



## Fall Pledge Campaign – Frequently Asked Questions

### ***Why do we have a Fall Pledge Campaign?***

The stewardship of our church home is a year round labor of love. We give generously of our *time, talent, and treasure* to support a wide variety of programs within our church and generously support the larger community through our many outreach programs. We give in response and thanksgiving for the abundance of Gifts that God has given to us.

**During the fall pledge campaign, we concentrate our efforts on the financial needs of the church and every member will be asked to make a financial pledge to support our church.**

### ***Who should pledge?***

All members are expected to pledge. Part of being a “member in good standing” is committing to an annual pledge. Our goal is 100% participation.

### ***Is my pledge confidential?***

Yes. For most of us our pledge is deeply personal and the church will honor your pledge with respect and care. Specific pledge information is limited to the bookkeeper, the Rector, the Treasurer, and the Senior Warden.

Members of the Vestry, the Finance Committee, and the Stewardship Committee have information regarding pledge statistics and pledge trends, but the amounts of individual pledges are not distributed nor discussed.

### ***Why should I pledge? Can't I just put money in the plate?***

Pledging is a spiritual statement of your ongoing support for the mission and shared ministry of Epiphany.

On a practical level, when members pledge their financial support for the upcoming year, the church can make a realistic budget regarding staff, programs and operating expenses. Our church’s operating budget is completely dependent upon pledge income. The vestry will finalize a budget for 2011 based upon the amount pledged by our members during the fall pledge campaign. Pledges provide a steady and consistent stream of income for the church.

### ***How much should I pledge?***

Only you can decide. The biblical tithe is 10% and some of our parishioners are able to meet this goal. Others give a smaller proportion and try to increase a bit each year. This is the time to count blessings and generously give back from our abundance. On October 31, after both services, Melanie will lead a group conversation about financial stewardship and pledging. On a personal level, Melanie is available for discussion and guidance.

### ***Does everyone pledge about the same amount?***

Definitely not! At Church of the Epiphany we are critically dependent upon a small number of large pledges. For 2010 we received 152 pledges totaling \$400,791 of pledge income.

Of those 152 pledges, the top twenty donors account for \$179,000 of pledge income. 45% of total pledge income is contributed by just 20 families. The loss of just one of these generous pledges could have a serious negative impact on our church.

### ***Pledge statistics for 2010:***

<b>Individual donations of :</b>	<b>Number of Donors:</b>
\$10,000 - \$20,000 per year	8 families
\$5,000 - \$9,999 per year	12 families
\$2,500 - \$4,999 per year	38 families
\$1,000 - \$2,499 per year	49 families
\$0 - \$999 per year	45 families

**Was our 2010 pledge campaign successful? Did we meet our goals?**

For 2010 our pledge goal was \$425,000. We fell short of our goal by \$24,000.

Due to the stressful economic conditions of the past two years and the subsequent effect on our parish, the church continues to operate on a tight budget. By cutting ministry budgets to minimum levels and with careful oversight, we have been able to keep our staff in place. And for this we are very thankful!

**What is the goal for the 2011 pledge campaign?**

Our pledge goal remains the same as last year, \$425,000. But, this year we absolutely need to close the gap. If every one of our pledging members could increase their current pledge by \$200 we will meet the \$425,000 goal.

**Can we do it?**

The Stewardship Committee has complete faith that the generosity of this *growing* congregation will support a pledge goal of \$425,000.

**Pledge trends for the past 3 years:**

Year	Total Pledge Income	Number of Donors
2008	\$418,064	158
2009	\$335,661	134
2010	\$400,791	152

**What is the best method for paying my pledge?**

There are several options for paying your pledge and pledges can be paid weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually.

**Cash or personal check** – if you choose to contribute cash towards your pledge, please make sure it is enclosed in an envelope with your name on it. For those who choose to pay by cash or check, weekly offering envelopes are available. This is a convenient way to keep track of your pledge. Envelopes are pre-marked with the Sunday date and with your pledge number. There is also a special blue envelope at the beginning of each month to remind us that a little extra would be appreciated for the Rector’s Discretionary Fund. (The Rector’s Discretionary Fund is used to provide confidential assistance to some of our parishioners and to people in need who come to our doors.)

**Bank transfer** – you can authorize your bank to direct a regularly scheduled payment to Church of the Epiphany. There is no fee to Epiphany for this service. This is an easy and efficient system for you and for the Church.

**Credit card** – please be sure to enter your updated credit card information on your pledge card (even if you are currently paying by credit card).

The bank transfer and credit card options provide a continuous stream of income for the church. This is especially helpful during the summer months when attendance is sporadic. However, processing credit cards is an expensive option. We currently charge 25 pledges/month by credit card for a total of \$6,500/month. The expense incurred by the church to process these cards is approximately \$300/month. Please consider contributing your pledge by bank transfer or the bill pay service offered by your bank.

**What’s next?**

Think about what belonging to our wonderful church means to you, your family and our community.

Take time to study our narrative budget and reflect on the many ways your pledge dollars are put to work in support of the mission of our church.

Prayerfully consider your pledge.

Talk to your children about stewardship and money.

Bring your pledge card to church the morning of Sunday November 7 for the in-gathering and blessing of our pledges.

**Stewardship Committee:** Heather Hansen and Ronica Smucker (Co-chairs), Rev. Melanie Donahoe (Rector), Steve Blake, Liz Olson, Annette Bender

***Please know that every pledge, no matter how large or how small, is deeply appreciated.  
May you find peace and joy in your giving.***