

A Stewardship Prayer

Loving God, we thank you for the rich abundance in our lives.

Open our eyes to see that, in being so blessed, we can, in turn, abundantly bless others.

Open our hearts to feel the powerful generosity of your Spirit and let go of our fear and judgment.

Open our ears to hear the needs of this church and community.

Open our minds that, whenever called, we offer the world our measureless love, our generous time, our unique talents and treasure.

Quicken our hands to your service, breathe your Spirit into us and touch us with the life of Christ.

Amen.

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Christ Episcopal Church
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Middletown, NJ 07748
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Christ Church Middletown



Building for Our Future through Stewardship

Frequently Asked Questions About Stewardship

Christ Episcopal Church
Middletown, NJ

What is Stewardship?

Stewardship is about using the gifts God has given us to do the work God is calling us to do. Stewardship is how we respond to God's love and generosity by caring for the world entrusted to us—this includes caring for the church so that the church can carry out God's mission in the world. Our ability to pursue the mission and ministries to which God has called us depends on the generosity of spirit of those who are a part of our community at Christ Church. Giving of your time, talent and treasure makes it possible **for** Christ Church to pursue this mission, helping us to assist and nurture people and to model God's love.

What is a Pledge?

A pledge is your best estimate of what you will be able to give financially to the church over a specific time. Pledging is also a spiritual discipline, which invites people to prayerfully consider what they give in proportion to what they receive. It is a financial commitment through which you are spiritually enriched.

I already put money in the Plate—do I have to pledge as well?

Ideally you do both—pledge annually and make a plate offering weekly. While both contribute to the financial health of the church, they serve somewhat different purposes.

Loose offerings in the plate help to support our ministries; as “gifts” rather than financial commitments to the church. Nevertheless, these gifts serve to improve our ability to carry out mission in our community; and each penny received in the plate enables us to do more of God's work!

Pledging, however, allows the Vestry to budget—to pay the churches expenses and to forecast the monies available for ministries. Thus, by pledging you will support the church's efforts to sustain our ministries, programs, and day-to-day operations.

How much should I pledge?

This is between you and God. Scripture calls for 10% of our time, talent and treasures (or a tithe). And, indeed, some parishioners currently tithe while many others have made a commitment to work toward tithing by starting with a percentage of income and increasing it over time.

Another way to determine your pledge is by estimating your weekly/monthly income in order to figure what portion of your income you can give each week/month. The important thing is that we give in gratitude for all our blessings and make a conscious effort to determine an appropriate level of giving for today and allow our giving to grow in the future. For giving back to God is an act of worship enabling us to grow deeper in our faith. Giving is to experience God's grace.

What happens if I need to change my estimate or I encounter financial hardship?

In the event your circumstances change, please contact the office or our rector, not only to revise your pledge but also to request any pastoral care and support that you might require. You are a valued member of Christ Church no matter how much you give. God honors your faithfulness.

How do I pay my pledge?

You may pay weekly, monthly, or as a onetime gift. Donations may also be made on the Christ Church website for a single or recurring contribution. This secure site will allow payment through debit/credit card or your personal checking account. If you pay your pledge by cash in the offering plate, use a designated envelope so that it is properly credited.

Can I submit a Pledge at any time in the year?

You may pay weekly, monthly, or as a onetime gift. If you pay your pledge by cash in the offering plate, use a designated envelope so that it is properly credited.

How is my pledge money spent?

Your pledge goes to support our work and ministries: worship and music, social justice ministries, fellowship events, and formation programs for children and adults. Your pledge also helps pay for clergy and staff salaries, as well as maintenance of our buildings and grounds.

Don't we receive money from the Diocese or Episcopal Church?

No. Most of our annual income, about 65%, comes directly from pledges. We are actually required to make a financial contribution to the Diocese to support its mission and ministries (which benefit Christ Church).

Christ Church does so much for our community—How Can I help?!

By offering your gifts of Time, Talent and Treasure!

Through the gifts of your time, expertise and money, you support the various ministries and operations connected to our parish including:

- Spiritual Enrichment through Worship, Music and maintaining our Sacred Space;
- Outreach Ministries, including St. Mark's Food Pantry & Soup Kitchen, the Calico Cat Thrift Shop and Food Pantry, Family Promise, Outreach Coffee Sales, Aslan Youth Ministries, Coat & Winter Needs Drive, CROP Walk, Thanksgiving and Christmas Ingatherings, Episcopal Relief and Development, and the Seamen's Church Institute.