



## Acts of generosity, acts of faith

by Tom Brubaker  
Sept. 27, 2009

Well, I know you'll all be so pleased to hear that it's annual pledge drive time again. I don't know about you, but sometimes all I feel is guilt at this time of year. It feels like you never can do enough. I have one very important message for you: Thank you.

Thank you for your pledges, but also thank you for leading small groups, for running Adult Ed, for teaching our children, for taking communion to those who are too sick to make it to church and for being there in the hospitals and for those who are grieving.

Thank you for running the Thrift Shop, for supporting the Ziegler Mission in Tanzania, for our youth mission trips. Thank you for caring for the homeless, for the Kairos prison ministry, for providing warm coats and backpacks and school supplies for kids.

Thank you for building a church that provides space for other churches, for day care, for AA meetings, for cancer support groups. Thank you for your music ministry, for greeting and ush-

# Giving with Gratitude

ering, for the Altar flowers, for making coffee.

Thank you just for walking in. We are grateful you are here. Each of these acts is an act of stewardship. You should take a moment to reflect and know you have helped accomplish great things. This is a good church, and you are a good congregation. You do good work. Each of you.

I've been giving this concept of Stewardship a lot of thought. It's at work everywhere. We do our work, we clean the house and do the laundry, we help the kids with homework, we balance our checkbooks. We buff and polish the various elements of our lives. We take care of things to make them last.

We do that here, too. Bishop Rickel says that stewardship is not about a pledge or a promise or an obligation. He says it's about faith. Surely you see that all these wonderful things I have been thanking you for are not just acts of generosity, but also are acts of faith.

And when you give the church a portion of your hard-earned money, it is equally an act of faith.

In Biblical times, there was a barter economy. Today, it is a cash economy. When you give money to this church, you are acknowledging that a portion of the time you worked this week you worked for God. That part of your work that provided for that donation you sacrificed to God.

After we take collection at this service, we will say, "It is right to give God thanks and praise." Your pledge

can be a gift joyfully given that is gratefully received, filled with thanks and praise. By pledging, as with all these other wonderful things we do, we join in and become a part of the body of this church, and through that, the body of Christ.

During the next four Sundays, a parishioner will speak briefly to you about stewardship at St. Margaret's. We have the Bishop's kick-off event this Tuesday, and we will be reaching out to you to actively consider stewardship throughout October, leading to commitment Sunday on November 1, All Saints' Day.

Please thoughtfully and prayerfully consider your pledge for 2010, and if you can, increase it by any amount, even 1% would make a difference.

Some of you have never pledged. Don't worry. But think about trying this: fill out a pledge card and pledge \$10 for the year. Then, as soon as you've given that \$10, you've joined in the life of this church in a new way, you've fulfilled your pledge and pleased God. In fact, I encourage you to grab a pledge card and scratch out "2010" and write in "2009," make that same \$10 pledge, and you have the opportunity to be a regular giver two years running in no time! Think about it. We need you all to pledge, no matter the amount.

So, in closing, thanks again for all the many ways you have been good stewards to this church, not just during our fall campaign, but throughout the year. Thank you for all that you have done, and all you are about to do.



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