



THE PARISH OF THE
EPIPHANY

A welcoming Episcopal community

*“Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons,
loving your neighbor as yourself?”*

~ The Baptismal Covenant, p. 305, The Book of Common Prayer

Neighbor to Neighbor
The 2018 Annual Commitment Campaign
For the Parish of the Epiphany

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Since our Rector, Thomas Brown, went on sabbatical this summer, we have been talking a great deal about what it means to be a Follower of Jesus. We progressive New Englanders hesitate to use the word “Discipleship,” but that is the very thing that Thomas hoped that we would work on while he is away from us. How do we deepen our faith and our relationship to Christ? Our Baptismal Covenant bids us to “seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves.”

Who is our neighbor? We have learned through our many outreach ministries here that our neighbors are people who come to be fed at San Lucas in Chelsea; children at the Blackstone School in Boston; people in Haiti who need medical assistance; children at El Hogar in Honduras who need our love and financial support. Our neighbors are the elderly who live in assisted living, at home, and in nursing facilities. Our neighbors are young couples beginning a family; our neighbors are parishioners who have lost their jobs or their spouse, or who are newly divorced. Our neighbors are the people with whom we share fellowship and worship together in this wonderful place we call the Parish of the Epiphany.

Our annual commitment campaign this year is called, “Neighbor to Neighbor.” We want to deepen our relationships with each other as members of the parish and reach out to others who are seeking a spiritual home or may need some loving companionship.

In order to widen the circle of care in our community, we would like to add to the 2018 Budget:

A part-time staff person for Communications. This person would work with our staff and volunteer leaders to strengthen our on-line presence using the web, social media, and all parish communications. People seeking a parish home use both on-line tools and printed media to search for a place of worship that speaks to their needs.

A line item for Stephen Ministry. Stephen Ministry, founded in 1975, equips committed lay people to become pastoral caregivers in their congregations. Up to five people would receive a week-long training and then become leaders to train others at Epiphany already engaged in Pastoral Care ministry and others who seek to volunteer as a Stephen Minister, Lay Eucharistic

Visitor, Healer, Epiphany Visitor, etc. The funds would pay for training and the beginning of a library of resources for Pastoral Care.

Continuing our Stewardship of our Resources: Epiphany, on the approval of the Vestry, joined the efforts of the Town of Winchester to procure our electricity from Mass Energy (Mass Energy Consumers Alliance) a provider of 100% renewable wind energy. Mass Energy uses Epiphany's contributions to purchase renewable energy certificates (RECs) from a renewable energy generator on our behalf. Purchasing renewable energy certificates for the energy we consume is the only way to claim that the electricity we pull from the power grid comes from renewable energy sources. And our contributions for REC purchases make more renewable energy possible in New England. Our contribution of .028 per KWh used in both the church campus and the rectory is a small way that we can answer the urgent call to care for God's creation.

All of these initiatives further the recommendations set forth in The Parish of the Epiphany's Strategic Plan in 2014.

We have often noted that each pledge, prayerfully made, is a building block – representing a foundation for our church's operating budget. Every commitment supports our day-to-day, local and global, ministries and mission. For 2017, 263 Epiphany households pledged \$842,355 in support of our operating budget. By increasing participation to 275 households pledging \$860,000 (an increase of 2.5% for those who can), we can build on those programs in 2018.

By digging a little deeper and increasing participation to 280 households pledging \$875,000, we hope to fund the important initiatives above. If those of us who are able increase our pledges by 4%, we will be able to grow our outreach to those in need of Pastoral Care, increase our visibility to inform and attract parishioners both current and new, and move closer to fulfilling God's mandate that we be good stewards of the earth and its resources.

Jesus reminds us in the gospel of Matthew: "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." (Matthew 18:20) When we share a cup of coffee with a friend or neighbor, when we visit someone in crisis, when we gather for worship or pray together, Jesus is in our midst. We experience the living Christ as we share our stories: our joys and sorrows, our hopes and fears, our dreams and longings to live a meaningful life.

I am so grateful to all of you who have supported this wonderful parish with your time, your talent, and your resources. Please join me and the members of the Vestry in pledging to Epiphany for the coming year when the Neighbor-to-Neighbor bag reaches your house between October 22 and November 13. Neighbor-to-neighbor, friend-to-friend, soul-to-soul. We are blessed beyond measure to be a part of such a vibrant and committed parish. Let's work together to build God's kingdom on earth.

Faithfully yours in Christ,



The Rev. Miriam C. Gelfer
Associate Rector

P.S. Please take a look at the FAQs enclosed with this letter for information about the mechanics of pledging.



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2018 Time and Talent Commitment

Throughout 2018 I/we will give time, energy, and talent to these ministries.

I/We plan to serve in the following ways:

I/We are interested in learning more about ways to serve in:

- Worship & Music Faith Formation Pastoral Care
- Parish Life & Evangelism Mission and Outreach

Signed _____

Date _____

Please complete the reverse side for financial commitment



Proportional Giving Chart					
Annual Income	2%	5%	7%	10%	15%
\$ 25,000	\$ 500	\$ 1,250	\$ 1,750	\$ 2,500	\$ 3,750
\$ 50,000	\$1,000	\$ 2,500	\$ 3,500	\$ 5,000	\$ 7,500
\$ 75,000	\$1,500	\$ 3,750	\$5,250	\$ 7,500	\$11,250
\$100,000	\$2,000	\$ 5,000	\$7,000	\$10,000	\$15,000
\$150,000	\$3,000	\$ 7,500	\$10,500	\$15,000	\$22,500
\$200,000	\$4,000	\$10,000	\$14,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
\$250,000	\$5,000	\$12,500	\$17,500	\$25,000	\$37,500
\$300,000	\$6,000	\$15,000	\$21,000	\$30,000	\$45,000
\$350,000	\$7,000	\$17,500	\$24,500	\$35,000	\$52,500
\$400,000	\$8,000	\$20,000	\$28,000	\$40,000	\$60,000

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2018 Annual Financial Commitment

If the information on this label is incorrect, please write-in the correction(s).



I/We make an annual financial commitment of \$ _____ for the ministries of the Parish of the Epiphany in 2018.

- I/We would like Offering Envelopes weekly / monthly / none (*circle one*)
 I/We would like information about paying electronically or by credit card.

Please email me at: _____

- I/We have already made a financial commitment of \$ _____ online.

Signed

Date

Please complete the reverse side for time and talent commitment

My/Our name may be included in publicity expressing gratitude: Yes No
Specific financial and time & talent information will not be included.

Please bring this letter with you to church on Joy Sunday, 19 November or mail it back in the enclosed envelope.

To pledge online, visit www.3crowns.org

Frequently Asked Questions about financially supporting the Parish of the Epiphany

What is Stewardship?

Stewardship is an expression of gratitude and thankfulness for the blessings of life that come from God. It is love shared and love returned. A life lived in gratitude is a life lived in love.

Why does the Parish of the Epiphany call stewardship a spiritual practice?

Any spiritual practice is based on faith—faith that the act repeated regularly will increase our awareness of the presence of God and will gradually remove from our lives walls we erect that block God’s grace. Spiritual practices include worship, prayer, silence and meditation, contemplation, reading scripture, and giving. Giving (financial stewardship is our focus here) has numerous spiritual benefits. Here are just three:

- First, stewardship reduces our attachment to things material. We learn that giving away something we “have” really does not diminish us at all. Our needs continue to be met by God.
- Second, regular giving chips away at our belief in the concept of “mine” and “yours.” Giving helps us better experience truth that we are indeed one in spirit. And finally, in some mysterious way, our willingness to give determines our willingness to receive. No doubt all of us know someone who would never give anything to someone else and, in turn, would never accept a gift. We must be willing to give in order to be open to receiving. And God is giving to us every moment of the day. Our willingness to give enhances our ability to accept God’s gifts.

Is my stewardship defined only by the money I give to the church?

Absolutely not. Time and service given to others is a critical component of stewardship. Our church can’t function without these gifts of time and service.

Why is my pledge important?

Two reasons. First, pledging yourself to any spiritual practice increases the likelihood that you will actually do it. In the fall each year we ask you to commit to the practice of giving. We’re most concerned with your commitment to this practice, and less concerned with how much you give. Second, your vestry does its best to operate the church on a sound financial basis, and having a good handle on the income the church can expect enhances the vestry’s ability to plan responsibly. We hold our stewardship campaign in the fall, because that’s when the vestry develops next year’s operating budget.

What percent of the church's annual budget is supported by pledges?

About 90%. The rest of the operating budget is supported by cash offerings, donations, some income from the use of our buildings by others, and income from our small endowment.

What percent of households fulfill their annual pledge each year?

Ninety-eight percent.

What happens if I make a pledge and find I cannot fulfill it?

Nothing. Your pledge is not a contract. It is a spiritual commitment. It helps with our financial planning, however, if you let Suzy Westcott, our financial administrator, know (confidentially) that you need to make a change in the amount of your pledge.

Why is the Parish of the Epiphany trying to increase electronic giving?

The goal is purely a practical one for the church. It helps to even out our cash flow and makes financial management easier for our treasurer.

Do I have to pay when I pledge? Can I pay in installments?

Once you've made your pledge, you can fulfill it in as many payments as you wish throughout the year. To help you with your payments, we can provide pledge envelopes that match the schedule you wish to follow. If you wish to pay all or a portion of your 2018 pledge before December 31 for tax reasons, simply enclose the payment in your pledge envelope with a covering note explaining your intent. If you wish to use appreciated securities to fulfill your pledge, please contact the parish office for instructions.

How much should I give? Am I expected to tithe?

If you asked ten different members of the church this question you would likely get ten different answers. We encourage you to give a gift that is meaningful, and we encourage you to increase the percentage of your household income that you commit each year, if you can. If we can all give a gift that is meaningful to us, we will be able to reach our goals.