



St. Francis in the Fields Episcopal Church  
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Harrods Creek, KY 40027  
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EVERY MEMBER CANVASS 2022

October 3, 2021

Dear Friends,

***The Gifts of God for the People of God***—this is a statement your clergy say to you every single Sunday, which has been chosen as our stewardship theme for 2022. It appears within the moment of the service when—after joining together in song, after hearing the sacred Scriptures, after confessing the historic faith and praying for our needs and those of others, and after confessing our need for God’s grace—we hear God’s deep love for us as he offers us *himself*, a gift of generosity for the sake of our well-being.

This pattern of self-gift is the constant posture of God throughout Scripture, who in the Old Testament seeks to give himself to Israel and the nations, and who in the New Testament gives himself chiefly through Christ on the cross and through the Holy Spirit shed in the hearts of the disciples. A sacrificial gift of self is at the heart of God’s own nature, and as those made in the image of God, we become more fully ourselves when we likewise learn to take on this posture of giving, of sacrificial self-gift.

All we have in life is on loan from God—this is the basic presupposition of Christian stewardship. While God endows us with strength and skill to cultivate and create material “stuff,” all creation is ultimately sustained by God, and exists as a gift. The “elements” used in the sacrament of the Eucharist remind us of this truth. Bread and wine have been cultivated by human hands and yet have their ultimate source in God the giver. The money given by human hands is also brought forward to the altar, but all of this—bread, wine, money—is lifted back up to God for his purposes in the world. By his grace, they become more than what they are by nature; they become gifts for his Kingdom purposes.

Thus, Christian giving is always a response of gratitude, thankfulness for being the recipients of the most sacrificial giving ever: Christ Jesus. Rather than relegating the subject of stewardship to once-a-year appeals to fund the parish budget, our primary aim is to increase self-conscious gratitude for God’s blessings upon us. If the latter occurs, the dollars will follow.

Through your generous response last year, we were blessed with a tremendous EMC campaign for our ministry needs in 2021. We had an increase in overall dollars pledged and increased by approximately 10% in our pledging households. This enabled us to take some strategic moves in building our team and preparing for a bright future of growth. No one, however, who has studied the data believes we are close to reaching our full potential with financial stewardship at St. Francis in the Fields. So once again, I encourage each of you to pray over and discuss your financial stewardship with at least one other person: your spouse, a parent or grandparent, a church mentor, a friend.

How might your decision to pledge be an expression of gratitude for the blessings in your life as well as an opportunity to grow in faith? Regardless of your response to this annual appeal, I thank you for a fresh consideration of God’s generosity to you in the person of Christ and the gift of membership in a church that seeks to be an even brighter light of faithfulness in a very broken world. This last year serves as a fresh reminder of the importance of what we do together as a parish family. Our vision is to make and grow disciples of Jesus Christ by drawing all generations into Worship, Formation and Mission. But we simply cannot do this without your sacrificial participation. Given your responsiveness in the past, I have every confidence we will witness further progress in our stewardship this year, and I thank you for your godly generosity.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Clinton M. Wilson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small flourish at the end.

The Rev. Clinton M. Wilson  
Rector