



A MESSAGE FROM THE RECTOR

The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. As it is written,

**‘He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor;
his righteousness endures for ever.’**

He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Dear

As I write to you, my heart is filled with gratitude for what we have been able to accomplish together not only during “ordinary time” but during this time of unprecedented change as a result of Covid-19. In season and out we have been given the grace to meet real people in their time of need with the good news of Jesus Christ.

We continue to pray for those effected by this crisis: for front line workers, for those whose employment has been affected through job loss or reduction as well as for those whose responsibilities have mushroomed at work or at home, for those families who have loved ones at risk or those who are concerned for their own health and safety.

I am deeply grateful for the faithful and committed generosity of members of Christ Church Brampton. Together, God has equipped us to adapt and thrive in this new situation. We have gone “digital” with worship, committee meetings and small groups for children, youth and adults, in prayer, study and in pastoral care - all happening in relationally close but physically distant ways through YouTube, Zoom, Facebook, e-mail, the telephone and Canada Post. Our outreach ministries continue to expand in partnership with our local ministry partners to meet the needs of the marginalized and those most at risk.

This year’s Annual Giving theme, *Planting Seeds*, reminds us that our financial support, in the form of an annual stewardship pledge, not only helps to further the current mission and ministry of Christ Church, but also helps in planning for future ministry.

Nearly all members of Christ Church make an annual financial commitment. Some members tithe, committing ten percent of their income to the work and missions of our church. Others give proportionally by committing a certain percentage. Still others give as they are able. We have a variety of giving mechanisms including **PAR** (Pre-Authorized Remittances), **e-Transfers** and even **CanadaHelps** as well as the good old fashioned **envelope system**.



Each year, in the Easter season, we ask each of our households to take time to *prayerfully, proactively and purposefully plan* their giving from the first fruits God has given them by making an annual stewardship pledge. The total of all pledges received is invaluable in planning for next year's budget and programming (for approval at our annual Vestry meeting in September).

Included with this mailing is a pledge card for 2020. Please join me, and so many others in our congregation, in planting seeds for today and tomorrow by making a financial pledge by Pentecost Sunday May 31st.

Winston Churchill, toward the end of his life, famously said that "we make a living by what we do, we make a life by what we give".

May God give each of us the grace to be people who make a life by giving back to God a portion of the abundance He has entrusted to us.

If you have any questions, or would like to further discuss making a financial pledge to Christ Church, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or any member of the Corporation.

We are releasing our 2020 video during the May 17th Sunday service

The Rev. Canon Dr. Byron Gilmore
Incumbent

THE BUILDING IS CLOSED, CHURCH IS NOT

On March 13th, we were provided direction from the College of Bishops that public worship was to be suspended until further notice. Over the last several weeks, we have "re-tooled" the delivery of our core ministry and mission. Like many, we faced a steep learning curve on how to go "digital" but have found that telephone calls and mailings are good in the mix too! Not everyone has access to the internet nor is comfortable with the technology ~ a healthy blend of both is what we are aiming for. Below are just some of the highlights of what we have been up to and what is in store.

Liturgy & Worship: On-Line Sunday Mornings @ 10:00

Many of you have reached out to us to express your gratitude for our on-line worship ~ thank you. When we are in the midst of what sometimes feels like a scramble, your feedback really does encourage us. It definitely is a learning experience and we continue to work on improving our Sunday morning worship. We are most grateful for key volunteers who have stepped up to provide their time and expertise in the way of filming, sound and close captioning.

Pastoral Care: Staying connected

In late March, under direction of the clergy, a team of volunteers contacted our parish families to how people were coping, to provide a listening ear and to provide information on what was happening in the parish. In this unusual time, new relationships have been formed and contact information has been updated. Another round of calls will be made towards end of this month. In the meantime, please do call the clergy or the church office should a need occur.

Discipleship: All are invited | All are welcome | No experience required



Youth Group

In early April, our Youth Group started meeting regularly on Friday evenings for an hour via Zoom. A core group of ten kids join Tina & Martha for an hour of God & Games. On occasion we have had Byron and Michelle join us and on our Star Wars themed night, we even had a guest appearance by Darth Vader. Those in grades 6 – 12 are welcome to join us at any time.



Thursday School

By late-April, we launched “Thursday School”. We had heard from our parents that families were watching the Sunday services together as a family so we moved Sunday School to Thursday afternoons at 3:00 for a half-hour of Gospel-inspired learning, prayer & crafts. On our last “Thursday School”, in preparation for Mother’s Day, there were 18 children in the class.



To join our Friday Night Youth Group (for grades 6-12) or “Thursday School” (for ages 4-12), please contact Tina Clarke, our Children, Youth and Family lead. Tina can be reached at: tina.clarke.brampton@gmail.com or via phone/text: 647-278-5519.

Weekly Prayer

Wanting to develop a deeper understanding of God’s love for you? Gain insight into a difficult situation?



Starting later this month on May 19 and May 22, we will be offering Lectio Divina twice weekly. Translated as Divine Reading, Lectio Divina is a simple and comprehensive prayer practice. Focusing on a fragment of the scripture from the upcoming Sunday, participants will be encouraged to listen to God.

Sessions are:

- **Tuesday evenings at 8:00 pm** followed by a short Night Prayer (approximately 45 minutes)
- And again on **Friday mornings at 10:00 am** (approximately 30 minutes)

Sessions will be offered over Zoom. However, for those that do not have access to internet technology, a telephone option is available. Lectio Divina is for all people with a desire to learn about prayer or deepen their existing practice. All are welcome to join at any time. For a Zoom invitation or telephone access, please contact our Assistant Curate, The Rev. Michelle Jones at: curate.christchurchbrampton@gmail.com or phone/text: 416-418-3912

Small Group Study starting Thursday, May 28

How is God being faithful to us in this time of Covid-19? Join us for a 5-week bible study entitled “Nothing Can Separate Us From the Love of God”. Starting on May 28, Zoom sessions will be on **Thursday evenings at 7:00 pm**.

The evening will conclude with Night Prayer at 8:00 pm. All study materials will be provided. All are welcome to sign-up for this study. For a Zoom invitation or telephone access, please contact our Rector, The Rev. Canon Byron Gilmore at: rectorchristchurch@bellnet.ca or phone: 905-451-6649 ext. 22



STEWARDSHIP FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Isn't there lots of money at Christ Church? Where are they overspending?

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.

2. I heard that the money comes from somewhere else. Is that true? Do I need to be the one to give more?

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.

Occasionally, we do receive grants from the Diocese of Toronto; most notably a Curacy Grant that provides 50% of the costs of having a Curate and recently extraordinary relief was provided by the Diocese in the form of covering the Clergy and Allotment expenses for all churches in the Diocese for 2 months. In the former case, Christ Church is tasked to fund the other 50% and in the latter, this act of generosity is unprecedented.

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

3. Why should I pledge? No one else does.

Not true. Annual pledge commitment invitations have been extended annually since 2006 ~ we are a pledging church. Last year close to 60% of our households made an annual commitment to Christ Church.

4. Does the church support people in need?

Prior to the pandemic, 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. This, of course, has been converted to telephone calls.

We provide counseling to those facing life challenges related to sickness, family issues, and other concerns. You can well imagine how this has increased in last couple of months.

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*. In early March, just as the pandemic was taking hold and doors being closed, Christ Church was able to provide Ste. Louise Outreach a cheque in the amount of \$1,200 from the proceeds of the Pancake Supper ~ God's timing is extraordinary.

Further we support the *Primate's World Relief* (Anglican Church of Canada), *Faithworks* (Diocese of Toronto) and *International Christian Voice*. In March, Christ Church was presented with an Excellency Award in recognition of our ministry partnership with *International Christian Voice*. Nurturing outreach and social action ministries within in our parish that care for the poor and marginalized is part of who we are.

5. I think I'm giving enough. I'm not quite sure what I "should" be giving. What would you suggest?

What is God asking of us? Please take time to read this mailing ~ 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. There is a helpful chart on the back of the pledge card that can be used as a guideline.



6. Is electronic giving is risky?

The simple answer is no. In the 6 weeks ending April 30th (our building was closed for public worship March 15), Christ Church received \$44,000 from our various electronic platforms. These include monthly Pre-Authorized Remittance (“PAR”), CanadaHelps and e-Transfers. We are so grateful for those that made donations through our newly introduced e-Transfer and CanadaHelps platforms.

As you may be aware, close to 50% of our annual Parish Offerings are received by way of PAR. That said, of our top 50 donors there is an equal split between PAR and envelopes. Should you wish to convert to PAR there is a form available on our website that can be downloaded or you may call the office to obtain one. We like to think that by setting up PAR, you are putting your spiritual giving plan into action.

7. Tell me more about e-Transfer?

A simple way to electronically transfer money from your account to the Christ Church account utilizing the Interac system. Here’s how it works:

- Set up Christ Church Brampton as a payee on your own bank account
- The payee email address you need is: christchurchbrampton@bellnet.ca
- No password is required
- Upon making an offering, you will receive an email notification of the transfer
- Christ Church will also receive an email notification. Your offering will be included in your annual tax receipt

8. Tell me more about CanadaHelps?

CanadaHelps provides Canadian charities with an electronic platform at a modest cost. If you give to Christ Church through CanadaHelps your charitable receipts will come directly from CanadaHelps for the full amount of your donation. CanadaHelps is a non-profit organization. 1.8% supports CanadaHelps in offering this service to charities. Like all online transactions, charitable gifts are subject to 3.5% transaction processing fees from credit card companies. Christ Church receives monthly disbursements directly into our bank account as donations become available. We have a direct link to our CanadaHelps account on our website.

WHY TITHE

A tithe is the gift given to the work of God that equals 10 percent of what God gave you in the first place. Such a gift is often referred to as “first fruit” because the first 10 percent of one’s increase is given back to God, while the remaining 90 percent is to be used by the one to whom the increase is given.

Many may ask reasonable questions like the following:

- Is my tithe before or after taxes?
- I work on commission; I have no idea what my income will be. How do I determine my tithe?
- What if I donate to other charitable institutions? Is that part of my tithe?

The short answer is that the Bible and our tradition teach that a tithe is a full 10 percent or one’s increase given specifically to the work of the Church. However, that may be quite a new understanding of giving for some. You may not be prepared to tithe, which is why ~ like many things ~ the place to start is with prayer.

At Christ Church, we have suggested to all members that they focus their giving on a percentage of income rather than a dollar amount. The goal would be the tithe but perhaps you begin at lower percent and consciously work your way up



until you reach, or like some, surpass the tithe. If you give a percentage of your income, then, if your income goes up, so does your gift and vice versa.

You have to determine, within your own heart, what part of your tithe is going to the work of Christ Church. For instance, it is reasonable to assume that a gift to the Primates World Relief, an overseas Christian mission or another Christian ministry is part of your tithe. However, a gift to an arts organization, local hospital or university while also tax deductible – and honourable as well – would not, in principle, be part of the Biblical tithe.

TITHE GOALS

To better help you reach the goal of tithing, please take some time to review the chart on the back of the pledge card. Find the income level in the first column that most closely matches your income and then following the number horizontally to determine your level of giving to Christ Church. Percentages are listed at the top. Consider stepping up your giving by moving one or more columns to the right.

Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters, since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ. For the wrongdoer will be paid back for whatever wrong has been done, and there is no partiality.

Colossians 3:23-25

ONE FINAL MESSAGE

- † Prayerfully consider what God is doing in your life.
- † Prayerfully consider your personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
- † Prayerfully consider what Christ Church means to you and your family, and what Christ Church can mean in the Brampton community.
- † Prayerfully consider what God has done in providing for your “goods and kindred,” and what you will return to Him.

Christ Church does not presume that if you have given in the past your prior pledge will continue to carry over. We need your completed, written pledge to ensure not only the continuation of our many ministries, but to enhance your personal Christian growth.

Our Stewardship Focus Period concludes with the Blessing of the Pledges.

The Day of Pentecost | May 31

Stewardship Pledges may be dropped off at the church or mailed in. Simply place your pledge in an envelope addressed to the Envelope Secretary.

You may also call or email our Envelope Secretary, Carolynne Atkinson who will be pleased to complete a pledge for you. These pledges will be included in the Blessing of the Pledges. Carolynne can be reached at:

Telephone: 905-453-8323 | Email: carolynneat@yahoo.ca