

“Much is required of the person to whom much is given; much more is required from the person to whom much more is given” (Luke 12:48)

October 14, 2018

Beloved in Christ,

As followers of Jesus, these words apply as much today as they did two thousand years ago. We are reminded to look at all God has placed in our care. It is easy to get caught up in the materialism of today's society, confusing our own wants as needs. It is easy to forget that Jesus calls us by our Baptism to continue the work He began on earth. It is our responsibility to ensure that we pass on the faith to up-coming generations and to support the work of the Church here in our own community and throughout the world.

Over the last few weeks you have heard us talk in church about Joyful Giving. In considering a joyful gift we recognize that all our gifts, abilities and possessions come from God. We acknowledge that we live, love and work because God gave us the ability and opportunity to do so.

We realise that without God's free gift of our lives and our physical and mental abilities, any effort on our part would be useless. In fact, our very ambition to go out and work is itself part of God's loving gift of our own human nature.

Likewise, all the material possessions we have derive from God's continued will to allow us to keep them. The gift of free will means that God allows us to decide what we will do with our lives and our wealth. To give joyfully is our choice. God is inviting us into a complete and loving relationship. Our gift will also strengthen our loving relationship with God's people because it will help support our parish and our diocese.

Over the last number of years, our average “gift” given at St. Timothy's has not kept up with the Diocesan average for this area (which is \$1750 per year) or natural inflation. Year to year, our revenues at year end are approximately 10% less than our expenses, even though we carry out ministry on a very tight operating budget. If we expect to see our ministries grow and be available not just to our neighbours who struggle, but also available to you and I when we need it most, then we need to seriously reflect on what a sacrificial gift means for each and every family.

Reviewing and reflecting on your personal contributions from last year, for which we are indeed grateful, I am asking you to prayerfully consider a contribution of 2-3% (or more) of your annual net income to the work of the Church, here in our own parish, in our diocese and beyond. You might consider donating an hour's pay per week to church and a similar amount to charity.

Those who are retired are encouraged to consider an hour's pay (2.5%) from their retirement income. This helps us to realize two things. First, it makes the work week and the work of our hands holy because our act of giving is intimately tied to how we earn a living. A blessing of sorts is given to our creative efforts made during the course of the week. Secondly, an hour's pay is simple and profound and it may increase with time to reflect our progress in life.

When you have taken time to listen to how God wants you to respond, use the enclosed "Percentage of Giving Chart" to decide what planned proportion of the family income you wish to give to the Lord's use and place the completed intention card in the enclosed envelope. You may either place it on the collection plate next Sunday, or send it back in the sealed Joyful Giving Relay envelope.

Thank you for your past generous support of the Church and for meeting the needs of your brothers and sisters in Christ.

May God bless you and your family abundantly.

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Andrea Christensen

Rector, St. Timothy's Anglican Church