

# LIVING GENEROUSLY



Dear Friends and Parish Members of All Saints

Psalm 112 speaks eloquently about the theme of *Living Generously*, which is the focus of our Stewardship Programme for 2016. It defines such generous living as being gracious, merciful and righteous. To live in such a way, we are to conduct our lives with justice.

Generous living is much more than what we do with our money. We are called to be kind to one another and to all living things. We are called to deal with each other honestly, and to be humble.

*Living Generously* is a call to action to each of us as followers of Jesus. He showed us the way to live generously: by welcoming the outcast, by overturning the tables of the money changers in the temple, by dining with the poor and healing the sick, by teaching, by forgiving, and by ultimately giving his life so that all might have life abundant.

During the month of November we are embarking on our annual giving campaign: *Living Generously*. During this month it is my hope and prayer that we can focus about how we are striving to live more generously as we offer our time, talent and treasure.

Our ministries here at All Saints are empowered through the generosity of all our members. Each week, we are nurtured in word and sacrament. We are called by God to care for those who are ill or hurting, and welcome all those searching for a community of faith.

All Saints strives to be a generous parish. Some of our members tithe, giving ten percent of their income to the church, while others commit a certain percentage, makes a one-time annual gift, or give, as they are able. Although giving levels vary in the congregation, what is important is that all of us are asked to make a gift that reflects our commitment to living an abundant and generous life.

I am aware that during this time of transition and uncertainty about the future of the Anglican-Lutheran future here in Peterborough one wonders about a financial commitment to the parish but we are a people of faith and hope. Faith is a journey we make together, not a solo expedition. The annual giving campaign is a time to reflect on the practice of intentional giving so that we live into the generous and abundant life God is calling us to live. Jesus said, "I come so that all may have life and have it abundantly." *Living Generously* brings us closer to that abundant life. I am convinced that the future of the Anglican-Lutheran presence in Peterborough will allow us to have a rich, full and vibrant faith community as we journey forward into the future.

Enclosed you will find a 2017 pledge commitment card. During this month, I invite you to prayerfully consider how you might live life more generously. Please consider how your standard of living lines up with your standard of giving. Think about the impact this community of faith has on your life and the wider community. Pray about God's generosity in your life and then make a pledge that reflects that generosity.

They rise in the darkness  
as a light for the upright;  
they are gracious,  
merciful, and righteous.  
It is well with those who  
deal generously and lend,  
who conduct their affairs  
with justice.  
For the righteous will  
never be moved;  
they will be remembered  
forever.

PSALM 112:4-6 (NRSV)

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As a conclusion to my letter to you I have provided some information about making a pledge to All Saints ( please see below). I am personally grateful for the wonderful and generous companions I've met at All Saints.

Blessings,  
Fr Geoff

## **What is the annual Stewardship Campaign?**

The Stewardship Campaign is “church speak” for All Saints Annual Fund.

## **What does the annual Stewardship Campaign support?**

The Stewardship Campaign accounts for over 60% of the current year's operating budget (the remaining 40% comes from the renting of our space and income from the terraces and St Alban's, etc.). Therefore, the Stewardship Campaign supports a little bit of everything – be it the maintenance of our building, Music and Choir programming or Community Ministries.

## **What do you mean when you say “make a pledge”?**

A pledge is a written declaration of intention to donate a specific amount of money over a certain length of time. When making a pledge to the Stewardship Campaign you are making a pledge for the current year with the intention of paying your pledge in full by December 31 2017.

## **Is my pledge binding?**

While your pledge is not legally binding, we ask that you only pledge an amount that you are comfortable donating. Of course, we all understand that sometimes life happens and should a situation arise that requires you to adjust the amount you initially pledged, please contact the parish office.

**What is the average gift amount?**<sup>[SEP]</sup> We believe that the average gift amount is not always the best representation of total giving (as outliers on either end of the spectrum can too easily skew the number). Therefore, we believe that the median gift amount is much more representative of true giving. The median gift at All Saints for last year's Stewardship Campaign is \$1,200.

## **Is pledging just another word for tithing?**

Not even close! The definition of tithing originates from multiple passages in the Old Testament that reference the Israelites giving 10% of the crops they grew and the livestock they raised to the temple. Some churches have taken these passages and translated them to mean that in a modern day church one should donate 10% of their annual income. All Saints is not one of these churches. We advocate something called “proportional giving” which means you – individually – select a proportion of your income that you are comfortable donating – whatever that might be! – and do so each year. All we ask is that when thinking about how much to donate to All Saints you consider first all the things you have been given – including not only your material blessing but also the things that aren't so easy to count, like your friendships, your family, and your talent – and from there give in proportion to the gifts you have received.

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