

2025 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN
HOLY COMFORTER EPISCOPAL
CHURCH





Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:1-2, NRSV

Dear Holy Comforter family,

As we begin our annual Stewardship Campaign, I invite you to pray about the journey you make with our congregation. We all have so many gifts to share: gifts of time, talent, and treasure. These gifts work together to build up our community, support our ministry, and enable our outreach to others. We share them not out of a sense that we will get back what we give, but because we are motivated by God's love. When Paul wrote to his friends in the Church at Ephesus, he reminded them that the very spark of love that founded their community of faith was one of giving. God showed His love for humanity by giving us Himself, generously, sacrificially, and selflessly, and He has called us imitate Him by doing the same.

Certainly, this is what we do when we place our gifts on the altar – we bring our whole selves and share the best part of our love and labor. As you consider what you will share with the church this year, I invite you to give thanks for the many people who have walked with you in love, supported you in your faith, and shared their gifts with you.

With this letter you are receiving the invitation to make your promise to Holy Comforter for the year to come. Before you fill it out, whether online or on paper, I ask that you pray about it, discuss it with your family, and discern how God is calling you to share your gifts. Pay special attention to both sides of the form, and let us know what time and talent offerings you would like to learn more about this year.

Our campaign will end on Sunday, November 24th so please return your answer to us by then if possible so that we may count your pledge in our ingathering. Your gift will be added to many others to be blessed, broken, and shared with the world. If there is anything I can do to support you or questions I can answer, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Walking with you in Love,

Fr. Allen

Investing in the Future

During Jesus' life on earth, generosity across generations and through the community of faith was paramount.

While Jesus traveled and preached, there were many who helped fund his ministry. For instance, we read of Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons; Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's business manager; Susanna; and many others who were contributing from their own resources to support Jesus and his disciples" (Luke 8:2b-3). Many of those who were contributing to Jesus' travel, food and other needs would have likely been older, established people of means; this is why Mary is called "Magdalene," or "of Magdala," indicating her place of residence instead of being identified by a relationship to a male relative.

Likewise, after Jesus ascended into heaven and the early Church began to spread, Luke explains in Acts:

"All the believers were united in heart and mind. And they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had. The apostles testified powerfully to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God's great blessing was upon them all. There were no needy people among them, because those who owned land or houses would sell them and bring the money to the apostles to give to those in need" (Acts 4:32-35).

Unity in generosity—and intergenerational generosity, at that—was foundational to the early Christian community and its mission. Those who had needs were provided for, and those who had an abundance were willing to forsake their own wealth and possessions for the sake of others.

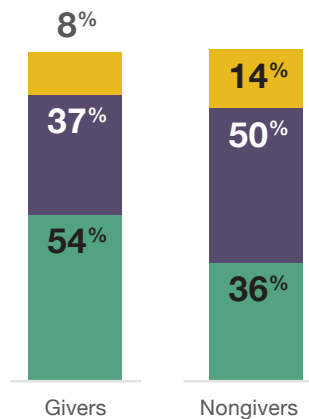
Just as Mary of Magdala received Jesus' healing power and mercy and then used her gifts to bless others, this pattern of generosity is still common today. In fact, a key insight from this study is that **those who have been the recipient of extraordinary generosity are more willing and likely to give to others.**

Generosity Is Catching

Adults who give charitably are more likely than nongivers to be part of an ongoing cycle of generosity. More than half of those who report making charitable donations within the past year (54%) say they have received extraordinary generosity from others, compared with 36 percent of nongivers.

In your life, have you ever been the recipient of someone else's extraordinary generosity?

● Yes ● No ● Not sure



n=2,016 U.S. adults, November 12–19, 2021.

Today's Church continues to be a place for this kind of cyclical giving; 65 percent of practicing Christians say they have been a recipient of extraordinary generosity (vs. 44% of nonpracticing Christians and 41% of non-Christians).

The data suggest that firsthand experiences of generosity can teach the recipient how to be generous to others. This paints generosity as a learned skill. Sharing what it means to be generous with others becomes a catalyst for generosity.

Holy Comforter Episcopal Church
2024 Narrative Budget
Living Our Faith by Serving God and Others

Our Parish financial stewardship is more than an exercise in meeting a budget. It is one of the most powerful ways that we make our faith visible, viable and active in our Parish, our community and our world. Our Parish is committed to a faithful response to support its Christian missions and ministries. This Narrative Budget is an attempt to show how the treasures we give are put to work to build the Kingdom of God.

Anticipated Income: **\$553,914**

This income comes from the generosity of our pledging members, as well as from our unpledged members and donors, and other miscellaneous sources, including fund raising.

Estimated Expenditures:

Supporting the Wider Mission of the Church: (\$71,782)

Our Parish's work extends far beyond our own community to the ends of the earth. Through our support of the Episcopal Diocese of Florida we provide support for: Our Bishop and the Diocesan staff in their ministry to our Diocesan family; ministries for newly ordained seminarians, fixed cash benefits for retired clergy and their spouses; Camp Weed and its many youth ministry initiatives; campus ministries at Florida State, The University of Florida and The University of North Florida; urban ministries in Jacksonville (Church Without Walls and St. Mary's Mission to the Homeless) and Tallahassee (Grace Mission); support for the Wounded Warrior's Retreats; 16 jail and prison ministries. From our Parish's Outreach budget we also provide direct funding for our companion churches in Cuba.

Reaching Out to Serve Our Community: (\$104,143)

We provide a Food Pantry to feed the hungry among us. We provide funds to support Grace Mission in Tallahassee. We also support the Christian education and ministry at Holy Comforter School. Our Priests visit non-members, provide counseling services to residents of our community and participate as our representative in several community organizations.

Preparing for Conducting Worship: (\$80,395)

Our worship is central to the life of our congregation. Our Parish's services on Sundays and Wednesday evenings give us the grace to go forth in our missions and ministries. Planning for Sunday morning worship, preparing meaningful sermons, preparing for and conducting weddings, funerals, baptisms, and other special services require a significant part of our Priests' time. Our Music Director, Organist, Altar Guild members, Audio Visual Assistant, and many other volunteers work tirelessly to provide prayerful liturgy. This category also includes costs for music, bulletins, candles, communion supplies, and seasonal decorations.

Educating Our Children, Youth and Adults: (\$62,156)

We continue to develop an excellent Sunday school and Youth program. Curriculum materials and other supplies, expenses for Vacation Bible School are also included here as well as funds to support our Youth Group. We regularly offer a Bible Study program. We also prepare youth and adults for Confirmation and for reception into the Episcopal Church. Our Priests provide chapels, Holy Eucharist, and participate in the life of our school.

Care for Our Church Family: (\$112,211)

Pastoral care is a vital part of our work, especially for persons who are ill, hospitalized, bereaved, preparing for marriage, going through divorce, or facing other personal crises. Along with providing direct pastoral care by our Priests, we also provide for the training of Eucharistic Visitors. Our office staff provides information and other services to members such as preparing annual reports for our congregational meeting. They also assist the hungry by responding to countless calls concerning our Food Pantry and other needs. Our seasonal publication of the *Dove* newsletter and our weekly *E-Dove*, Parish website and other publications, Parish campout, campfires, and the many ministries of our Hospitality committee (receptions after funerals, coffee hour, and many more too numerous to name here) are within this category that enables us to sustain our common life together.

Equipping and Maintaining Our Platform for Mission: (\$148,354)

Our Sexton keeps our facilities clean and in good order so that we may perform the work God is calling us to do. Our Finance Manager, our worship space, Mercy Lounge, and offices that provide the room for performing the administrative framework that supports our various ministries are included in this resource area. Utilities, insurance, employment taxes and related costs to providing facilities to carry on our work are also found in this category.

Total Resources Required to Perform & Carryout Our Mission: \$579,041
(\$25,127 deficit)

Why make a pledge?

Annual pledges are the financial foundation of our church, our single most important source of funding. Your pledge enables us to create a viable budget - something random giving simply cannot. The budget determines our year's activities and what we can accomplish as a church.



When you make a pledge:

- You commit to give financially as an expression of faith and a personal response to God's generosity.
- You embrace the spiritual discipline of regular, faithful giving and experience the joy of generosity.
- You trust in God to provide for your needs as you give to others.

Why make a proportional gift?

Recently retired Bishop of Olympia, the Rt. Rev. Greg Rickel, stated that the tithe is only the beginning point. As Christians we give one hundred percent of what we have in gratitude for God who gave us everything there is. We're *all in*.



When you make a proportional gift:

- You set aside your first fruits, dedicating a portion of your wealth, works, and wisdom to God. This is a sacred act.
- Your financial gift rises and falls with your income - it is right-sized to your household.
- Giving back to God is a life-time journey; setting a percentage allows you to step up your giving over time.

How do I make a pledge?

You can submit your pledge electronically by using our secure online form or by filling out a paper pledge card. Pick up a pledge card in the church office. Then, simply mail it, drop it off at the church office, or bring it to Stewardship Sunday on Nov. 24th.



When you make your pledge:

- Consider contacting our Gina, our Finance Manager, at (850) 877-2712 to set up automatic withdrawals from your bank.
- Consider contacting Gina to learn about planned giving options.
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Annual Income	Weekly Income	Beyond the Tithe		Tithe	Proportional Giving								
		15%	12%		10%	9%	8%	7%	6%	5%	4%	3%	2%
\$20,000	\$385	\$58	\$46	\$38	\$35	\$31	\$27	\$23	\$19	\$15	\$12	\$8	\$4
\$25,000	\$481	\$72	\$58	\$48	\$43	\$38	\$34	\$29	\$24	\$19	\$14	\$10	\$5
\$30,000	\$577	\$87	\$69	\$58	\$52	\$46	\$40	\$35	\$29	\$23	\$17	\$12	\$6
\$40,000	\$769	\$115	\$92	\$77	\$69	\$62	\$54	\$46	\$38	\$31	\$23	\$15	\$8
\$50,000	\$962	\$144	\$115	\$96	\$87	\$77	\$67	\$58	\$48	\$38	\$29	\$19	\$10
\$60,000	\$1,154	\$173	\$138	\$115	\$104	\$92	\$81	\$69	\$58	\$46	\$35	\$23	\$12
\$70,000	\$1,346	\$202	\$162	\$135	\$121	\$108	\$94	\$81	\$67	\$54	\$40	\$27	\$13
\$80,000	\$1,538	\$231	\$185	\$154	\$138	\$123	\$108	\$92	\$77	\$62	\$46	\$31	\$15
\$90,000	\$1,731	\$260	\$208	\$173	\$156	\$138	\$121	\$104	\$87	\$69	\$52	\$35	\$17
\$100,000	\$1,923	\$288	\$231	\$192	\$173	\$154	\$135	\$115	\$96	\$77	\$58	\$38	\$19
\$120,000	\$2,308	\$346	\$277	\$231	\$208	\$185	\$162	\$138	\$115	\$92	\$69	\$46	\$23
\$150,000	\$2,885	\$433	\$346	\$288	\$260	\$231	\$202	\$173	\$144	\$115	\$87	\$58	\$29

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