



***A Guide to
Christian Giving***

Anglican Parish of Emerald

Why Should I Give?

1. To grow our reverence of God. Moses told the Israelites that they were to set aside their tithes “so that you may learn to revere the LORD your God always.” Deuteronomy 14:22 When we give sacrificially, we will see that God does indeed provide all our needs. We will move from reliance on ourselves to reliance on God. Such trust honours our Lord and gives him glory.

“This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.” 2 Corinthians 9:12

2. Because all things come from God. As God's people we are responsible to support his work with his money. This work includes the various ministries of the parish – preaching and teaching, pastoring, visiting, children's and youth ministries and so on. As we do this we share in God's mission with him.

“The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;” Psalm 24:1

3. Because God is the owner, we are just managers. Everything we have comes from God and has been entrusted to us to use. God calls us to steward wisely the resources he has given us and to use them to serve his purposes.

“Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them.” Matthew 25:14-30

4. Because we will be held accountable for our stewardship. God gives us resources according to our ability and he will one day question us as to whether we were faithful in our use of them.

“‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.’ His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things.’” Matthew 25:20-21

5. So we can learn to be generous. Generosity does not come easily to human nature but through giving we can experience the freedom that follows opening our hands and letting go of what we cling to. We will discover the economics of God's kingdom.

“Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each person should give what they have decided in their heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

6. And because it is the character of our God. We are called to be like God. Our Lord is a generous and loving God who gives to us without limit. To be like Jesus is to love like him and give like him.

“For God so loved the world he gave his only Son . . .” John 3:16

“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, that through his poverty you might become rich.” 2 Corinthians 8:9

Questions about Giving

- ***“The Anglican Church owns a lot of property – it must be able to fund local churches.”***

The income from Diocesan investments is used for a variety of purposes including the training of people for ministry and strategic initiatives in evangelism such as cross-cultural and new growth area ministries. However, **every parish has to support its own ministries**. Our Parish does not receive any income or grants from the Diocese. In fact, we pay a significant assessment to the Diocese which is used to fund our parish insurances, Diocesan wide ministries and other costs paid for by the Diocese.

- ***“I give generously to a number of other Christian and charitable organisations. I can’t afford to give to the local church as well.”***

If you benefit from the ministry of your local church, then it must have a strong claim on your giving. The local community is where the mission of the church begins as Jesus himself pointed out in the Great Commission. Members have the privilege and responsibility to fund ministry in their local church. Previous generations have given so we today have resources and facilities to use, so we need to make a similar contribution for future generations. This does not mean we should neglect those other organisations but review how we proportion our giving to meet all the needs we feel God is directing us to fulfil.

- ***“I’m a Pensioner or a student. I don’t think I should be asked to give.”***

It’s true that the privilege of giving most should belong to those who have the most to give. But the principle is clear - we should all be prepared to give from what God has given us, no matter how small. What matters is our trust that God does provide all we need, including the resources to be generous on all occasions.

Two forms of Worship

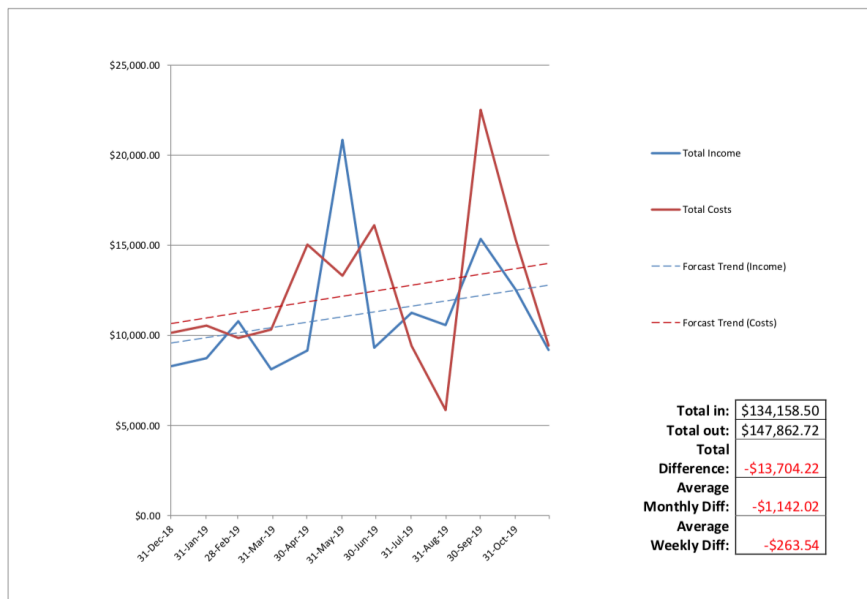
Tithing is a form of worship because it shows God you trust *Him*—not money—to provide. Jesus reminds us “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.” Matthew 6:24

On the other hand, when you serve, you worship God by stewarding your time and your talents for Him. And Matthew 25:40 tells us that whatever we do to serve others in need, we do for Him. So, serving is a beautiful form of generosity!

So, yes, God wants you to serve and give of your time. But He also wants you to put your faith in Him instead of money—especially since He gives us 100% of His money while only asking us to give 10% of it back.

It is important to note here that tithing is **NOT** a salvation issue, and God isn’t going to condemn you if you don’t do it. But tithing *is* for your benefit. **God doesn’t need your money. He wants your heart.** Tithing is a way to give your heart over to God because you’re reminding yourself that your security lies in Christ alone. When you do not tithe you need to ask yourself the question: are you standing on this truth?

PARISH OPERATION EXPENSES



Known Variables for 2020:

Removed wages for Bargain Shop: \$14,466.48

Additional income from Diocese for Safe Ministry role: \$15,629.37

How will my giving be spent?

The Parish Council sets a budget each year based on known costs and Parish priorities, however as you can see from the chart on page 4 our expenditure currently outstrips our income. Whilst we have had budget line items for important areas of repairs and ministry, these have not been able to be achieved without the additional generosity of some within our congregation. This year we are seeking input from the budget planning meeting, and distributing this information broadly within the parish. The church budget will be finalised by Parish Council and presented at the Annual General Meeting for endorsement. All members of the church are encouraged to attend this meeting and participate in the decision-making process.

Budget progress reports will be distributed regularly to church members via the pew sheets.

Methods of Giving

- **Money directly placed in the collection plate.**
This kind of giving depends on cash being available to use and you can only give when you're present at a church meeting.
- **Use of envelopes.**
This kind of giving is completely anonymous and helps maintain systematic giving. It also makes it easy to give to mission outside the church.
- **Direct giving electronically. (Automatic Transfer from Bank Account.)**
This kind of giving needs to be budgeted in advance and is an excellent way to be disciplined in your giving, is convenient and doesn't depend on your memory. For this method to be completely anonymous you will need to check with your bank that your name will not appear against your deposit in the Parishes Bank Account. The details of the Parish Account can be found in the pew sheet.
- **Your Will.**
We have been blessed as a church by former members who have made a gift to future generations through a bequest. You can make our Parish a beneficiary in your Will. If you would like to leave something to St Luke's in your will you should talk to a solicitor about this. Please contact Jen, the Wardens or the Treasurer for more information.

How much should I give?

- **Old Covenant (Old Testament) – Tithes**

In ancient Israel God instructed an annual **tithe** for the support of the priests (Levites) and others. One tenth of the increase of the land, trees, herds and flocks was given to the Lord as a tithe in recognition that everything belongs to him. In Deuteronomy 14:23, Moses explains that the tithe was commanded so that the people would revere the Lord.

- **New Covenant (New Testament) – Generosity & Sacrifice**

For Christians under the new covenant our giving to God should also reflect that same reverence and honour. Jesus said “where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” Matthew 6:21. The 10% tithe is still a **good starting point** for Christians today bearing in mind; that we also will want to revere our Lord; that Jesus said he came to fulfil the Law and the Prophets not abolish them; and he criticised the Pharisees for tithing while neglecting justice, when they should have been doing both.

Paul told the Corinthian church that people will praise God for their **generosity** in sharing with them and with everyone else. (2 Corinthians 9:13) Paul commends the churches in Macedonia because, out of their deep poverty, they gave with great generosity for the support of fellow Christians. (2 Corinthians 8:1-5). Our giving then should be both generous, and also **sacrificial**, i.e. not just the leftovers. Jesus commends the widow who gave her few coins, which, unlike the gifts of others, was not out of surplus funds, but what she needed to live on. (Mark 12:43-44). God calls us all to **equal sacrifice; not an equal amount**.

The thing to remember is that tithes & offerings are about our heart and where we draw our security from God or money. A tithe of 10% for a pensioner may be an impossible sacrifice in today’s world, whereas a wealthy person’s 10% may be no sacrifice at all.

Jesus moves us from a rules based religion to real faith based relationships with God characterised by a transformed heart (evidenced by grace, generosity & sacrifice).

Some ideas you might find helpful:

- **Plan** a household budget for the year and include your giving to Christian ministries in relation to anticipated spending on other needs.
- **Remember** Murphy's Law of Home Economics: 'your lifestyle expands to the level of your income'. Include generosity as part of your lifestyle!
- **Give a fixed percentage** of gross income rather than a dollar amount. This can become a pattern for future years, automatically adjusting for inflation and any change in your means.
- **Give priority** to the group from which you receive regular Christian teaching and fellowship, in most cases the local church.
- **Think** carefully about how many Christian organisations you wish to support; each will require some commitment of time for meetings and informed prayer.
- Christian parents need to model a proper attitude to money and giving:
 - **Families with younger children** may like to teach them the principles of tithing, saving and spending through the separate money box system, apportioning 10% to both God and Savings, then having the remainder to spend.
 - **Families with older children** might consider making them part of the decision-making process with regards to budgeting and generosity.
- **Look** for opportunities to give to significant projects or causes that arise over and above your regular weekly giving.

The Basics of Stewardship

God Owns Everything

God is the Source of Everything

We are the Managers

To Serve God's Purposes

We are Accountable

Equal Sacrifice

Generosity

The Anglican Parish of Emerald January 2020

*This document was originally created by St. John's Launceston
and is amended, updated and used with permission.*