

# The United Reformed Church Wessex Synod

## GIFTS AND EXPENSES FOR VISITING PREACHERS

### GUIDELINES suggested to churches

#### Gifts

Some churches wish to offer a gift to a visiting preacher. All churches are encouraged to offer this. The size of any gift is at the discretion of a church, but for those who would like guidance, a suggestion is:

Up to 100 members	£25
Over 100 members	£35

If a gift is offered it should be offered to all visiting preachers.

The only exceptions are serving full time Stipendiary Ministers or CRCWs, and Synod and Assembly staff (i.e. Development and Support Officers, Children's and Youth Development Officers, Synod Moderator, Church House Staff), whose stipend is intended to cover such service.

For visiting preachers who are taxpayers, any gift given in money (rather than vouchers, book tokens etc.) is liable to income tax. The responsibility for declaration lies with the recipient.

#### Expenses

Regardless of whether or not a gift is offered to a preacher, all churches are strongly encouraged to offer full expenses to all visiting preachers at the upper HMRC rate (currently 40 pence/mile).

The only exceptions are Synod and Assembly staff (i.e. Development and Support Officers, Children's and Youth Development Officers, Synod Moderator, Church House Staff), who claim expenses from Synod or Assembly. In these cases, churches are invited to consider making a donation to the Synod Benevolent Fund if they wish.

#### General Points

In any event, the church's policy on gifts and expenses should be made clear to preachers when they are booked, as part of the arrangement. Although talking about money can be embarrassing, it is better to be quite clear on arrangements when booking a preacher. All monies should normally be paid, either in cash or by cheque payable to the preacher, before the preacher leaves after a service.

If preachers wish to decline a gift and/or expenses, or pass them on to charity, they are free to do so, but they should always be offered to the preacher. Cheques should only be made payable to charity at the express request of the preacher, never on the church's initiative. It is generally bad practice to leave blank the payee on cheques.

When a visiting preacher is Interim Moderator it would be wise for churches to agree the financial arrangements for services taken, along with all other financial arrangements, at the beginning of the appointment.