

The First Presbyterian Church of Waunakee

Stewardship Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

All must give as they are able, according to the blessings given to them by the Lord your God.

Deuteronomy 16:17

1. What is Stewardship?

The dictionary defines a steward as “a person who manages another's property or financial affairs; one who administers anything as the agent of another or others.” So when we speak of Stewardship in the context of living a Christian life and being part of First Presbyterian Church of Waunakee we are referring to the body of the congregation using the gifts of time, talent, and treasure that God has given us to further God's work in this world.

Another way of looking at Stewardship is captured by the idea that GOD OWNS EVERYTHING. We bring nothing into the world, and we will take nothing out, so we're TAKING CARE OF what belongs to God. We are stewards for God and of what God has given us. *Biblical references: Psalm 24:1, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Deuteronomy 8:18, Leviticus 25:23*

2. What is pledging?

Pledging is the act of promising a monetary sum to God for His work and for the work of His Church over a specific period of time as the Bible instructs in 1 Corinthians 16:2: “On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income Individuals or families “pledge” to give to the Lord whatever amount they determine weekly, monthly or annually. *Biblical references: 1st Corinthians 16:2, Exodus 3:19, Deuteronomy 26:1-4, Proverbs 3:9, Luke 6:38*

3. What is the Stewardship campaign?

Every Fall at First Presbyterian Church of Waunakee a Stewardship campaign is held to remind all church members of the responsibilities of Christian stewardship, the joys and blessings of giving back to God, and the opportunities to share what we have been given as we become part of God's Kingdom work. Church members and friends are invited and encouraged to make a pledge of support to God's work through the church for the following year. During the campaign individuals and families are asked prayerfully to consider making a commitment to FPCs stewardship efforts by pledging whatever amount is appropriate for them, as God inspires and guides them.

4. How much is “appropriate” to pledge?

In the Bible God asks His people for the first 1/10 or 10% of the harvest. The act of giving 1/10 is called tithing. However tithing is not the “required” or “right” amount for everyone. While tithing is something to strive for, the amount an individual or family unit pledges is dependent on personal/family circumstances and on what God leads them to give. But the concept of tithing provides a good model for giving: instead of giving a set dollar amount members can pledge a proportion (percentage) of their yearly, monthly or weekly income. Regardless of the method – set amount or proportional giving - as stated in 2 Corinthians 9:7 “Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” *Biblical references: Leviticus 27:30, Malachi 3:10*

5. Who at FPC knows how much I pledge?

Only two people know this sensitive information – the Session’s Finance Elder and the Church Business Administrator in the office. Both are sworn to secrecy. Nobody else in the church – not any of the pastors or Session members or any other members of the congregation – knows the amount pledged by congregation members. Obviously, *God* knows our hearts and knows what we give.

6. How does the pledging process work?

During the Stewardship campaign the Stewardship Ministry Team sends information and pledge cards to all church members. Families and individuals that have – after prayerful consideration – decided to pledge to the Lord’s work at FPC fill out a pledge card specifying the amount of their pledge for the coming year, the frequency of the gift etc. On Stewardship Pledge Sunday all who have made the choice to pledge may bring their pledge card forward during the last hymn and deposit it in the pledge card box for dedication to God. Some choose to mail their pledge card to the church office, or put it in the offering plate, or deposit it in the pledge card box in the lobby/narthex. Any and all of these methods represent great ways to offer our gift up to God.

7. What if I am a new member and join after the Stewardship campaign?

Pledging to First Presbyterian Church of Waunakee is welcome at any time. If you are a new member – or someone who was unsure about pledging during the campaign – and wish to make a pledge to FPC please contact Church Business Administrator, Sue Gade (849-4625, sgade@myfpc.org), or a member of the Stewardship Ministry Team to get more information.

8. How many families pledge at FPC?

In 2008 58% of families at FPC Waunakee made pledges. This percentage – while still a blessing – is lower than expected. For instance in 2000 86% of families at FPC made pledges. Being able to plan and budget for a church year while maintaining the high quality of church programs for our growing membership is much easier for the Session to do when every church member offers their pledge of support.

9. What if I can’t honor my pledge?

As events continue to remind us, circumstances do change. While everyone is encouraged to fulfill their pledges we understand that there are times when things don’t go quite as planned and trying to maintain a pledge becomes difficult. Likewise there may be cases where God blesses someone with an unplanned abundance! In either case families and individuals should make their own prayerful decision about what to give to the church, and can change their pledged amount at any time by contacting the business administrator in the church office (849-4625, ext. 11).

10. What methods are available for paying my pledge?

Once a family or individual decides to pledge to First Presbyterian Church of Waunakee there are several ways to fulfill that pledge. First we provide traditional offering envelopes to every family after the Stewardship campaign. These envelopes allow folks to enclose cash or a check and deposit them in the offering plates on Sunday. FPC also provides new and more modern electronic giving options including automatic periodic (weekly, monthly etc.) debits from checking and savings accounts as well from credit or debit cards. These periodic donations can be set up by contacting Church Business Administrator, Sue Gade, or any Stewardship Team member for the appropriate paperwork or by visiting <http://www.myfpc.org> and clicking on the “Donate Here” button.

11. What benefits do I derive from pledging?

There are really two categories of benefits that congregation members derive from pledging; spiritual and practical. The simple act of prayerfully considering your gratitude to God and how you want to show your love and thankfulness with your offering can grow and strengthen your relationship with Him. Pledging for the first time or increasing your pledge also requires that you take a leap of faith, really trusting God to provide. It gives you and your family the opportunity to witness the miracle of His faithfulness to you. It also serves as a continual reminder that all things come from God and prevents us from allowing money, either through worry or greed, to control our lives. From a practical perspective pledging can become an important part of personal or family budgeting. Using electronic giving options can reduce the sometimes frantic rush of getting to church on Sunday morning since you don't have to worry about bringing the checkbook. Finally pledging and giving in a structured fashion - as opposed to just putting cash in the offering plate on Sunday – allows you to track your monetary donation and provide a legitimate receipt to the IRS for income tax deduction purposes.

12. What benefits does the church receive from pledges?

Pledges are the financial cornerstone for all of the planning that goes into the running of FPC Waunakee and its ministries. Pledges – unlike the more fluid but nonetheless important unstructured gifts - gives The Session a solid basis from which to map out programs and ministries for the coming year.

13. How is my money used at FPC?

All giving to First Presbyterian Church of Waunakee is used to fund every aspect of the church's ministries, mission, and outreach. Even though FPC is a non-profit organization, FPC has staffing costs, debt retirement expenses (mortgages), facilities costs (heating, snow plowing etc.) and other monthly costs just like any business. But beyond that there are the costs of supporting and furthering the ministries within the church. These ministries – from the Children's Christian Education to Fellowship and all of the other ministries in between – are what really spread the Word in our Church and our community. Keeping these programs funded keep FPC a growing and thriving house of God with a phenomenal outreach.

14. What is the basic cost of running the church?

In 2007 the budget for First Presbyterian Church of Waunakee was \$700,000. This amount represents all the money needed to cover the costs of personnel, facilities and ministries. A complete breakdown of the budget is available to all church members. You may contact Sue Gade in the church office or the Finance Elder to obtain a copy of this report.

15. Does FPC have a Mission commitment?

First Presbyterian Church of Waunakee follows the Word of God when it comes to sharing the blessings God has bestowed on this church. We believe "the church that doesn't REACH out will PASS out!" Specifically, FPC pledges 10% of the church's income to Mission endeavors locally, nationally, and around the world. Not only do pledges to FPC support the running of FPC and its own ministries, but pledges to FPC help spread the Word of God's love around the world to those in need.

16. How do I make my pledge?

If after prayerful consideration you wish to pledge to the Lord's work through FPC Waunakee, stay tuned for more information during the fall Stewardship campaign in November. If you wish to pledge and it is not during the fall Stewardship campaign, you may contact Sue Gade in the church office or any member of the Stewardship Ministry Team or look for a pledge card in the pews. You can also go to <http://www.myfpc.org> for more information or to donate on-line.

What does The Bible say about Giving?

Stewardship

Psalm 24:1

¹ The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it.
The world and all its people belong to him.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

¹⁹ Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, ²⁰ for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.

Deuteronomy 8:18

¹⁸ Remember the Lord your God. He is the one who gives you power to be successful, in order to fulfill the covenant he confirmed to your ancestors with an oath.

Leviticus 25:23

²³ "The land must never be sold on a permanent basis, for the land belongs to me. You are only foreigners and tenant farmers working for me.

Pledging

1st Corinthians 16:2

² On the first day of each week, you should each put aside a portion of the money you have earned. Don't wait until I get there and then try to collect it all at once.

Deuteronomy 26:1-4

¹ When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you as a special possession and you have conquered it and settled there, ² put some of the first produce from each crop you harvest into a basket and bring it to the designated place of worship—the place the Lord your God chooses for his name to be honored. ³ Go to the priest in charge at that time and say to him, 'With this gift I acknowledge to the Lord your God that I have entered the land he swore to our ancestors he would give us.' ⁴ The priest will then take the basket from your hand and set it before the altar of the Lord your God.

Proverbs 3:9

⁹ Honor the Lord with your wealth
and with the best part of everything you produce.

Luke 6:38

³⁸ Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back.

Tithing

Leviticus 27:30

³⁰ One tenth of the produce of the land, whether grain from the fields or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord and must be set apart to him as holy.

Malachi 3:10

¹⁰ Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do, says the Lord of Heaven's Armies, "I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put me to the test!"