



Faith in Action

Isaiah 6:8: Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!' (NRSV)

Several of our members have shared how giving and serving have deepened their faith. They've graciously agreed to share their experiences here in hopes of inspiring others to do the same.

Financial Giving

"My wife and I take our tithe out of our budget first. Then we manage our budget with what's left. That helps us remember to honor God with our first fruits like the scripture teaches us to do. Exodus 20:19 says, 'the choicest of your first fruits from your ground you shall bring into the house of the Lord your God.' God taught the children of Israel to bring their best to offer to God. When we do that in our own way, we are honoring God by showing Him we know all that we have is from Him. Remarkably, somehow, we always seem to have enough. More importantly we know our priorities are right."

"You walk into a church building and assume they are funded by some source outside the community. They aren't. The first time I realized the church's only source of funding was from donations from people like me, I felt a sense of urgency about giving. Once I started, I felt a sense of ownership about what got done. It's a wonderful feeling to be a part of that."

"It seems like we have always been tithers. But there have been times when we couldn't. We moved around a lot and sometimes tithed to the church we left behind and never joined a church in our new location before having to move again to yet another location. But when we resumed tithing, it always felt like a part of us that was missing had been restored. We were whole again."

"There are so many groups asking for money. Public television, St Jude Hospital, Society for Prevention of cruelty to animals, Disabled American Veterans, Good Will Industries, etc. Everywhere I turn even on the street corner in town people ask me for money. I really get tired of that! Thankfully, when I contribute to my local church, I know what I am doing for my community, and I can see the results. We give to the four special offerings at church as well as tithing. This makes us feel a sense of peace when we see disasters in other parts of the world and realize our special offerings are going there."

"I see tithing as an investment in the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is in our hearts and minds. The church provides opportunities for education, worship, fellowship, hospitality and service. My contributions build the kingdom of God in people's minds and hearts."

Giving Time and Talent

"I was very reluctant to serve as a leader in my church at first. Well, after all, I don't have a seminary degree. I'm not well versed in the Book of Order. I don't feel qualified. But then I agreed to serve on a committee. Our leader did a good job of including us all. I began to realize the many different perspectives in a team are the tools of God's Spirit for working His will through us. They need to hear my point of view so they can learn how to reach people like me. I really felt like I was doing something important for Jesus."

"The first time I served as an Elder it was a little intimidating. But once I started working with the pastor and the other leaders, I had this sense of peace and purpose about my work in the church. At first, I would dread going to meetings. Then, after experiencing the Peace of Christ firsthand during the opening devotional and the deliberation of business, I felt rewarded with spiritual contentment like I've never experienced before. Thank you, God, for letting me serve this church!"

"I'm a senior citizen and I'm not as agile as I was in my 20's. I volunteered for the building and grounds clean up day. I was thinking, "Gee I hope I don't hurt myself!" I met a young teenager who was volunteering by himself. We decided to work on trimming the hedges together. He was young and strong and could do certain things I couldn't do. I was a little taller and able to reach some things he couldn't reach. We helped each other. I really enjoyed getting to know that young man and every time we see each other at church we take time to catch up on how we are both doing. Volunteering gave me new friends."

"When we first joined the church, we felt a bit like outsiders. Our involvement at church was like the Raid on Entebbe. We would swoop in on Sunday morning, participate in worship and then try to get to the car before anyone stopped us. Volunteering became our point of entry into real church life. Now, we linger and look forward to talking with our brothers and sisters in Christ at TPC. It is a truly rewarding experience."

"I'm a single parent. I need the support of a worship service to recharge my batteries so to speak. My children go to kids' church at TPC. At first, I'd drop them off and use the time to go get a cup of coffee. Then later I started attending church but stayed in worship when they went to children's church. At some point I realized they probably needed help in children's church and began volunteering for that. Now, I am making it possible for other single parents to get their batteries recharged when I volunteer to work with their children. We take turns working at children's church so all of us get a chance to recharge our batteries. Now, I have a sense of purpose and direction as well as new friends and the blessing of serving others at church."