CEEC
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
EVANGELICAL COUNCIL

The Ephesian Fund – a short briefing paper

INTRODUCTION

The Ephesian Fund was set up in order to help members of local churches in the Church of England be assured that their giving will only be used to support churches committed to the **apostolic teaching of the Church as we have received it in the Church of England**.

The Ephesian Fund is a **registered charity** in its own right – originally set up by but now independent of CEEC (registered charity number 1206489).

- **CHURCHES wishing to pay a parish contribution** to the cost of their (and other) ministries in the diocese can do so via the website:
    - In the case of a net receiver church making a donation, this gift is credited back to the parish towards the costs of ministry.
    - In the case of a net contributor parish, the Ephesian Fund seeks confirmation from the diocese that the surplus money will only be credited to a parish whose vicar and/or PCC has signed the CEEC Basis of Faith.

- **INDIVIDUALS** can give to their parish via the Ephesian Fund – and we are grateful to Stewardship for their administration of this. Further details are on the website.

QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK

Q1 - Why is CEEC (as part of the Alliance) encouraging people to use the Ephesian Fund?

As well as preserving the conscience of individuals and enabling them to give, the use of the Ephesian Fund is a helpful indication to bishops of the breadth and strength of concern regarding the current direction of travel in LLF.

We are hoping that 1,000 churches will opt to use the Ephesian Fund in the next few months, which would be a powerful signal to the House of Bishops and impossible to ignore.

Q2 - Isn't use of the Ephesian Fund a kind of 'blackmail'?

The Ephesian Fund allows individual givers and PCCs as a whole to express their profound concerns to the House of Bishops. Many lay people (i.e. non-ordained and the vast majority of people in the church) across our dioceses feel unheard by their bishops and yet they are the people who financially support the Church of England and provide the lion's share of energy and resources in parish churches across the land.

To not 'allow' people to give via the Ephesian Fund (given that it is legally permissible to do so) could be described as bullying.

Q3 - Should churches whose diocesan bishop is orthodox use the Ephesian Fund?

The simple answer is yes – but it's important to know why.

In short, the parish in a diocese, whose diocesan bishop is orthodox, is not using the Ephesian Fund to criticise their bishop, nor to make any kind of complaint about the diocese. The use of the Ephesian Fund in such a context is to express a concern about the direction of travel being pursued by the House of Bishops collectively. In practice, support of the Ephesian Fund in an orthodox diocese might allow the bishop to articulate the breadth and depth of concern and the concomitant risk to his/her diocese if the bishops continue to pursue their LLF agenda. Critics of the fund will suggest that its existence and usage is schismatic. This is factually incorrect in that the existence of the fund is enabling people to give who otherwise might not do so, and enabling dioceses to collect parish share contributions that would otherwise not be forthcoming.

Q4 - Does the Ephesian Fund 'rob' dioceses of money?

Quite the opposite - it is clear that in a number of dioceses, parishes are giving money that might otherwise have been withheld because of concerns about LLF.

Q5 - Isn't the administration of the Ephesian Fund very demanding on diocesan staff and administration.

Not so – it has been straightforward to set up processes in the 27 dioceses in which churches are currently using the Ephesian Fund. A diocese receiving gifts from the Ephesian Fund for the first time might take a few days to exchange emails with the Ephesian Fund staff, but once things are clarified and set up, correspondence and exchange can be kept to an absolute minimum.

USING THE EPHESIAN FUND

Please follow the simple instructions on the website HERE.

PCCs are invited to contact the Fund before informing the diocese of your intention of using it – so that the Fund staff team can help you in approaching the diocese in a way that works for all.

CONTACT US

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