



EPISCOPAL PARISH OF ST. PAUL 2017 ANNUAL GIVING



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Like the early church, we give what we can, we get what we need!

A Reminder of the Values that We Most Cherish at the Parish of St. Paul:

1. We find and value and joy in worship and spiritual growth.
2. We challenge ourselves to live our tradition in new ways.
3. The dignity that we see in creation calls us to see the divine in the world.
4. We are on a journey of becoming a “beloved community.”
5. We welcome each other - whoever we are and where ever we are – with acceptance, caring and companionship.

With these values in mind, please prayerfully consider making a generous pledge of time, talent and treasure to our beloved community. *The stewardship form is page 4 of this packet.*

Pledging has a practical and direct connection to our parish budgeting process. In the Episcopal polity, each parish is self-supporting. And so, our budget is to a large degree, predicated on our pledging. Without a firm idea of what people plan to give (pledges are the largest single component of our income), it is very difficult for our Vestry - charged with managing the financial resources - to make decisions about what we can afford. So please prayerfully consider making a pledge to support our beloved community in the most generous amount that you can afford.

And, because financial support is just one component of our stewardship, please prayerfully consider contributing to any one of a number of ministries that make the Parish of St. Paul the vibrant, progressive, beloved community of faith that we are. There are opportunities in every ministry area. And especially this year we need a Coordinator for our newly formed property team (a one year term). But whatever your gifts, please consider sharing your time and talent with our community!

A Few Parish Financial Statistics

- ☛ In 2017, our parish budget is/was ~\$246,000. \$156,000 of the total budget is in payroll expenses!
- ☛ In 2017, we have/had 47 pledges totaling \$145,000. The rest comes from various donations, rental & investment income, and a planned 4% draw on our endowment.
- ☛ In 2017, annual pledges ranged from \$52 to \$12,000. Everyone can contribute something.
- ☛ In 2017, the average and the mode pledge were roughly \$2,970. Can your family stretch to this?
- ☛ Roughly 33% of our 2017 pledges come from 5 families. The other 66% comes from 42 families. If each of these 42 pledges stretches up to the next \$500 mark, we can shift this ratio to 50/50; a much healthier scenario!

Where Does the Money Go?

Our pledging dollars make this parish and its programs possible. Every dime that we spend - give or take a few small grants - comes from us. Our annual budget is roughly \$246,000 which pays for our buildings and grounds, our utilities, our office and administration, our rector (Gretchen), our pastoral associate (Amanda) our youth programs (Katherine and Islam and Vincent and Abigail), our music programs (too many folks to list!) and all of the ministries made possible by the health and subsistence of this beloved community. These include our rich ministry of pastoral care, our outreach activity, our hospitality, our parish life and the nourishment and renewal and friendship that strengthens us to go back out in the world and do God's work.

And every dime that the diocese spends - give or take a few grants - also comes from us, and our fellow pledging parishioners throughout the diocese. We support our diocese through the payment of our annual diocesan assessment which is roughly 15% of every dollar that we spend in our operating budget, minus outreach. When the parish grows, the budget grows. And when the budget grows, so does the assessment. In 2008 our diocesan assessment was \$8,000. In 2017 it is \$25,160. Onward!

A Note About How our Income Structure Differs from Other Traditions

The financial structure of the Episcopal Church differs substantially from the Roman Catholic Church and from our sister Jewish synagogues. In the Catholic polity, parishes are funded by the diocese which funds every line item of the parish budget, and controls everything that happens in the parish, including the assignment of clergy. **In the Roman Catholic model, the parish is not required to fully fund itself. Our neighboring Jewish synagogues do support themselves. But they charge dues to belong and fees to attend high holy services.** There is no discernment required in the pledge drive at a synagogue; each family pays an equal share of the total budget. The Episcopal tradition is closer to the early Christian church which asks its community to discern what can be offered, and to use that offering as a spiritual practice. **And, the ability to pay is never a prerequisite to belonging.**

How do I begin to think about my pledge?

Pledging is a spiritual practice; the first step is to think about gratitude. What does this beloved community add to God's world? And because we are a community, think not just about how this community serves you directly, but how it serves all of its parishioners, its neighbors and the wider world. **We rely on pledges rather than dues for a reason. We are not a community that welcomes only those who can afford to be here. Rather, we are a community who knows that if each gives generously, all will be welcomed unconditionally.**

If you are able to increase your pledge, this year we hope you will prayerfully consider reaching to the next \$250 level. If last year's pledge was \$1,100, can you stretch to \$1,250? If it was \$2,550, can you stretch to \$2,750? If it was \$4,000, can you stretch to \$4,250? And if this stretch is just too much to manage at this time, please know how grateful we will be for whatever you can pledge.

How can I pay my pledge?

There are a variety of ways to pay your pledge. You can pay it all in a lump sum whenever the funds are available! You can ask for envelopes and pay a bit every week. You can set up an automatic monthly bill-pay at your bank so that a check in your designated amount is automatically sent every month. You can gift your pledge in stock. You can pay with a credit card. Or, you can pay your pledge in cash and coins! For more information or other ideas, please talk with our wonderful Treasurer, Susan Boyer.

**So, if you value this community and this diocese
and our deep, expansive and inspiring Episcopal tradition!**

If you are energized and lifted by our worship!

If you are inspired by our music and the voices in our midst!

If you are comforted by the good care and prayers of our beloved community!

If you cherish the friendships of the hearts in our pews!

If you want your children to know a place where they can always go for strength and solace!

If you believe that we are nothing if not a sanctuary!

**If you value the way we reach out to God's world when we feed the hungry
and spread the love!**

If you value the work and ministry of your fellow parishioners and your clergy!

Then please put your pledge where your heart is!

*Turn this sheet over and check off some areas where your gifts meet our needs,
and make a financial pledge that makes your Spirit soar!*