

**Advent Offering 2018
2-24 December**

Advent Offering practicalities

Publicity and preparations before your Advent Offering

- Remember to announce your Advent Offering service in your pulpit notices, church and circuit notices as well as your newsletters.
- Stick up your Advent Offering poster (available from the Methodist Publishing www.mph.org.uk – see ‘Planning your service’) on your church noticeboard or window to promote the service to church and community members.
- Publicise the date of your Advent Offering service when you distribute the Advent Offering collection envelopes.
- Encourage people to join our Advent social media conversation:

 @MethodistGB

 Methodist Church

Financial instructions for your Advent Offering

Please read these instructions and ensure your Church Treasurer, Gift Aid Secretary and, importantly, the Circuit Mission in Britain Fund Treasurer receive them.

Two options are outlined overleaf for collecting Gift Aid and sending in donations using the Advent Offering collection envelopes. These instructions apply to individual church collections.

However we recognise that some Advent Offering services may be held as circuit-wide events, in which case local churches may take a separate collection with donations being received by circuit officers.

We would love to celebrate the outcome of this Advent’s giving with all churches. To help us do that please ask your Church or Circuit Fund Treasurers to send your donations to the Methodist in Britain Circuit Fund Treasurer so that your donations can be banked using the Advent Offering paying-in book.* If your circuit does not have a Fund Treasurer, please send a summary letter or email to circuit.income@methodistchurch.org.uk using either Option 1 or Option 2 below and quoting reference ADV001.

** Using the numbered Advent Offering paying-in book helps Finance identify Advent Offering donations and ensures those donations are allocated to your circuit.*

See over for options for individual churches collecting and sending in donations using the Advent Offering collection envelopes.



OPTION 1

Option 1 is the preferred income route we encourage all churches to adopt in order to claim Gift Aid on donations.

A. Collecting donations AND Gift Aid

- i. In the same way that other special collections are received (eg All We Can, MHA or Christian Aid), please ask your church officers (Gift Aid Secretaries or equivalent) to collect the sealed and completed Advent Offering collection envelopes with cash/cheque donations enclosed from their congregation. The envelopes should then be opened and the total sum handed to the Church Treasurer (or equivalent) to bank the donations into the church bank account.
- ii. Once the church has received and banked the donations into the church bank account, the church officers (Gift Aid Secretaries or equivalent) are to keep the empty Advent Offering collection envelopes for audit purposes for six years in line with Gift Aid record-keeping requirements.

Church officers then include banked donations on their church's Gift Aid claim form for submission to the Gift Aid Bureau Service.* Please do NOT send the empty Advent Offering envelopes to the Finance Department at Methodist Church House (this only occurs if your church is unable to claim Gift Aid, see Option 2).

**The Gift Aid Bureau Service of the Methodist Church processes Gift Aid claims for about 4,000 churches every year, reclaiming about £10m from HMRC on behalf of those churches. Once processed, the Bureau Service will transfer the relevant Gift Aid rebate to each church.*

B. Sending donations into the Mission in Britain Fund

Once a church has collected and banked Advent Offering donations into the church bank account then either:

- i. The Church Treasurer can write a cheque, made payable to "Methodist Church Mission in Britain Fund" for the total amount donated. A further cheque will need to be sent when the Gift Aid amount is refunded. This should be passed to the Circuit Mission in Britain Fund Treasurer. The Circuit Mission in Britain Fund Treasurer should then bank the donations using the Advent Offering paying-in books. **Please note that this is a new paying-in book introduced in 2018 and it is different from the general Mission in Britain paying-in book which should be used for general Mission in Britain (non-Advent Offering) donations.** Please ask the cashier to include your circuit reference along with O3 (already printed on each paying in slip) to help Finance identify the Advent Offering donations and correctly allocate them to your church. Please confirm the total banked, your circuit number and the reference code in an email to circuit.income@methodistchurch.org.uk.
- ii. If churches cannot get in touch with their Circuit Mission in Britain Fund Treasurer a cheque for the total amount donated may be sent to the Finance Department at Methodist Church House, with a covering letter stating the reference code ADV001 along with the **circuit number** to help us identify the Advent Offering donations.





OPTION 2

If the church is unable to claim Gift Aid through the Gift Aid Bureau Service OR if cheques are already made payable to the Mission in Britain Fund then follow Option 2. If churches follow Option 2, they cannot claim Gift Aid as they have not banked donations into their own accounts.

A. Collecting donations

Church officers (Gift Aid Secretaries or equivalent) collect the sealed and completed Advent Offering collection envelopes with cash/cheque donations enclosed from their congregation.

B. Sending in donations

- i. These donations (cheques/cash) with their Advent Offering envelopes are sent to the Circuit Mission in Britain Fund Treasurer who will then bank the donations and send the empty envelopes to the Finance Office at Methodist Church House. The Treasurer must include a covering letter referenced ADV001 confirming that the donations are banked and the date they were banked.

- ii. If churches cannot get in touch with the Circuit Mission in Britain Fund Treasurer, they can send cheques and envelopes directly to the Finance Office at Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR.

Please do not send the Finance Office cash donations by post. Deposit cash into your church account and send in a cheque for the same amount, payable to "Mission in Britain Fund".

