

Where your Treasure is, there will your heart be also...

Dear Saints of John,

As we enter the last part of our Lenten journey, many of us are also turning our attention towards our tax preparation. A friend of mine, a Lutheran pastor, shared a story with me the other day. One of his parishioners had been invited to go through his checkbook and credit card bills for the year, and pay attention to the amount of his spending that went to the church or other charities, in proportion to other things. He was aghast – at having found that he was spending much more money on entertainment – even on his liquor bill - than he was giving to his church. That had not been his intention. Another friend of mine, a physician, told me that when she analyzed the percentage of her income that she was giving away, she was shocked. It was very low – perhaps 2 percent. She made a pledge to herself to work towards a tithe – and within a year or two she was giving 10 percent of her income away. Both of these individuals found great joy in their increasing generosity.

Jesus tells us, *Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven...For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.* (Matthew 6: 19-21)

As you prepare your taxes, I invite you to take a look at the percentage of your income that you are currently giving away. Where are you, and where would you like to be? It has been suggested that if all the people of St. John's gave even 5% of their income to the work of the church, we would have such an abundance in our budget that we would be able to increase our ministry tremendously, both within our own walls, and to the surrounding community.

Even in times of economic uncertainty, most of us have the capacity to give more generously. And when we do, we participate more fully in the abundant life that Jesus calls us into – the Kingdom of God on this earth. A blessed Lenten season to you all.

In Christ,
Susan+

Proportional Giving Guide

Giving proportionately means offering a percentage of your income with the goal of the "tithe" - giving 10%. Begin your stewardship journey where you are able, and aim to increase that percentage each year. If giving 10% seems daunting, please consider starting with a pledge of just 2% of your income. And if you are already working toward the goal of giving 10%, we hope you will increase your pledge each year.

For an estimate of what your pledge would be, here is a chart showing proportional giving at various income levels and percentages:

Annual Gross Income	2%	4%	6%
\$10,000	\$200	\$400	\$600
\$20,000	\$400	\$800	\$1,200
\$30,000	\$600	\$1,200	\$1,800
\$40,000	\$800	\$1,600	\$2,400
\$50,000	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000
\$75,000	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$4,500
\$100,000	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$6,000
\$150,000	\$3,000	\$6,000	\$9,000
\$200,000	\$4,000	\$8,000	\$12,000

Annual Gross Income	8%	10%	12%
\$10,000	\$800	\$1,000	\$1,200
\$20,000	\$1,600	\$2,000	\$2,400
\$30,000	\$2,400	\$3,000	\$3,600
\$40,000	\$3,200	\$4,000	\$4,800
\$50,000	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$6,000
\$75,000	\$6,000	\$7,500	\$9,000
\$100,000	\$8,000	\$10,000	\$12,000
\$150,000	\$12,000	\$15,000	\$18,000
\$200,000	\$16,000	\$20,000	\$24,000

Chart from the Website of Trinity Church, Boston

St. John's Pledging – 2009

Pledge Amount	Number of pledges in category
0 - \$500	26
501 – 1,000	33
1001 – 2000	43
2001 – 3500	23
3501 – 5000	16
5001 – 7500	9
7501 – 10,000	5
10,001 – 25,000	6