



# TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH



November 2010

Dear Parishioners:

In my office is a picture of a stained glass window with the words "Stewardship - a way of life." It challenges me every day to recognize that all I have was given to me to use for the good of God's kingdom. My gifts and skills, my time here on earth and all of the abundance that comes into my hands are meant to be shared. The spiritual discipline of giving a portion of all of it back to God is how I remember to keep God first.

Since coming to Trinity, I have heard time and again how much all of you love this place and what a big part of your lives this Church on the Green is. You

love the people here, the good work done in the community, the worship, the music, the beauty of the place, and the feeling you have when coming through our striking red doors. In all of these things, you are blessed through the presence and love of God.

Each year you are asked to respond to God's blessings in your lives, by giving back in thanksgiving, some of what God has given you. What portion of your abundance will it be? Years ago, I committed to coming as close to the Biblical standard of the tithe, ten percent, as I can manage. It took a leap of faith but it taught me the true nature of abundance; however much I give away, I always have enough.

I invite you, in support of the 2010 Fall Pledge Campaign, to prayerfully consider what percentage of your after-tax income you are called to give to the life and mission of Trinity Church in thanksgiving. What percentage honors all that you have been given?

Let us be a community of generous, joyful givers, growing in our trust in the abundance of God.

*Sharon* †

The Rev. Sharon K. Gracen  
Rector



## *An Invitation to Proportionate Giving*

### **Proportionate Giving involves two points:**

1. That we understand ourselves to be stewards of all that we have and to share it thankfully for the good of God's world.
2. That our level of giving arises from the level of our income.

### **The "Giving" part ...**

Giving is an exercise of gratitude, faith, and trust. It is an outward expression of the priorities of your heart.

### **The "Proportionate" part ...**

Proportionate giving simply means calculating your giving as a percentage of your income. With regards to Christian stewardship, your giving is best expressed in relative terms, not absolute. Thus you need not measure your giving against that of anyone else – only against your own means.

### **Every person stands on equal ground as a giver.**

Recall the parable of the widow's mite (*Mark 12:42-44*). Although she was poor, the widow gave a significant portion of what she had and Jesus honored her small gift.



#### **A WAY TO CALCULATE YOUR CURRENT LEVEL OF GIVING**

1. Enter your annual income here (after income taxes as reported): \_\_\_\_\_
2. Total what you now contribute to:
  - a. Trinity Church \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Other charitable causes \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Total \_\_\_\_\_
3. Divide what you currently contribute by your income (#2c divided by #1). Move the decimal point two places to the right. This is the percentage of your income you are now giving. \_\_\_\_\_

The highest form of proportionate giving is the 10 percent tithe, a biblical standard from the early Old Testament. Few people can casually give away a tenth of their income, and most of us fall short of the tithe standard. However, for those of you who can make the commitment, the move toward tithing can be a transforming experience in your spiritual journey. To reach the goal, incrementally increase by 1 percent each year. Please see the guide enclosed.

## **Pledging is as important as proportionate giving.**

Where we put our treasure shows what is important to us. So we ask: What *does* Trinity mean to you? Is it family? Friendships? Belonging? Acceptance? Support? Love?



Pledging is a spiritual discipline by which we imitate Christ in giving from our own abundance. The pledge is a personal faith commitment and a statement about what we value. It is a commitment to the life and ministry of this congregation.

The Vestry serves as stewards of your pledges and crafts a budget from that income that reflects the mission of Trinity Church. This year, each Ministry of the parish will be asked to live within their respective budgets so that extra appeals will be minimized. Your pledge will make Trinity's ministries possible.

## **Pray for guidance.**

Please consider carefully and prayerfully how God has blessed you, and if you are currently pledging, we ask you to increase your level of giving by an additional one percent. If this is your first time making a pledge to Trinity Church, consider what proportion of your treasure reflects what God is calling you to this year at Trinity.



Our Stewardship Committee and Vestry

are committed to proportionate giving and pledging. We cherish our church and community and understand that it is up to us to sustain Trinity and its ministries for future generations.

Please join us.

# *Christ ... Community ... Compassion*

## VESTRY STEWARDSHIP STATEMENT

We believe

- † God gives us the gift of life through *Christ*.
- † God's glory is reflected in all that we are and all that we do.
- † ours is a position of both trust and responsibility.

We commit to

- † grow in our love for God and one another.
- † live our lives as faithful and grateful guardians of God's resources.
- † regularly attend worship, prayer and strengthen fellowship.
- † use our time, talent and treasure in ministry serving others.
- † support the financial health of Trinity Church through proportionate giving and pledging.

We invite each person to

- † share the joy, wonder and mystery of God's presence.
- † actively participate in our church *community*.
- † show *compassion*, love and generosity as our faith response to God's gifts.

Members of the Vestry and Stewardship Committee:

*James Atkinson*  
*Sandra Baldwin*  
*Leo Barbaro*  
*Bob Barnett*  
*Phoebe Burbine*  
*Regis Conlon*  
*Ann Freeman*  
*Michael Freeman*  
*Sherry Jones*  
*Kris Lockwood*  
*Maureen McGuinness*  
*Martha Monico*  
*Laura Radulski*  
*Mitch Rucinski*  
*Cathy Seibyl*  
*Steve Sharma*

