



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q: What is a pledge? How is it different from a donation?**

A: A pledge is a commitment by you to give a stated amount to St. Paul's for the following year. As a spiritual practice, it places our hearts in an intentional posture of thankfulness. Second, as all of our pledge cards are gathered, it provides the vestry with the means to make thoughtful and faithful choices when it comes time to create a budget for the new year to fund our ministries.

**Q: What percent of the church's annual budget is supported by pledges?**

A: Over 79%. The rest of the operating budget is supported by cash offerings, donations, fundraisers, and to a lesser extent, building rentals.

**Q: What if this is an uncertain year? I don't want to make a pledge I can't fulfill.**

A: Your pledge is a spiritual commitment, not a contract. You may change your pledge at any time by contacting the church office.

**Q: How much should I give?**

A: The Bible describes, in several places, a standard of giving of one tenth to God (Genesis 14:17-20, 28:18-22, Deuteronomy chapters 12, 14, 26, Leviticus 27:30-33). If you asked ten different members of the church this question, you would likely get ten different answers. We encourage you to give a gift that is a meaningful percentage of your income. For someone like Bill and Melinda Gates, who could likely live an extravagant lifestyle on one percent of their income, a tithe of ten percent of their income may or may not be meaningful. To the contrary, a single parent with several children in college who has to budget down to the last dollar, a pledge of one-tenth of one percent may be meaningful. If every member of the church gave 2 percent of their income, we would have more than enough. Whatever your gift, consider giving God the first and best of all you receive, making it an intentional and meaningful priority in your household spending. If you have never pledged, consider starting at 2% of your household income. No amount is too small or too large.

**Q: Don't we get money from the Diocese?**

A: No. Unlike some traditions, we are NOT funded from the top down. In fact, St. Paul's makes a congregational pledge to the Diocese to support its missions and operations both locally and for the Episcopal Church throughout the world.

**Q: Is my stewardship defined only by the money I give to the church?**

A: Absolutely not. Time and service given to others is a critical component of stewardship. Our church can't function without these gifts of time and service.