

Why give to my local church?

There are a number of good reasons why Christians give money to their local church.

1. Stewardship

Everything I own belongs to God and I am accountable to him for the way I use it. This is emphasised in Jesus' stewardship parables (Matthew 25:14-21; Luke 19:11-27), where the good steward of his master's wealth is commended, while the bad (stingy!) steward suffers judgment. We are to store up riches for ourselves in the Kingdom of Heaven instead of here on earth (Luke 6:24; 12:16-21; 16:19-31; 18:18-30). When Jesus speaks of this kind of stewardship, he has in mind our whole lives, not just our money. However, in this sense, it is true that our use of money can be an indicator of our wider spiritual condition.

2. As an expression of gratitude to God

Though he was infinitely 'rich', Jesus made himself poor so that we might become rich (2 Corinthians 8:9). Financial giving is often an expression of thanksgiving to God for salvation and material abundance in this life.

3. Our obligations to our church staff

Christians have an obligation to share all good things with those whose work it is to teach and preach. This has always been the practice of the Christian church, which found a precedent in the Old Testament temple system of priests and tithes (1 Timothy 5:17-18; 1 Corinthians 9:3-14; Galatians 6:6).

4. Compassion for the poor

Christians are to give generously to the

poor as a demonstration of the grace God has bestowed upon us (2 Corinthians 8-9; Proverbs 19:17; 22:9). This was the practice of Christians from the very beginning, first of all to those within the Christian community, and then to all people generally (Acts 4:32-37; Galatians 6:10).

5. Strategic Gospel Partnerships

The wise steward will want to get the greatest gospel return for his or her investment. We share in the gospel work of others when we partner with them financially. Not all of us are evangelists, preachers, missionaries or youth workers. But we set them free to do the job to which God has called and equipped them when we commit to supporting them financially (Philippians 1:3-7; 4:10-20).

6. Fleeing from Greed

Christians also give in order to free themselves from the tyranny of greed—wealth can be a trap! (Ephesians 5:3-10, 1 Timothy 6:3-10; James 1:10-11; 5:1-6).

Other obligations

Christian giving also occurs in the context of other financial obligations that we have to governments (Romans 13:1-17), to our families (1 Timothy 5:3-16), to be prudent (Proverbs 6:6-11; 27:23-27) and to support ourselves (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12). Without ignoring these obligations, Christians are to be generous and free in their giving—for God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7).

How much should I give?

The amount that you decide to give is a matter to be determined between you and God. In Old Testament times, giving towards the support of the temple system began at the level of 10% of gross income and then 'freewill', 'fellowship' and other offerings were added to that amount.

Although some Christians find this a useful guide, this principle of 'tithing' does not have any force in the New Testament. Christians are free to decide before God what they give—there is no obligation. Instead of such 'tithing' laws, **Christians are instructed to give generously, systematically and in proportion to what one has** (1 Corinthians 16:2, 2 Corinthians 8:1-12, 1 Timothy 6:18). So, having prayerfully determined what you will give, stick to it and rejoice that you are able to share in this work.

What is the money used for?

Money given to Seaforth Anglican is used in three main ways:

- (i) **Growing** the ministry of our church locally by providing staff, ministry resources and support functions;
- (ii) **Investing** in buildings and equipment that effectively serve ministry functions—both for current maintenance as well as future development; and
- (iii) **Partnering** with other individuals and organisations engaged in strategic mission and mercy ministries (eg. CMS missionaries in Australia, South Asia and Europe, Anglicare, Anglican Aid etc.).

The ministry of Seaforth Anglican Church is entirely self-funded. We receive no money from the Anglican Church head office.

How can I give at Seaforth Anglican Church?

At Seaforth Anglican there are several avenues available for regular giving, as well as special occasion or special purpose gifts.

1. Internet Banking: Some people prefer to electronically deposit their giving directly from their bank account to the church's bank account. To do this, you will need the following account details:

Account name:
Seaforth Anglican Church General Account;

BSB number:
032101

Account number:
180369

For accounting purposes, it would help us if you indicate in the 'Description' field which congregation you belong to.

2. Periodical payment: If you do not have access to Internet banking, or you choose not to use this facility, you can make arrangements with your own bank to set up a recurring payment, using the account details above. You would need to contact your bank via telephone or visit your local branch to set this up.

3. Cash: During each of our Sunday gatherings there is an opportunity for people to place cash or a cheque in the giving box, which is located just inside the entrance to the church building. If you prefer to give by cash or cheque, you might like to use the envelope system. Envelopes are found in the entrance foyer of the church.

4. Tax deductible funds: We have two tax deductible funds: the Scripture In Government Schools Fund; and the Seaforth Anglican School Building Fund. These funds allow for tax deductible giving towards Scripture-related ministry in local schools, and giving towards building maintenance and development. When you nominate your giving to go to either of these funds, you will receive a tax deductible receipt covering your donations for the year. All cheques should be addressed to either Seaforth Anglican Scripture in Government Schools or Seaforth Anglican School Building Fund. You can also give directly via Internet banking:

1) Account Name: Seaforth Anglican Scripture in Govt Schools; BSB number: 032101; Account number: 180385.

2) Account name: Seaforth Anglican School Building Fund; BSB number: 032101; Account number: 180377.

5. Bequests: Bequests are made through your Will, and would normally be arranged for you by your legal advisor. You may make Seaforth Anglican the beneficiary of cash, securities, and/or other property. You may designate specific amounts or a percentage of your estate, or you may make Seaforth Anglican a residual beneficiary of your estate, that is, a recipient of some part of the balance after payment of specific bequests, expenses, and taxes. An unencumbered bequest is the most flexible way to benefit the future generations of our church.

If you have any questions about Giving at Seaforth Anglican Church, please speak with our Senior Minister, Jaime Dickson. He will be happy to speak with you in confidence.

Contact

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Seaforth Anglican
building lives for Christ

*Giving at Seaforth
Anglican Church*

*"For you know the
grace of our Lord
Jesus Christ, that
though he was rich,
yet for your sakes
he became poor, so
that you through his
poverty might
become rich."
(2 Corinthians 8:9)*