

Cathy Shanks on “The Role of Pledging”

Delivered at Grace Church on Sunday November 3

Hi everyone—Fr Matt asked me to say something about the role of pledging—so I googled pledging—and found a really concise explanation I thought I’d share with you. It is called:

Pledges: Everything you wanted to know but were afraid to ask!

By the Rev. Chris Harris, Associate Rector – Christ Church, Cranbrook CA

Q: What is a pledge?

“Practically speaking, a “pledge” is an estimate of your giving for the coming year, which in turn, funds everything we do as a faith community – from paying the salaries of our clergy and staff, to supporting our outreach ministries, our pastoral care, our worship, our education programs, our music and our facilities. Pledges allow us to dream big and to make bold plans as we make decisions about our priorities and possibilities in the year to come.

Spiritually speaking, your pledge is your response to God’s abundance in our lives. It is both a statement of thanksgiving and an outward and visible sign of our commitment to follow in the way of Jesus, by giving as God gives to us. A pledge can thus help you to grow in your faith and trust in God. By giving in a regular, committed way, a pledge can turn your giving into a spiritual practice just like prayer or worship which in turn helps to keep God as a priority in our life. When we give in a committed way, it helps to keep us focused on God. Where our money goes, our heart will be found also.”

Pretty good, isn’t it?

And now that we have heard the official word, with which I agree, here’s my take. Pledging to Grace Church is a commitment to **yourself** and everyone sitting in front of you, next to you and behind you. Pledging is much bigger than just money in the plate. On a personal note, Pledging makes me feel good and really connected. When I pledge I know I am a member of the Grace Church Family. I hope those of you already pledging have a similar feeling and those who might

be new this year will have a similar experience. Please remember it NEVER matters the size of your pledge; it is the pledge itself which serves as a continual reminder of God's claim on our lives.

Currently 30% of our parishioner's pledge and this year we would like to see that number double. At our annual meetings in January, we do present the prior year's income and expenses as well as a budget for the upcoming year. Father Matt and I are working on the idea of putting this information out quarterly so everyone can see current information. Of course, questions can be asked at any time during the year.

I hope after you have thought about what pledging means, you will complete and return your pledge card. Please also consider filling out the questions on the back of the card on how else you would like to be a part of the Grace Church family. It could be on the buildings and grounds committee, fund raising, assisting with Sunday School, Vestry, there are a lot of options, and everyone is welcome.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart. God Bless.

Cathy Shanks, Treasurer and proud pledger of Grace Church Millbrook