

STEWARDSHIP FAQs

What is pledging? Pledging is a covenant made to contribute a certain amount of money over a period of time. Our current stewardship campaign (aka "pledge drive") is asking parishioners to let us know what they will be able to contribute to St. Paul's over 2021 so that we can plan for our mission and ministry in the coming year. It is necessary for us to know how much we will be receiving in pledges so we can prepare a budget for 2021. Pledges can be any amount, usually given periodically (weekly, monthly, quarterly) throughout the year. Some people give a one-time lump sum. All pledges, large and small, are valued as a commitment in faith to our community.

What if I put money in the offering plate – doesn't that take the place of a pledge? Putting money in the offering plate is a wonderful spiritual discipline, but it does not take the place of a pledge. Simply put, it is not possible for the Vestry to plan a budget or operate our Church given the fluctuating and uncertain nature of plate offerings. The experience of 2020 has made clear how essential pledging is to the financial health of the Church. While our plate donations have essentially gone away since March, our income from pledging has remained stable and sustained St. Paul's during an uncertain time by making a pledge, you are giving the Vestry the necessary tools to sustain the Church's operations and support its ministries over the course of a year.

Does my additional contribution take the place of my regular pledge? In this highly unusual and uncertain time, St. Paul's vestry is asking that you consider making a special contribution in addition to your regular pledge to ensure the financial stability of St. Paul's. That additional contribution can be paid all at once or over the course of the year as you would your regular pledge.

What if I can't meet my pledge? Things can happen over a year: job loss, illness, moves. We understand this. In the event your circumstances change, please contact Jan Toth at janth223@gmail.com or the Rector Noah Evans at noah@stpaulspgh.org, not only to revise your pledge, but in case you might also desire pastoral care and support. We value you no matter how much you give. God honors your faithfulness.

Does St. Paul's receive any financial support from the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh or any other church? St. Paul's supports the Diocese through an assessment based on our operating expenses.

How does St. Paul's meet its expenses? Going in to 2020, St. Paul's had a budget of approximately \$917,755 which included salaries and benefits for a full-time rector, an assistant rector and lay staff, as well as expenses for the building, missions, and education. The budget was reduced to approximately \$842,703 in April, which allowed us to maintain essential operations and retain all staff despite the challenges the pandemic created. Annual pledges meet a significant portion of the budget in normal times and were essential in this past year. The remainder comes from use of the building, investments and some other sources. Please look over our annual budget if you want to know where the money comes from and how it is spent. It is important to remember that the salaries of our clergy and staff are part of our mission of providing the sacraments of the church, pastoral care, education, and music ministry.

How are financial decisions made at St. Paul's? Financial decisions are made by the vestry of St. Paul's. The vestry is the name for the church's "board of directors." Members are elected to three year terms. Officers include the Senior and Junior Wardens, Treasurer and Clerk. The vestry meets monthly.

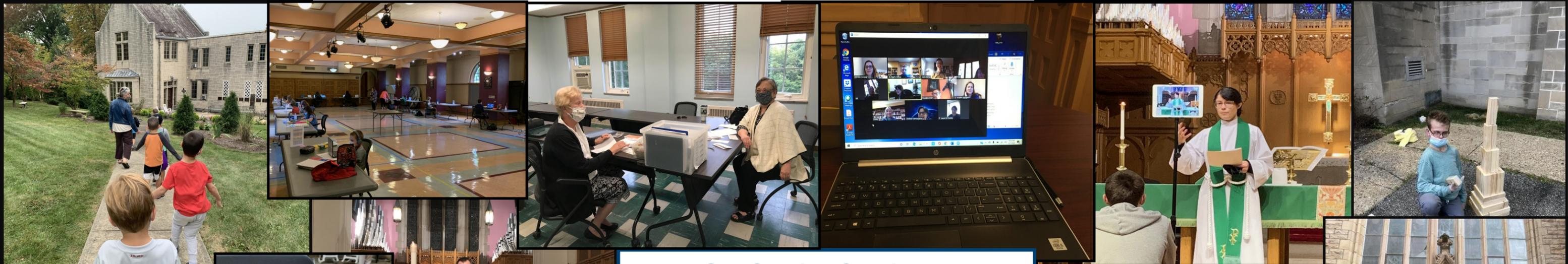
Who needs to pledge? We ask all members to pledge. If you have never pledged before, you can start out with a modest sum. Given on a regular basis over a year, this provides needed support.

Are my donations tax deductible? Yes. Per IRS regulations, contributions for each year must be received or postmarked by December 31 of that year in order to receive donation credit for that year's tax purposes. Donations may be applied to pledges for the prior year or to the following year, but the statement for tax purposes will reflect the actual date of the donation.

Our World Has Changed



Our Service Continues



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In the midst of unimaginable challenges, we have seen service and sacrifice from all levels of society that have made us rethink what it means to be essential. What has become clear is the essential nature of service to others. And in times like these, everyone has experienced a call to serve and a need to be served.

St. Paul's radiates service. When the doors closed in March, the Spirit was unleashed. We have witnessed an outpouring of energy, creativity, and love for our neighbors. Whether preparing meals or donating food for those facing food instability or delivering the Eucharist to parishioners experiencing spiritual hunger, our community has continued to find ways to serve.

At the same time, our clergy, staff, and lay leaders have shown endless adaptability and ingenuity, working to keep the bonds of St. Paul's strong. St. Paul's has not just survived the past year, we have thrived. And none of this would have been possible without the sustaining support of those who pledged during last year's Stewardship Campaign.

As we look forward, we know that next year will bring new challenges that are impossible to anticipate. But this year has shown we can rise to meet whatever comes our way. To do so, however, we ask that you make a commitment to the stability and sustainability of the parish by pledging to support St. Paul's financially in 2021. By pledging our time, our talents, and our treasure, we can continue to be Christ's hands and feet in the world, serving all who are in need of God's love.

