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St Ursula's Church

Financial Giving

St Ursula's Church
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Why should one give?

Our Church was built in 1906. Since then, we have grown and now have a multinational and diverse congregation, united in their love of Christ. We want to continue to be the English-Speaking Church in Berne, welcoming and serving all who know or wish to know Christ. To do this we need to raise around CHF 260,000 per year. We receive no Church tax, no state funds and nothing from the Church of England. We rely on our own resources to raise the money, through fund raising events throughout the year, renting out of our premises to different groups and through the generous financial support of our members.

75% of all our funds is given by the congregation. As Christians we are commanded to give generously back to God, out of gratitude and thanksgiving for what Christ did for us. In 2025 there were 66 households who contributed CHF 161708 via pledges or donations. Half of that money came from just 11 households, which is clearly unsustainable. The average giving was around CHF 200 per month.

How much should one give?

The right amount depends on personal circumstances. As Christians we are encouraged to tithe, that is give away 10% of our income. The Church of England recommends that we give half of this (5%) to your local church and the other half (5%) to charities. Download David's sermon about this under resources on the last page.

How can one give?

You can give in all or any of the following ways:

- **Collections** taken during our Services is a way to show your appreciation to God for all that he has provided in the week.
- **Donations** are irregular in nature, and ideal for those who cannot commit to a regular pledge, but who want to support God's work through us when they are able to.
- **Pledging** is your commitment to our work and the future of our Church. It is a promise to give a regular amount to the Church.
- **Legacies** are the final gift and witness that you can specify in your will.

  Deuteronomy 16:17: All shall give as they are able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God that he has given you.

GOOD TO KNOW

- ✓ Your giving is between you, God, and the Church Treasurer. We use codes in our bookkeeping to identify givers and to protect their privacy. Even the clergy do not know who give, unless you choose to tell them.
- ✓ Payments can be made at intervals of your choosing, so you also can plan them based on the pattern of your income. You can change the amount at any time as your circumstances change
- ✓ We can also accept Gift Aid pledges or donations in GBP.
- ✓ Payments to St Ursula's Church are not eligible for tax relief, however tax relief is available if you give to the Charitable Association.
- ✓ Giving can be to either the Church or the Charitable Association or split between both.
- ✓ You will automatically receive a statement for tax purposes by the end of January each year.

OUR TWO ASSOCIATIONS

- ✧ St Ursula's Church is responsible for the Ministry side of our Mission, except the charitable giving. Most of our costs are borne by the Church.
- ✧ The Charitable Association was set up at the suggestion of the Tax authorities to enable tax relief, and is responsible for the building, pastoral work and charitable giving. It is a registered charity in Switzerland.

SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

1. *I pay church tax (Kirchensteuer). Doesn't some of that go to St Ursula's?*

No. We are not a state church (Landeskirche). Some of our members choose to pay church tax because they also want to support their local state church. But you don't have to if you are a member of St Ursula's. There is information about leaving the state church on our website under downloads on the giving page.

2. *What is the difference between the Church and the Charitable Association?*

When the Swiss Government decided that giving to Churches was no longer eligible for Tax relief, the Bern Tax Office suggested that we set up a Charitable Association, which can only do Charitable works and upkeep our buildings. The money given to this is tax deductible for the giver. Whilst this may seem a great solution, we cannot use the money given to the Association for our expenses in the Church, and these include all wages and admin costs.

3. *What is a good split between the Church and the Charitable Association?*

Currently we find that 70:30 is a good split. 70% to the Church, and 30% to the Charitable Association. However, you might choose a different split if the tax relief is important to you, or if you also continue to give in the collection. If you do not pay tax in Switzerland, please choose the Church.

2 Corinthians 9:7: Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

OUR ONLINE RESOURCES FOR YOU.

Our website contains information about our bank accounts as well as how to give in sterling:

https://stursula.ch/giving/ or scan the QR code below

In our download area of the Giving page, you will find various documents including budgets, accounts, QR codes for your banking, guides to leaving the Swiss church or to writing your will. There is also an interesting sermon preached by Rev David Marshall about pledging and tithing.

Scan the QR code for the online Pledge form

If there are any questions, or you do not have access to the online resources, please contact the Treasurer. Thank you for your support.