

2010: A Grace Odyssey

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

WHY PLEDGE? Giving is a spiritual discipline that deepens faith. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matthew 6:21). This is often heard the other way around - where your *heart* is, there your *treasure* will be. But Jesus puts it: Where you put your *treasure* - that’s where your *heart* will end up.” Pledging is the practice of directing one’s heart by making a commitment. Giving in this way transforms lives.

WHAT IS AN APPROPRIATE PLEDGE? Determining an appropriate pledge is a very individual decision. Some folks pledge a percentage of income and endeavor to increase that percentage each year. Others prefer to know what the church’s budget requires. Consider that, in 2009, the amount of the church’s budget represented by each individual member is \$1104 (this will increase in 2010). The median *household* pledge is \$1200, and has been so for over 12 years. Further, 140 members do not pledge or give. When you pledge, consider whether you are giving in proportion to your ability to give and in proportion to the church’s need for member support.

WHAT IS PERCENTAGE GIVING? Percentage giving is the decision to view one’s pledge to the church as a percentage of one’s (gross or net) income. The value of percentage giving is that it helps one to see their church giving in relation to other household expenditures.

WHAT IS TITHING? Tithing is the biblical practice of pledging 10% of one’s income to the ministry of the church. For some, this means gross income (before deductions) and for others it means net income (after deductions). If a tithe (10%) does not seem appropriate for your situation, please still consider giving a percentage of your income.

WHAT IS ANOTHER PLEDGE OPTION? Our church would never ask a pledger to give as a percentage of income if doing so would jeopardizing a person’s financial well-being. Therefore, if percentage giving does not fit with your situation, pledge another amount. A pledge to the church is a sign of connection and commitment. No pledge is too little or too much.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LOCAL CHURCH MINISTRY & A MISSION GIVING? Local Church Ministry pledges support operational expenses that make local ministry and mission possible including salaries, utilities, curriculum, building maintenance, supplies, etc. Mission Giving pledges financially support local, regional, national, and international groups and causes that reflect the values of our local church. Currently, Mission Giving pledges constitute 17% of total pledges. When you make your decision, consider designating 18 - 20% of your pledge to Mission Giving.

WHAT DIFFERENT WAYS ARE THERE TO GIVE? Pledgers give by dropping a check into the offering plate, mailing a check into the office, or signing up for automatic withdrawal. We encourage pledgers to adopt the latter practice because of the ease and security of the transaction, but any of these three forms is acceptable. Some pledgers make a one-time gift because they donate stock dividends or foundation funds. Contact the office with any questions.

WHAT ABOUT GIFTS OF CASH? Cash is welcome; however, please place your gift in an envelope with your name on it so that the office may post the gift to your contribution record. Under the current IRS recordkeeping rule, donors of monetary contributions of any amount must obtain and keep a bank record or a written communication from the charitable organization as a record of the contribution. Written records prepared by the donor (such as check registers or personal notations) are no longer sufficient to support charitable contributions.

WHAT IF I NEED TO ADJUST MY PLEDGE? Please contact the church office at any time to adjust your 2010 Pledge.