

## Stewardship: God's gift to us

Stewardship is a Christian's way of living. It is everything we are, everything we do, every dollar we spend, every moment we live. It is all this because we live in God's creation, we are a part of God's creation and we have been named stewards of His Holy Estate.

In Luke 19, Jesus told of a wealthy man who was going on a trip. He told his stewards 'Look, I'm going away. You take over. You take my place; do what you think I would do.'

He didn't tell his servants, his stewards, what to do or how to do it. He simply said, 'you are in charge of this.' This man gave his stewards the freedom to use their own initiative. In essence, their master was telling them he trusted them to run his affairs with intelligence, judgment, and honesty.

This story gives honor and importance to the position of a steward. Like these servants we are free to choose how to best serve our Lord. There is no compulsion other than a willing and loving loyalty to Jesus Christ. There is nothing legalistic about the arrangement between our Lord and ourselves.

The Biblical idea of stewardship, therefore, is that a sovereign God created and directs the universe. Everything we have: time, talent, abilities, treasures are to be used to manage His estate.

Stewardship is a believer's response to God's love in creating, preserving, redeeming and sanctifying him. Stewardship is the Christian's management of his redeemed life and possessions to God's glory and man's benefit. Christian Stewardship is the fruit of saving faith.

Annual Income	Weekly Income	2%	3%	4%	5%	6%	7%	8%	9%	10%
\$15,000.00	\$288.46	\$5.77	\$8.65	\$11.54	\$14.42	\$17.31	\$20.19	\$23.08	\$25.96	\$28.85
\$20,000.00	\$384.62	\$7.69	\$11.54	\$15.38	\$19.23	\$23.08	\$26.92	\$30.77	\$34.62	\$38.46
\$25,000.00	\$480.77	\$9.62	\$14.42	\$19.23	\$24.04	\$28.85	\$33.65	\$38.46	\$43.27	\$48.08
\$30,000.00	\$576.92	\$11.54	\$17.31	\$23.08	\$28.85	\$34.62	\$40.38	\$46.15	\$51.92	\$57.69
\$35,000.00	\$673.08	\$13.46	\$20.19	\$26.92	\$33.65	\$40.38	\$47.12	\$53.85	\$60.58	\$67.31
\$40,000.00	\$769.23	\$15.38	\$23.08	\$30.77	\$38.46	\$46.15	\$53.85	\$61.54	\$69.23	\$76.92
\$45,000.00	\$865.38	\$17.31	\$25.96	\$34.62	\$43.27	\$51.92	\$60.58	\$69.23	\$77.88	\$86.54
\$50,000.00	\$961.54	\$19.23	\$28.85	\$38.46	\$48.08	\$57.69	\$67.31	\$76.92	\$86.54	\$96.15
\$55,000.00	\$1,057.69	\$21.15	\$31.73	\$42.31	\$52.88	\$63.46	\$74.04	\$84.62	\$95.19	\$105.77
\$60,000.00	\$1,153.85	\$23.08	\$34.62	\$46.15	\$57.69	\$69.23	\$80.77	\$92.31	\$103.85	\$115.38
\$65,000.00	\$1,250.00	\$25.00	\$37.50	\$50.00	\$62.50	\$75.00	\$87.50	\$100.00	\$112.50	\$125.00
\$70,000.00	\$1,346.15	\$26.92	\$40.38	\$53.85	\$67.31	\$80.77	\$94.23	\$107.69	\$121.15	\$134.62
\$75,000.00	\$1,442.31	\$28.85	\$43.27	\$57.69	\$72.12	\$86.54	\$100.96	\$115.38	\$129.81	\$144.23
\$80,000.00	\$1,538.46	\$30.77	\$46.15	\$61.54	\$76.92	\$92.31	\$107.69	\$123.08	\$138.46	\$153.85
\$85,000.00	\$1,634.62	\$32.69	\$49.04	\$65.38	\$81.73	\$98.08	\$114.42	\$130.77	\$147.12	\$163.46
\$90,000.00	\$1,730.77	\$34.62	\$51.92	\$69.23	\$86.54	\$103.85	\$121.15	\$138.46	\$155.77	\$173.08
\$95,000.00	\$1,826.92	\$36.54	\$54.81	\$73.08	\$91.35	\$109.62	\$127.88	\$146.15	\$164.42	\$182.69
\$100,000.00	\$1,923.08	\$38.46	\$57.69	\$76.92	\$96.15	\$115.38	\$134.62	\$153.85	\$173.08	\$192.31

# Financial Giving at St. Peter's



How do I become a good steward of what God has blessed me with?

St. Peter's Church

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Everything we have comes from the Lord to hold in trust for him. Part of being a good steward is giving to God's work in his church. Even if what you can give seems small, in God's economy it can have rippling effects to touch many lives. Here are some questions and answers about what giving looks like at St. Peter's.

## **Giving Q & A**

### **What is a Pledge?**

A pledge, by definition means, "to offer or guarantee by a solemn binding promise." Each year, we have the opportunity to renew our commitment to one another and the ministry of St. Peter's Church by making a financial commitment. Each and every pledge makes a difference and works toward the building of our faith community.

### **Why are annual pledges important?**

Annual pledges support everything we do and are at St. Peter's. Our yearly budget is driven by the generosity of our parishioners through annual pledges; we have no endowment. These pledges support all the operating costs of our ministry programs as well as our building and staff operations, and expenses such as outreach and mission, liturgy & music, and nursery caregivers. In order to budget and plan for the operating budget each year, we need to receive pledge commitments on which the budget will be developed.

### **When should I return my annual pledge card?**

We ask everyone who participates to make a pledge on Pledge Sunday (usually in November) either by bringing a pledge card to the church, or by mailing it. Pledging at that time is important,

because we use total pledge amounts to help establish our budget for the upcoming year. Nevertheless, pledges are welcome throughout the year.

### **Do I have to pay when I pledge? Can I pay in installments?**

Returning your pledge card is simply a promise to pay. You make your pledge and you fulfill your pledge in as many payments as you wish throughout the year. The Treasurer assigns giving numbers found on a sheet in the back of the church that help process the envelopes. Pledges are to be fulfilled on a calendar year basis that is, beginning Jan. 1 through Dec. 31 of each year.

### **Why should I pledge when I regularly put money in the offering plate?**

Loose funds collected each week do help to support the ongoing life of the parish. However, pledges are very important because they enable us to plan responsibly and to establish a parish operating budget for the coming year. They also enable us to give you a tax deduction letter at the end of the year.

### **I'm not sure what I can afford this year. How can I pledge?**

We suggest that you pledge responsibly, based on your best estimate of the year's income. A pledge can be adjusted during the year if your circumstances change.

### **How much should I give with an annual pledge?**

We believe strongly that our standard of giving should reflect our standard of living. We ask each parishioner to consider making a pledge that is both responsible and significant based on his or her financial situation. At St. Peter's, the tithe (10%) is held up as the Christian standard of giving.

### **What does it mean to give proportionately?**

Proportional giving is based on the premise that the first fruits are given back to God in grateful response to what God has given us. It refers to a conscious effort to determine an appropriate level of giving. We ask each parishioner to consider making an annual pledge in proportion to income.

The Bible states a specific obligation to "tithe"—that is, to give back to God one-tenth of what we have received from God. One-tenth! Ten percent! The Bible sets the bar very high—maybe too high for most of us to think about at first.

We encourage you to begin your commitment to proportional giving with a small step: Promise to give two percent each year, or three. The average pledge to churches nationally is 2.6 percent of income, and maybe that's a good place to start.

The important thing is that the Biblical notion of proportionality is the ultimately fair way of giving. You pledge and give in proportion to what you have or make. There's no hidden standard, some sort of "dues" structure, though some people mistakenly imagine there is. A senior citizen living on a fixed, modest income who gives 5% is a more faithful proportionate giver than the rich man who dashes off a check for \$10,000. Sound suspiciously familiar? Sounds like Jesus.

The first step of proportional giving is an eye-opener for many of us: Compute the percentage of your income that you gave to the church last year. The second step is to thoughtfully consider the role of the church and God in your life and to establish the percentage level at which you would like to be giving. The third step is to make incremental increases to this percentage each year, so that your gift will move gradually closer to your personal goal for giving back to God.

We have included a chart on the back to help you get a sense of what your proportional giving may look like.