



Generosity: Giving to others in the name of God from the gifts and resources He has given us. Our faithful giving may be directed to our church, our local community and/or our global community.

What is a Steward?

A steward is one who manages or cares for another's property, finances or affairs. God asks us to be stewards of the talents and resources He provides for our life on Earth. How we manage these gifts is an important part of our life and our relationship with God.

What are the types of Stewardship?

Our gifts generally fall into three categories:

- **Time** – Time is a precious commodity. Because every person is given a certain measure of days, time is limited. Investing our time in daily prayer and serving others, whether through church activities or individually, is important in promoting God's work. A commitment of time is just as important as volunteering a special talent or making a financial donation.
- **Talent** – We are each provided with talents that make us unique individuals. Talents such as music, art, public speaking, handiwork, cooking, and administration are gifts that we can share. When we combine our talents, the results are limitless. God's work depends on us sharing our time and talents with others.
- **Treasure** – God has provided us with the knowledge and ability to make a living. Our needs and services are purchased with the money we earn. The church is like any other organization. It has bills to pay, maintenance that is required, and expenses for personnel and services to fulfill the spiritual needs of the church. To demonstrate God's love and work, a church must reach out to those in need and minister to its members and those in the community. Without funding, a church cannot provide for itself, the community or those in need.

Stewardship is important because:

As stewards of God's gifts, we are called upon to invest these gifts so they will return benefits for the owner (*read Matthew 25:14-30*). If we fail to use our gifts, or we keep these gifts for our own benefit, we ignore the reason God entrusted them to us. God intends that we invest our time, energy, talents, and resources to further His work on Earth. As we know from practical experience, the act of giving to or for others is rewarding in so many ways.

What is a "pledge?"

A pledge is a promise. To make a pledge to the church, you are making a promise (or covenant) to support the work of the church. In many churches (and in the Bible), the term "tithe" is used in reference to financial pledges. You may pledge your time and talents, and you may make a financial pledge to the church. Each year in the fall, pledge forms are distributed to all church members to gather your "covenants" with God and the church for the coming year. (*see Numbers 30: 32*)

Why is pledging important?

Pledging helps the leaders of the church plan for the coming year. Like any organization, a budget is needed to make decisions about future activities. Since a church does not have a product to sell or have a guaranteed source of income, your pledge helps the church determine how much income it can expect for the coming year in order to pay for its needs and programs. Without pledges to guide the budget, many needs and outreach activities will go unfulfilled.

What is a “tithe?”

A tithe is one-tenth of your financial income. This is the amount called for in scripture for church members to give back to God’s work. When we consider all that God has provided for us, one-tenth is a small request especially when we compare it to the percentage of our income we spend on dining out, new gadgets, and entertainment. If you are not currently tithing, prayerfully consider working toward that goal. (*see Leviticus 27: 30-32 and Malachi 3:10*)

Who knows what I pledge and how much I give?

Your pledge is confidential. Only those people who work with the weekly church budget and bookkeeping know what your pledge is.

Why should I make a financial pledge?

Some members have said, “I prefer to give to special needs or programs of the church instead of making a pledge to the general fund.” Your non-pledged gifts are encouraged and greatly appreciated since they help the church with non-budgeted needs. However, please consider setting aside a portion of your annual gift to pledge to the general fund. These monies are necessary to pay routine expenses such as maintenance, utilities, insurance and staff salaries. When special appeals diminish contributions to the general fund, the basic church needs are not met.

Do special offerings go toward my pledge?

Special offerings are separate from the amount you pledge. However, the church bookkeeper does record these gifts along with your pledged gifts and reports them to you for tax reasons.

What if I am not sure of my time or financial situation for the coming year?

Make a pledge of the gift(s) that you feel you can give. If it turns out that you are able to give or do more during the year, you may give or do more than your pledge; or if your circumstances change, we encourage you to contact the church bookkeeper to lower your pledge so you may fulfill your covenant.

Can I give stocks and securities?

Yes, you may coordinate these arrangements with the church bookkeeper.

Can I make my financial gifts electronically?

St. John’s is currently working on providing this method of giving. Please let us know if you are interested in using this so that we can be certain to accommodate your needs.

Are children included in stewardship?

Yes. Children of any age can learn to pray and can attend Sunday school and church on a regular basis. There are specific church programs and activities for teens and children to volunteer their time and talents to help others. Children are encouraged to pledge a small amount from their allowance (if they receive one) to learn the principles of stewardship.

(Here’s a resource for creating a 3-part tithing bank for children:

http://www.christiancrafters.com/craft_tithingbank.html

Pinterest has really easy patterns as well: <https://www.pinterest.com/torthodoxpress/give-save-spend/>)

Can I pre-pay my pledged amount or make a lump-sum gift?

Yes, you may coordinate these arrangements with the church bookkeeper.

I am a busy person. I don’t have any extra time to give. What are my options?

You may support the work of the church by:

- Attending church service and Sunday school regularly,
- Praying for the church and its needs,
- Making financial gifts or other donations,
- Sharing your gifts and talents as you are able.