

Christ Church's Finances

Stewardship Pledging at Christ Church

We are pleased to present the last article in our series on our parish finances. This installment is on annual pledging, a key component of stewardship and a vital revenue source for the operating expenses of our parish.

While these articles are about our parish finances, it's important to remember that making an annual pledge to the parish is first and foremost a theological decision that grows out of prayerful consideration of all that God has given us. As thoughtful givers, we realize that "*we have gifts that differ according to the favor bestowed on each of us.*" (Romans 12:6-8). This should lead us to proportional giving, pledging more as God gives us more. The financial health of the parish depends on all us taking this approach to our annual pledge.

The vestry has three main goals for pledging in our parish. Let's look at the goals and how we're doing with each.

Goal 1 - Every parishioner pledges. In 2018, the parish received 128 pledges. We currently have over 200 families or "pledging units" in the parish. So only about 60-65% of us make an annual pledge.

Goal 2 - Every parishioner increases his or her pledge, even if it's a small amount. In this current pledge year, 38% of us increased our pledge amount over the previous year. The average pledge increase was \$718.

Goal 3 - Pledge income covers the parish's annual operating expenses. We pledged a total of about \$393,000 for 2018. Not everyone who pledges meets their total pledge amount and occasionally parishioners move and do not complete their pledge. Our forecasted operating expenses for 2018 is \$668,000. Pledge income will cover only about 60% of our operating expenses. In 2019, besides the challenges of covering regular inflationary costs of salaries services and supplies, we need to fund the addition of our Assistant Rector.

We've been increasing the percentage of operating expenses covered by pledges, but our current level of giving still does not support our parish programs, clergy, staff and physical plant. Thankfully, we have growing income from rentals of our buildings and an endowment that we draw from to help us pay our bills.

Why every pledge matters

Like any organization or household, Christ Church has fixed costs and bills to pay every month. It's our pledge dollars that we want to be able to count on to keep the lights and heat on, pay the staff's salaries and benefits, maintain our buildings and grounds, pay insurance premiums and so on.

The average pledge amount in 2018 is \$3,067, which is a slight decrease from a year ago. If we look at the parish's cost areas we can see how many pledges it takes to cover these expenses.

Expense Item	2018 Cost	Average \$3,067 Pledges needed
Personnel		
Personnel Expenses	312,790	102
Diocesan Assessment		
Diocesan Assessment	77,370	25
Worship		
Worship	1,825	-
Music	26,510	9
Childcare	2,600	1
Total Worship	30,935	10 Pledges
Service		
Christian Education	1,600	1
Budgeted Clergy Discretionary	1,000	-
Evangelism	250	-
Conventions & Seminars	1,900	1
Outreach	6,500	2
Total Service	11,250	4 Pledges
Community		
Fellowship	4,235	1 Pledge
Foundation		
Office Expense	35,452	12
Professional Services	12,140	4
Insurance	31,950	10
Utilities	57,910	19
Maintenance & Repairs	70,975	23
Grounds	18,768	6
Snow Plowing	4,500	1
Total Foundation	231,695	76 Pledges
	668,275	218 Pledges

To reach our goal of covering operating expenses with pledge income, with the same number of pledges (128), we'd need to raise our average pledge to \$5,221, a 70% increase. That's probably not going to happen. However, if every family in our parish pledged, we'd have around 200 pledges, and to meet our operating expenses we'd need an average pledge of \$3,341, just a 9% increase. If we are able to meet our operating expenses out of pledge income we will free up income from the endowment that can be used to support our outreach efforts.

One of the stewardship committee objectives in presenting this series of mailings was to provide parishioners a comprehensive financial overview leading up to our annual stewardship pledge campaign. The committee hopes that as you consider your pledge this year, you'll keep the financial realities of our parish in mind and give generously.

We urge all parishioners to complete the attached Estimate of Giving card for 2019 and to bring it with you to church on November 4 -Stewardship Sunday.

Give and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put back into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back. Luke 6:38