**Is it right for the Church to talk about generosity and giving in the midst of a public health crisis?**

With so much need around us, is it appropriate for the church to broach the subject of generosity and giving? We think it is, here is why.

1. The example of the Macedonian Church, described by Paul in 2 Corinthians 8, never ceases to inspire me. We are told “In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability”.

The Macedonian church were facing an extreme trial and that manifested itself in rich generosity. We are certainly in the midst of our own “severe trial”. Our encouragement is that this trial won’t result in each of us buttoning down the hatches and looking to our own needs alone, until this storm has passed, but instead that we will allow this trial to shape us and change us into a people responding to all the needs we see around us with *rich generosity.* Afterall, generosity is always a response to love. Our prayer is that these challenging times will be opportunities for each of us to grow in our love.

1. Our church buildings have, for the most part, been closed. But that does not mean church has been closed.

We have been so encouraged to hear about the multitude of ways you have carried on ‘being church’ during lockdown. You have served your communities through foodbanks, shopping, and medicine deliveries; you have gone online with church services and school assemblies and you have reached out to the most lonely and vulnerable members of your communities. The ministry of the church has changed in this period but not stopped. And so, our giving to the Church may also need to change but should not stop. Afterall, if we don’t give to the local church, who will?

1. Our model is Jesus Christ.

And Jesus gave everything. Always. Until the very end.