also reflects the Church’s teachings on proportionate giving.

What are the tax implications?

All gifts to charities (including churches) in wills are tax-free. Gifts to your local church and other charities would be deducted from the value of your estate when inheritance tax is calculated.

What happens if my church doesn’t have a registered charity number?

All Church of England churches hold charitable status even if they do not have a Registered Charity Number. If the church does not have a registered charity number, the only information you need to leave a gift in your will to your local church is its full name and address.

I am happy with my will, but I want to add a gift to my local church. What do I do?

Ask your solicitor or legal advisor to draw up a codicil – this is a simple legal addition to your existing will. We have a codicil template available online which you can download www.churchlegacy.org.uk/codicil

What is a Letter of Wishes?

A letter of wishes is a document that accompanies your will. It is not legally binding but can guide your executors and trustees to ensure your personal wishes are carried out. We have a letter of wishes template available online which you can download www.churchlegacy.org.uk/wishes

How will my gift be used?

A legacy can be left to your local church for specific or general purposes. However since needs change over the years, churches encourage gifts to be left for the general purposes of the parish (unrestricted), rather than for a specific purpose (restricted). Many parishes have a written Legacy Policy confirming that however large or small, gifts will be used to make a real difference.

Contact Us

You can discuss gifts in wills in confidence by contacting your Incumbent, Legacy Officer or Treasurer.

Alternatively, you can visit the Church Legacy website www.churchlegacy.org.uk or call the Church Legacy and Wills Information Line on 08445 870875.

“Rejoice in hope,
be patient in suffering,
persevere in prayer.”

ROMANS 12:12

Encouraging words, which we can all draw strength from in our day to day living. Our hope is built on God's love, a sure and certain thing which enables us to endure with patience the trials and tribulations of this world.

For many of us the idea of persevering in prayer might be the harder part, yet it is through prayer that we will discern God's will for our lives and that includes seeking his guidance on how we use all that he has entrusted to us for his glory.

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“And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

1 CORINTHIANS 13:13

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