



THE LORD BISHOP OF ST ALBANS
The Right Reverend Dr Alan Smith

7 October 2020

Dear Colleagues

Thank you for all that you are doing to enable and support ministry in our communities and churches, it is very much appreciated.

Since lockdown began we have all experienced moments of joy and surprise, when we have seen God at work, mixed with hurt and sadness of loss and anxiety. Among the feelings, shared by the Bishop's Staff, is also a deep sense of gratitude to God for the continued creativity and generosity of so many across the diocese.

Generosity of time, energy and finances is at the heart of "Living God's Love". Thanks to the efforts of congregations, parish officers, treasurers, churchwardens, readers and clergy, the parish share, which sustains parish ministry, is ahead of our initial estimates of what was realistic in these circumstances, although understandably below 2019 figures, and will result in us using substantial amounts of diocesan reserves this year.

We are greatly encouraged that worshippers, whose incomes have been stable, have continued, and even in some cases increased, their giving. Many who have not been in such a fortunate position have shown extraordinary generosity in continuing to offer what they can to sustain and build the Kingdom of God through supporting their church's ministry. We have also heard of local communities who have been generously supporting their local church in these challenging times.

Let us continue to support one another as we adjust to the ever-changing situation. We will need to continue to face the challenges ahead by adapting creatively and generously as we provide mixed-mode online, in-person worship, support our congregations and communities, and more. The Archdeacons, Flourishing Churches Team, and other diocesan officers, are there to offer help and support where they can, including with stewardship and giving.

Going Deeper into God • Transforming Communities • Making New Disciples

Thank you again for all that you are doing to enable ministry and build the Kingdom of God in our churches and communities.

This comes with my best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

+ Alan