



# Christ Church

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November 15, 2023

*We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters, as is right,  
because your faith is growing abundantly  
and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing.*

*2 Thessalonians 1:3*

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

**Sunday, December 3, is Gratitude & Growth Stewardship Sunday & the First Sunday of Advent.** That Sunday we are celebrating the launch of the earthly business of Parish finances and planning and the spiritual business of the Christian Year in one joyful event – it will be a special day that is also critical to life of the Parish. Please try to attend one of the services that day (8am, 10am, or 5pm) on this very special day of renewal. We hope you will consider five critical points as you pray over how you can continue to support and grow Christ Church in 2024:

1. **Please make a Pledge by filling out the enclosed Pledge Card** which gives the Stewardship committee the best indication of what goals can be pursued and budgeted in the year to come. Your pledge will enable us to continue our mission and ministry in Pelham, New Rochelle, Mount Vernon, and the Bronx, including our newly rejuvenated and growing family and children's ministries. We are formally collecting and blessing Pledge Cards on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, but they can be returned to the parish office anytime if that is more convenient for you. You can mail the card in, drop it off at the parish office, or simply email the parish office at [marie@christchurchpelham.org](mailto:marie@christchurchpelham.org).
2. We offer **numerous ways of making a pledge and giving donations to the Parish.** Please see the attached page for information on different ways to give.
3. In answer to the perennial question, **"How much should I give?"** - a good starting point is to choose a percentage of your income and give or increase that percentage each year. Percentage giving helps to navigate increases or decreases in your personal finances and moves you toward the traditional tithe (10%) which is recommended by the Episcopal Church. The attached page also includes a chart outlining of 2023 pledge amounts.

4. We are willing – excited even – to discuss with anyone the question **“where is my money going to?”** including presentations of past budgets and some thought about what initiatives can be undertaken if certain funding thresholds can be reached. Please reach out to any of us with any questions you have. Throughout this process we are committed to full transparency and partnership in which all members of the Parish are invited in as full participants.
5. Most of all, please join us in offering **prayers of grateful and thanksgiving** for the generosity shown by so many this past year which has allowed our parish to thrive in these challenging times, recalling especially:
  - Last year’s Stewardship Campaign totaled over \$460,000 in pledges (our most ever!), from 110 pledge units. We are especially grateful to one family that challenged the parish with a \$25,000 matching pledge and to those who increased or made new pledges as part of the match.
  - We called a part-time Youth Minister whose efforts to welcome back families are already bearing fruit. We are also grateful to the three families who each matched the \$5,000 Grant from the Diocese of New York to support our new Youth Minister.
  - Our spaces are now being rented and used by more community groups, included Hearts & Homes for Refugees and Pelham Troop 1.
  - We are all blessed by every member of the parish who donated time and energy to offer countless events to our parish and community.

We hope you will join us in this effort, letting us know what is on your mind and contributing, if you can, to this joyful exercise. Last year’s campaign was a success because it was done with open hearts and open ears, and we committed to keeping that spirit going forward. God bless you, and thank you so much for your support and prayers for Christ Church.

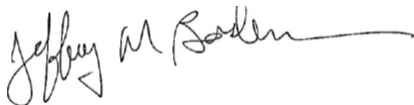
The Peace of the of the Lord be always with you,



Curtis Chase, Stewardship Chair



Etta Gumbs, Junion Warden



Jeff Bodenmann, Senior Warden



The Rev. Matthew Mead, Rector

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances,  
for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

*1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*