



Releasing *God's*
BLESSINGS
2023 Stewardship

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is giving a spiritual discipline and how does it help me grow in my faith?

Our Christian faith continually points us to love God and love our neighbor. Our faith journey, while it is life-giving to us, is not about us. Giving as a spiritual discipline helps you learn to rely on and trust God. Similarly, it helps us move away from self-centeredness to thinking about and caring for others. Giving requires intentionality and self-sacrifice.

What is percentage giving and why does the church encourage that rather than giving a certain amount?

All that we have is a gift from God. God invites us to give a portion of what God gives us back to the church. The Biblical tithe is 10 percent (Malachi 3:10) and while we might not all be able to do that at the moment, it's a worthy goal. We can't all give a certain amount of money, but we can all take steps to give 10 percent. Percentage giving allows you to be fluid with your giving which is a constant reminder of our ultimate source of blessings. If your income goes up, your giving goes up. If your income goes down, your percentage giving can stay the same while the actual dollar amount might go down. For some people, it helps to take a percentage that is a step of faith, but not yet 10 percent. Then, every three or six months, they increase their giving 1 percent until they eventually arrive at the tithe.

Ten percent, really?

Ten percent, regardless of your income, feels like a significant portion of your budget and it requires you to be intentional with how you spend the other 90 percent of your income. It requires you to intentionally make sacrifices for others and this is a good spiritual discipline. If you calculate 10 percent and that just feels like way too much money to give away, take a second and count your blessings (That 90 percent number could be pretty big as well). It's been said that we shouldn't give until it hurts, but instead, give until it feels good. Ten percent of your income can make a huge difference in the life of this church. Celebrate that you are able to give so much! To whom much is given, much is required (Luke 12:48).

How does the church create a budget and why is pledging so important?

The church creates its budget primarily through the pledges we receive. There are several other factors that help us set the budget for the next year and we recognize that the budget must be flexible if our giving changes. Your pledge for 2023 will help us plan our ministry budgets accordingly.

How does the church use my money?

We strive to be good stewards of these funds and maximize them to help us live into our mission to grow deep, grow wide, grow strong and thrive in joyful community. Our ministries are spread out in these categories, as well as staff salaries, church expenses, and apportionments (which help support the local, national, and global ministries of The United Methodist Church).

Why is automatic giving so important?

Whether you sign up for automatic bank drafts or scheduled giving through your bank, we are so grateful for this intentional step. This allows the church to receive your giving on a regular schedule. We know we can count on your offering being here and that helps us move forward confidently in our ministries. This also helps us avoid credit card giving site fees, and nobody likes fees. Finally, we hope this helps you in your faith journey. There is something extremely meaningful when you truly commit to giving to support the ministries of the church.

Can I change my pledge during the year?

Certainly! We know that there is a great deal of uncertainty around individual jobs and the financial market. There are all sorts of curveballs that life can throw at us. If you need to change your pledge, simply contact the church office. Perhaps more importantly, if life is getting a little crazy for one reason or another, let us know so that we can pray for you and walk alongside you through the storm.

My budget already feels stretched, can I really make a pledge?

Budgeting, although it can sound like an unpleasant word to some, can truly help with this. Sit down with a pencil and paper to see how you are spending your money. Oftentimes, a simple budget can help people really discover where their money is going and help make their income not feel so stretched.

Tithing or giving is most fruitful when it is given as “first fruits” or right off the top of our budget. Don’t wait until the end of the month to give. Instead, as you receive, give a portion to God with full thanksgiving. Then, pay the necessary expenses and invest in savings. Finally, use the rest of your money for all the other “extras.” Budgeting can be a spiritual discipline that helps you name and stick with your priorities.