

changing church

TOOLKIT | LEADING WELL

5 KEY QUESTIONS

FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

ON FINANCES AND FURLOUGH



1. What does it look like to love Jesus and our neighbour when it comes to money and staff?

Gathering is important, but we must do so in a way that doesn't put people at risk. This may lead to some ministry settings being opened sooner for those who are isolated and lonely, but also proceeding with caution, remembering those who are particularly at risk. And remember, more people have been checking out church online and making a commitment to follow Jesus - so how do we remain missional in this moment?

2. How do we proceed with honesty and integrity?

There can be a reluctance to talk about money, and staffing decisions are often personal, particularly in smaller contexts. Almost a quarter of churches surveyed said they had reserves but did not anticipate needing them. Churches are often top of people's list in terms of giving, but if people have less income, they have less to give. Congregants need to be honest about their ability to give and leadership teams need to be honest about the type of decisions they are facing. We have responsibility to steward well the assets we have been given. Being open and honest can be painful, but in the long run, it is for the best.

3. How do we ensure our approach is honouring?

Decisions around staffing can be difficult, and especially so in a church context. Some will have found this season incredibly busy and challenging and will need a rest (this may include volunteers who have stepped into the gap). Some will have been furloughed and may be struggling with questions about their identity and purpose. A phased retune may suit all parties. Some may be facing redundancy as churches recalibrate, leading to difficult conversations. In each case, we want to ensure our approach honours all those involved.

4. How do we incarnate hope?

There is likely to be significant financial uncertainty ahead which will be an issue for churches large and small, and particularly for those in economically challenged areas. At the same time, this is a moment for the church to be a gift to their local community by rising to meet a huge set of needs with practical help and gospel hope. Those who spend their available resources returning to previous ways will have limited ability to respond to new opportunities.

5. Who decides what?

When it comes to staffing and finance, there will be a range of decisions that have to be taken, probably over a period of time. These will raise issues around good governance and may require quick decision-making. It is helpful to discuss and agree who is accountable, responsible, needs to be consulted and needs to be informed at each stage.

It is important that we move ahead soaked in prayer, rooted in scripture, passionate for the gospel and committed to one another in love.

