

3 Small Steps to a Summer-Ready Body

“Is your body ready for summer?” That’s a question posed by many a female magazine before the holiday season begins. What about the body of Christ? How can our Cornish churches get in shape for the season? The Generous Giving Team has 3 small steps for **every**-body.

Step 1. Watch your waste-line. With inflation rising and costs spiralling are there items you could be re-purposing or doing away with buying altogether? Churches have been excellent over the years at getting the best deals and watching the pennies but there may be areas you are missing out on. Parish Buying have specially negotiated rates, exclusive to the Church of England for hundreds of products, including great deals on contactless devices. There is not much point in wasting valuable time trawling online for a bargain when it has been done for you. What about those costly Gift Aid envelopes? True – they’re traditional but traditions often start out of necessity. Why not make signing up to PGS, a new cost-free, labour-saving tradition?

Step 2. Watch the pounds. Whether you are in favour of it or not, the movement towards a cashless society is under way. People are carrying less cash and this makes it harder for churches to receive generous donations from visitors if it has no form of digital giving. No WiFi? No problem. Contactless devices are available which work from a 3G/4G signal – and even without one. Don’t delay, though. In the same way there is always a run on ice lollies on hot days, there can be a greater lead-in time for devices due to increased demand. No card reader? No problem. QR codes can be downloaded and displayed for a direct link to your PGS page or GiveALittle - both free to sign up to. If you really want to just stick with your wall box/milk churn/chest, be wise and ensure it is emptied regularly to deter theft. Additionally prepare clear signage (some donations end up in prayer boxes!) with an attractive message and a brief explanation of how the money is used, highlighting the impact of the gift.

Step 3. Watch the excess. Less is always more when it comes to what is on display. On a welcome table or at a giving station make sure your main messaging isn’t hidden behind the clutter. One site we use is [canva.com](https://www.canva.com), where you can create posters and messaging free, from professional looking templates. Rather than allowing old notices, books and leaflets to detract, display a clear and cheerful greeting or invitation to give. A common misconception is that every leaflet you ever had has to be on view to show how much you are doing, when it is far better to draw people’s eye by paring down. Seasonal messaging and event paraphernalia should be kept within the season and not still be on display weeks or even months later. By thinking about how you can first bless your visitors, you may come up with a free giveaway. Who doesn’t like to be given something free to take home? If you do, just make sure it is fit for purpose and not fit only for the bin!

Hope you shape up well and have a wonderful summer!