

Stewardship FAQ's

What is the Stewardship Campaign?

The stewardship campaign is a yearly request for church members to make a commitment of time, talent and treasure to support the work and ministries of the church for the coming fiscal year. We need volunteers to share their time and talent with the church in many different ways. It could be assisting with children's ministries, leading a Bible study or Sunday school class, or working on one of our many outreach efforts. We will also be asking members of the congregation to make a one-year commitment of treasure to support the regular annual operating budget of the church.

Why do we pledge?

This church belongs to each of us. We pledge to fund the daily operations and to ensure that the church and its resources are here for us and for others now and in the future.

How much are we being asked to commit to in terms of a pledge?

Giving to Church of St. Luke in the Fields is an opportunity to share the gifts we have received from God with others. The amount each person or family is able to give is, of course, a personal decision. In making that decision, please consider that we estimate that next year's annual operating budget will increase by 3 percent over the current budget. In order to meet that budget, we ask that members prayerfully consider increasing their annual commitment by 3 percent or more. As you know, the programs we can offer, the outreach we can provide and the impact our congregation can have on its members and others is directly impacted by the funds we have available for those purposes. Whatever the size of your commitment, your generous gift is important and greatly appreciated.

I understand that St. Luke's new development initiative will eventually provide a new and sizeable income stream to the church. Why do I need to continue to pledge?

The income from pledging remains critically important to the church. The new income stream resulting from the residential development project will have no impact on or input into the Church's operating budget. The church's annual operating budget continues to rely almost entirely on revenues from pledging, rental income from the townhouses and a modest amount of rental income from St. Luke's School.

Will this revenue that St. Luke's is getting from the residential development project change what my pledge is going toward?

Not at all. Revenues from the residential development project are not going to be used to fund the annual operating budget. Pledging remains a key revenue component of the church's annual operating budget and provides approximately 25% of its total revenues.

How will the revenues the parish is getting from the residential development project be used?

The Vestry, in consultation with the Finance Committee, and after a great deal of prayer and discussion, has decided to utilize these new funds for 3 broad, long-term goals: refurbish, endowment & mission.

- **Refurbish.** Refurbish will involve the renovation/restoration of the townhouses. This will substantially cut down on the need for future capital expenses as well as provide a substantial increase in rental income once each townhouse has been refurbished.
- **Endowment.** Our endowment has always been quite small as compared to the size of our operating budget. For long-term financial planning, it is critical that we increase the size of our endowment so as to provide a more stable financial foundation for generations to come. The increased revenue stream from investments in the endowment, like the increased rental income from refurbished townhouses, will also go toward increasing the revenues in our operating budget in the future.
- **Mission.** In many ways, this is the most important of the 3 areas of allocation of development project revenues, as it goes to the core of what our church, and really any church, is about; that is, making a positive difference in the lives of those in our community, our country and around the world who are less fortunate than we are. We will segregate a portion of the revenue stream from the development project to go towards a fund which will help us to eventually build new space dedicated to mission, as well as to expand the scope and the breadth of our outreach ministries.

Now that I think about it, I have never really known where or what my pledge contributions are going toward. How is my contribution being spent?

Pledges contribute to approximately 25% of the total operating budget, which includes such items as expenses for staff and clergy personnel, payment of our diocesan assessment, program expenses (music, outreach, etc.) as well as costs for the maintenance and upkeep of the buildings & grounds on the block.

Do I really need to make a pledge commitment? Can't I just put donations in the plate at services throughout the year?

The difference between pledging and giving through the offering plate is an important one. When we pledge -- a strictly confidential process where we agree to offer a set amount for a year -- we help the church plan our annual budget, much like businesses or individuals do. Planning ahead with a budget allows us to responsibly account for all operating costs in the coming year, so that we can remain a financially stable community able to account for and allocate these expenses throughout the year. While all giving is a treasure, pledging allows us to plan ahead in a way that a variable week-to-week offering plate cannot do.

What happens if my financial circumstances change and I cannot continue my pledge or need to change it?

Lives are not static and we understand that your financial situation may change. If, during the commitment period, you find that you need to adjust or cancel your pledge, you may do so at any time by calling the church office.

Can other kinds of assets can be donated instead of a cash contribution?

Assets could include investment property, stocks, mutual fund shares, bonds and/or real estate. If you have a question about contributing assets, contact the church office.

How will gifts and pledges be solicited during the stewardship campaign?

Personal phone calls by parishioner volunteers will be a key component of the campaign. This will give you the opportunity to ask questions about the campaign. Additionally, regular paper mailings as well as e-mailings will be sent out throughout the duration of the campaign.