

# PLEDGING 101

## WHAT IS A PLEDGE?

A pledge is an estimate of your financial support for the upcoming year, in this case 2024.

## DOES THE AMOUNT OF MY PLEDGE OR DONATION AFFECT MY STANDING AT ST. PAUL'S?

No. Your participation in worship, fellowship, service, pastoral care, or anything else is **not** conditioned upon you pledging.

## I ALREADY GIVE. WHY SHOULD I PLEDGE?

Thank you! We are grateful for your generosity. In short, you don't *have* to pledge. However, pledges allow church leadership to estimate next year's income and make informed decisions while building the budget. If we don't have enough pledged income, we may have to cut some of our programs and projects. Unlike some denominations, we are NOT funded from the top down by the diocese (our regional body) or the national church. In fact, St. Paul's makes a mission pledge to the diocese to support the collective ministry of our 88 sister churches in the District, Charles, Montgomery, Prince George's, and St. Mary's counties.

## HOW MUCH SHOULD I GIVE?

The amount you pledge is strictly up to you. It is a personal decision. The Bible, however describes, in several places, a standard of giving one tenth of one's income to fulfilling the mission of God's dream (Genesis 14:17-20 & 28:18-22; Deuteronomy chs. 12, 14, 26; Leviticus 27:30-33). Our rector and a handful of parishioners have made this commitment; others are incrementally working toward it each **Over the last three years, the average pledge has increased by 20%**. What's most important is to establish a level of giving that is meaningful to you so that it is the **first and best** of all you receive and a reflection of your values and priorities. Pledging also helps us remember that all that we have are gifts of God.

## IS THE MONEY I PLEDGE USED WISELY?

Our rector and vestry (our elected body of lay leaders) work diligently to prioritize the needs of the church in accordance with the pledges received. After the vestry approves the budget, it is published at the beginning of each year and shared at our annual meeting. Each month the treasurer also provides a detailed breakdown of income and expenses and publishes it in the Midweek. It's also posted on the bulletin board across from the office.

## HOW DO I PAY OR FULFILL MY PLEDGE?

You can make periodic payments or pay a lump sum online, in the offering tray, or by mail.

## WHAT IF THIS IS AN UNCERTAIN YEAR?

Our pledge is a spiritual commitment, not a contract. You may change your pledge at any time by contacting the church office. God will not love you any less if you do and neither will we. Your pledge and any adjustments are confidential.