

Acceptance, Disclosure & Handling of Financial (& Other) Gifts Policy

Purpose

This policy provides guidelines for Ministers, church staff and volunteers regarding the acceptance, disclosure, and appropriate handling of financial (and non-financial) gifts offered in the course of their ministry or work with the church. It is designed to uphold transparency, accountability, and integrity within our staff/volunteer team and broader church community.

Scope

This policy applies to all paid staff and volunteers, including Ministers, Trustees, staff and any individual acting in an official capacity on behalf of the church. 'Staff', as used below, includes employed and volunteer roles.

General Principles

Staff members are expected to serve with integrity and avoid any appearance of impropriety or conflict of interest. All gifts (financial and other) received in the course of ministry or work within the church—whether from Church Members, attendees, ministry partners, or external sources—must be handled in a manner that maintains public trust and aligns with the church's mission and values.

Guidelines for Receiving Gifts (Financial and Other)

Personal Gifts Under A Value Of £100*

Staff may accept personal gifts (financial or other) or tokens of appreciation (e.g. a gift card, flowers, chocolate, etc) under the value of £100 annually per giver) without the need for disclosure, provided:

- a. The gift is not solicited.
- b. The gift does not create a conflict of interest.
- c. The gift is not given in exchange for preferential treatment or church-related influence.
- d. The gift not a benefit in kind but rather a personal gift.
- e. The gift does not somehow conflict with our safeguarding policies and procedures.
- f. The recipient has not already received a total of more than £1,000 within the past 12 months from one donor or a combination of donors.
- g. The recipient recognises their responsibility to self-assess the gift, where appropriate, for taxation purposes.

*For Church Trustees (excluding accredited Ministers) this value is £50.

Gifts Over £100" In Value or Of A Repeated Nature

Any gift (financial or other) over £100 in value or recurring in nature (e.g. monthly support) must be reported to a Line-Manager or Church Treasurer within 10 days of receipt. Line-Mangers and/or the Church Treasurer will then assess whether:

- a. The gift should be formally declined or redirected to the church.
- b. The gift poses any ethical, relational, pastoral, conflict of interest or safeguarding concerns.

*For Church Trustees, (excluding accredited Ministers) this value is £50.

Anonymous Gifts

Anonymous gifts of any value received in the course of ministry should be reported to the Church Treasurer or Line-Manager who will determine how the gift should be accounted for.

Gifts Intended for the Church or Third Party Organisations

Any gift clearly intended for church use, a church-related cause (e.g., missions, build project, etc.) or third party (e.g. external charity) must be forwarded to the Church Treasurer for processing. Staff must not deposit such gifts into personal accounts, even for the purpose of then forwarding the gift to the intended recipient.

Wills & Legacy Gifts

Staff must not solicit or encourage inclusion in a will or trust.

Staff must disclose immediately if they become aware that they are personally named as a beneficiary in a will or trust from a Church Member or donor, especially if that gift is related to their pastoral or ministerial relationship.

In most cases, such gifts will need to be reviewed by the church's leadership team and/or legal/financial counsel to avoid conflicts of interest.

Disclosure & Recordkeeping

Staff are encouraged to maintain transparency in their financial interactions and keep records of all gifts (financial or other) received and any actions taken with them. The church will maintain a secure record of such disclosures for accountability purposes. Individual staff are responsible for self-assessment of any gifts received for taxation purposes. Records will be kept in accordance with our Data Retention Policy.

Prohibited Gifts

Staff may not accept:

- a. Any gifts that may compromise their impartiality.
- b. Gifts intended to influence church decisions or gain favour.
- c. Gifts that violate legal or tax regulations.
- d. Gifts that compromise our safeguarding policies and procedures.

Disciplinary Actions

Violation of this policy may result in corrective action, including but not limited to reprimand, requirement to return or surrender the gift, suspension, or termination, depending on the severity of the breach.

Questions & Clarifications

For guidance on specific situations not clearly addressed in this policy, staff should consult their Line Manager or the Church Treasurer.