

As Christians, we are a people of gratitude. Easter, and the Great Fifty Days of Easter, is truly a reason for great thanksgiving. It is a season of gratitude as we offer great thanks for the gift of the Risen Christ.

Next month, Christ Church parishioners will receive their annual stewardship pledging invitation for the upcoming fiscal year (*July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019*). This week, we ask that you pray and reflect on God’s blessings to us. In turn, give thought as to how your financial commitment to Christ Church is in line with your gratitude.

STEWARDSHIP MYTHS AND REALITIES

Myth #1 - Christ Church has lots of money – what happened to the Elizabeth Street proceeds?

- Much of our share of the proceeds from the sale of 18 Elizabeth Street was used to clear accumulated debt incurred by Christ Church over a number of years by operating on deficit budgets and to replace the boiler. The balance of the proceeds – with the approval of the College of Bishops – was allocated toward seeding future ministry needs. It was agreed that the additional funds received would be spent within 3 to 5 years. Christ Church approaching the end of this time period and we would be anticipating the Future Ministry Fund will be depleted by the end of the next fiscal year (June 2019).

Myth #2 - There’s always been lots of money at Christ Church – there must be overspending somewhere.

- There has never been “lots of money at Christ Church”. That is simply our reality. As good stewards, we make use of volunteers and gifts as best we can. Our expenses have remained historically flat for a number of years with one exception ~ and that is staffing. It is through our staffing that our ministry becomes alive but there is always a financial pressure in this area.

**Myth #3 - The money will come from “somewhere,” it always does.
I don’t need to be the one to give more.**

- As good stewards, we must make choices about what we do with our gifts from God – our time, abilities and financial resources.

Myth #4 - I can’t afford to give as much as the church needs.

- Not one person can give as much as the Church needs – this is absolutely true! BUT we are all called upon to give what we can.
- We recognize everyone has different life circumstances and different financial situations; this is about being prayerfully reflective of our own circumstances to determine what we are called to give.
- We do ask that you intentionally and prayerfully review what you intend to give on an annual basis.

Myth # 5 - The church doesn’t support people in need.

- Teams of clergy and lay people conduct services in local nursing homes and care facilities. We visit parishioners in hospitals and institutions as well as those confined to home.
- We provide counseling to those facing life challenges related to sickness, family issues, and other concerns.
- We regularly provide volunteers and donations of food, clothing and personal care items to those in need through our local mission partners: Regeneration, Ste. Louise Outreach, and Knight’s Table.
- We support the Primate’s World Relief (Anglican Church of Canada), Faithworks (Diocese of Toronto) as well as local outreach and social action ministries in our parish; caring for the poor and marginalized.

Myth #6 - Money will come from somewhere else.

- Christ Church is a self-supporting and self-sustaining. The life and vitality of our Church is an expression of the life and vitality each one of us gives. Financial support is the means of ensuring the mission that God has given us continues to flourish.

Periodically, we receive grants from the Diocese of Toronto. Most recently, we received a Curacy Grant resulting in the placement The Rev'd Jeff Nowers. This particular grant was for 2 years. Each year, we were provided \$30,000; however Christ Church is tasked to match this grant.

- We offer two ways to provide regular offerings – Envelope Sets and monthly Pre-Authorized Remittances (“PAR”).
- Regular intentional giving is the key to the financial health of Christ Church and helps us individually to express our call to Christian stewardship. Regular intentional giving is rooted in prayerful discernment and expressed in commitment through an annual stewardship pledge.
- To be clear, the combined total of your pledges (*only the aggregate number is reported to Corporation from the Envelope Secretary*) provides Corporation with an indication of what financial support that can be expected when crafting the annual budget. The results of this Stewardship Focus period will be used in determining the F2019 budget.

Myth #7 - I think I'm giving enough (although really, I'm not quite sure what I “should” be giving.)

- What is God asking of us? Please take time to read our 2018/2019 Stewardship Mailing that will be released next week to each member household ~ in it you will find useful information to help you answer this question. In terms of understanding giving as a percentage of one's annual household income, we would challenge you to consider move up a percentage point.



Myth #8 - Electronic giving is risky (aka Pre-Authorized Remittance “PAR”)

- Simply put ~ not so! In Fiscal 2017, close to 50% of our contributions to Parish Operations were received via PAR.
- \$11,500 is received monthly for Parish Operations ~ this goes a long to normalize seasonal swings in offerings.
- A number of PAR subscribers take advantage of designating a portion of their monthly contribution to a designated fund (i.e. FaithWorks, Clergy Discretion, etc.).
- Once a figure is decided upon and committed to, it becomes helpful and easy to remain current with one’s pledge.
- Of all the ways that we can give – envelope giving, cheques, cash – electronic giving minimizes seasonal adjustments to parish income (expenses continue even when you are not here!).
- Participating in PAR, is an effective putting your spiritual giving plan into action.

Stewardship Pledges may be placed on the plate during the offering and they will all be blessed on Commitment Sunday ~ June 3, 2018