

Vestry Letter
November 2009

The Christian faith encompasses an almost indescribably wide range of beliefs, practices, and traditions. One could examine the various Christian denominations and scarcely recognize them as parts of the same whole. But one of the commonalities for most Christians is that the church will ask them for money. Why? First, because the Bible tells us that everything we have has been entrusted to our care by God. Pledging a portion of our treasure (and also our time and talents) to God's work is a central tenet of our faith. But second, because as much as we'd like to avoid it, churches are businesses that have all of the normal expenses that you would expect: payrolls, utility bills, facilities maintenance, and all the rest.

Very often the second aspect dominates the first. It's so much easier to talk about budgets, about numbers, than about expressions of faith. So let's dispense with the easy part as directly as possible: Trinity is asking each member to pledge a portion of his or her 2010 income by returning a pledge card before November 8th. The pledge is an estimate of how much money you plan to give in 2010. We ask for your pledge so we can create an accurate budget. Since the largest portion of our income is members' contributions, we can't really budget effectively without your pledge. There it is. That's all we need to say about budgets and pledging. The more challenging question is, of course, how you arrive at the size of your contribution.

This fall we are having a discussion about Trinity's future, about our shared vision for what this Cathedral Church will become. The Dean has preached about it (check our web site for his sermon) and members will have received at least one letter outlining our vision for the future. We intend to build on the many positive steps in 2009 and increase our ministries both inside and, more importantly, outside our faith community. We will continue to grow our presence in downtown San Jose, to be a center for ministry to all in our community, especially those less fortunate. And we will do it through Stewardship.

Stewardship is, simply, commitment to ministry. It is what we do on a daily basis as we recognize God's generosity and devote a portion of it back to God's work. I hope you will spend some time thinking about Trinity's vision for the future and your place in it. Every person that walks into our church is a steward, and each has time, talent, and treasure that can help us realize our shared ministry more fully. The commitment of your wealth is the surest sign of your investment in this ministry.

Charles Key
Senior Warden