

Taking the Next Step in **GRATITUDE** Prayer Vigil

**TAKING THE NEXT
STEP IN
GRATITUDE**



Thank you for participating in our virtual Prayer Vigil. We suggest you find a quiet and comfortable place, then take some time with each of the following pages to reflect and prepare for our Generosity Sunday on October 24th , where we will be given an opportunity to complete our Estimate of Giving Card for 2020-2021.

Why Talk About Money? Because It's a Spiritual Issue!

Generosity is directly linked to our journey of discipleship. How we use our resources is primarily a spiritual issue, not a financial one. The quality of that decision is determined by the spiritual condition of our heart.

*Strive first for the kingdom of God and
all of these things will be given to you as well.*

Matthew 6:33

Seeking God's kingdom means trusting that God will take care of our needs. The promise of this verse is that when we put your focus on Christ and Christ's way of doing things first, all the other areas of our lives will begin to fall into place. The birds and flowers are taken care of (Matthew 6:26), so we can trust that God will take care of us—His children—too. We simply need to trust that God will come through because that is God's promise to us. We will have enough.
We will have what we need.

***Take a minute to pray to God to help you seek
Him first in your everyday life.***

*Lord, sometimes I get so distracted by
everyday life that I forget to talk to you
about it. Forgive me. Help me to seek you
constantly -- your presence, your help,
your wisdom, your mercy.
Let my life revolve around you
our righteousness, and your Kingdom.
In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.*

Seek the
KINGDOM
of God above
ALL ELSE
matthew 6:33

Why Talk About Money?

Because Jesus Talked About It!

Jesus spoke openly about money and possessions. About two-thirds of the parables and about one in every ten verses in the Gospels addresses this very issue. As followers of Jesus, we should not be reluctant to talk about giving as an outward expression of our love for Christ.

The Apostle Paul writes in Philippians chapter 4 describing how Christians can overcome worry and worldly desires, regardless of their circumstances. By making a purposeful decision to be content, we can trust God to provide our true needs, and not be consumed with materialism or anxiety. Paul has learned this spiritual discipline through his many trials and ministry experiences.

“Actually, I do not have a sense of need anything personally. I have learned by now to be quite content whatever my circumstances. I am just as happy with little as with much, with much as with little. I have found the recipe for being happy whether full or hungry, hands full or hands empty. Whatever I have, wherever I am, I can make it through anything in the One who makes me who I am.”

Philippians 4:12 (The Message)

On the next two pages are several different bible verses and quotes about contentment. Take a minute and read through them all. Take some time to pray about the one that speaks to you the most about finding contentment in your relationship with Jesus Christ. Use the next two pages as a prompt to prayer as you prepare for Taking the Next Step in Generosity Sunday on October 25th.

The greedy
stir up conflict,
but those who
trust in the Lord
will prosper
Proverbs 28:25

1 TIMOTHY 6:7-8

FOR WE BROUGHT NOTHING
INTO THE WORLD, AND WE CAN
TAKE NOTHING OUT OF IT. BUT
IF WE HAVE FOOD AND
CLOTHING, WE WILL BE
CONTENT WITH THAT.



"WATCH OUT!
BE ON YOUR GUARD
against all
kinds of greed;
life does not
consist in an
abundance of
possessions."

LUKE 12:15

Keep your lives free
from the love of
money and be
content with what
you have, because
God has said, "Never
will I leave you;
never will I forsake
you."

HEBREWS 13:5 NIV

"THE more
YOU HAVE, THE
more occupied
THE less YOU ARE.
YOU HAVE, THE
more free
YOU ARE."

-Mother Theresa

Contentment

does not mean
that I desire nothing

But rather,
it's the simple decision

*to be happy
with what I have.*

-Paula Rollo

I will choose
CONTENTMENT
no matter what.
Because in every
circumstance,
I HAVE JESUS.
And He is
enough.

BE CONTENT
with what
you have

Hebrews 13:5

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Why Talk About Money? Because It's All About Trust!

As we learn to trust God more and follow Christ's teaching more faithfully, we learn to depend less on ourselves and more on God, relinquishing attitudes and habits that impede our relationship with God.

*The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly,
and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.
Each one must do just as has purposed in his heart,
not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*
2 Corinthians 9:6-7

God is pleased when we give from the heart. Because that's where giving started—from God's heart, with the gift of God's son Jesus. We honor God when we give cheerfully, freely, generously and intentionally. We also honor God when we grow in our giving because this is part of the change Christ works in us as disciples of Jesus Christ. When giving we are acknowledging that what we have in our hands belongs to God and is a gift to us.

Look at the picture of seeds. Think of all the different steps that need to happen in order for them to bloom into the beautiful flowers you see: planting in the right sized container using good soil, providing plenty of sunlight and water, keeping the plants at the correct temperature, feeding the plants with fertilizer.



Now think of all the steps you could take in helping to grow God's kingdom. Giving enables us to take part in God's work in the world by giving sacrificially from our means. By giving, we claim our part in God's redemptive work in the world.

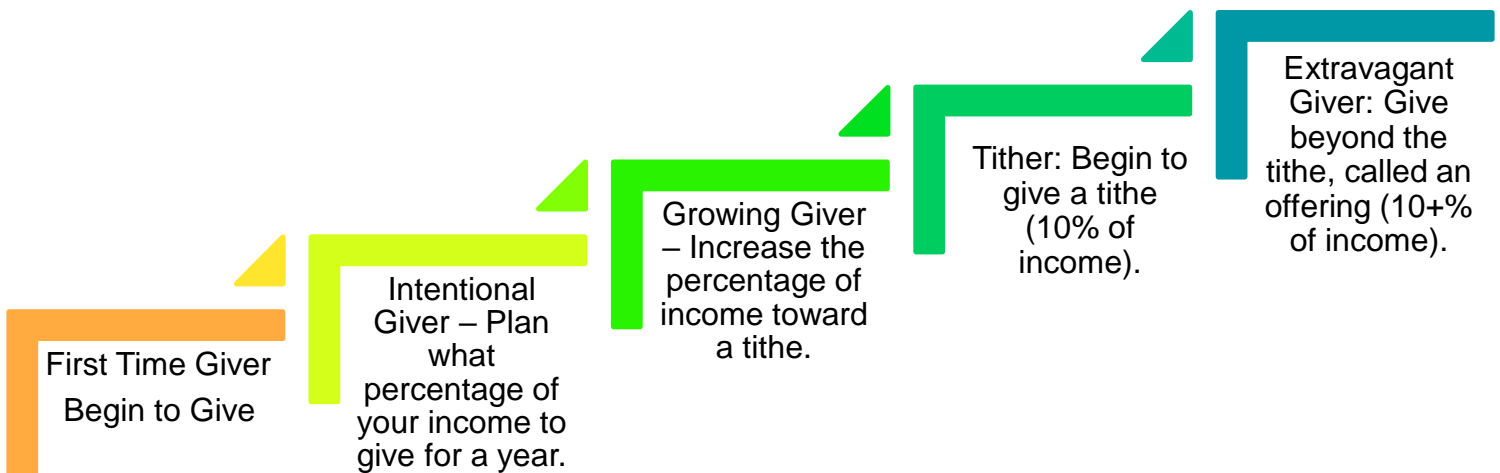
Take a minute to pray about where God wants you to be in your giving.

Why Take the Next Step?

It's God's intention that we grow more generous and take bigger steps in our giving as we become more aware of how richly God has blessed us in Christ.

When we take a step along the Giving Path we are moving forward in our spiritual journey to be more like Christ. Jesus said that "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"

Take a moment to think about where you currently are on the Giving Path. Trace the steps along the Giving Path with your finger and think about what it would mean for you personally to take one step higher on the Giving Path.



Pray about where God WANTS you to be in your giving?
Ask yourself, does my giving reflect real gratitude and joy-filled generosity?
Make note of where you feel like God is calling you to be in your giving.

Taking the Next Step in Gratitude

Preparing for October 24th

On Sunday, October 24th you will be invited to complete your 2020-2021 Estimate of Giving Card during worship.

“Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, as long as ever you can.”

John Wesley

In Psalm 116:12 the Psalmist asks, “How can I repay the Lord for all his goodness to me?” Think about all the ways you have known God’s love, presence, help, healing and forgiveness.

Think about all the blessings you know through your relationship with Christ and your participation in this church. Ponder the gift of grace and the promise of life eternal we know in Christ.

Now ask yourself three questions.

How will I respond to all these amazing gifts?

How can I express my gratitude to God?

Does my giving reflect real gratitude and joy-filled generosity?

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Galatians 5:22

What do you need as you prepare for YOUR Next Step in Gratitude? Is it love or joy? Peace or Patience? Kindness, Generosity or Faithfulness? Gentleness or Self-Control? On the next two pages are a list of scriptures for each one of these – choose one that speaks to you as you prepare for YOUR next step.

*Let us not love
with words or speech,
but with actions
and in truth.*

1 JOHN 3:18



**DO NOT BE
ANXIOUS
ABOUT ANYTHING
— INSTEAD —**

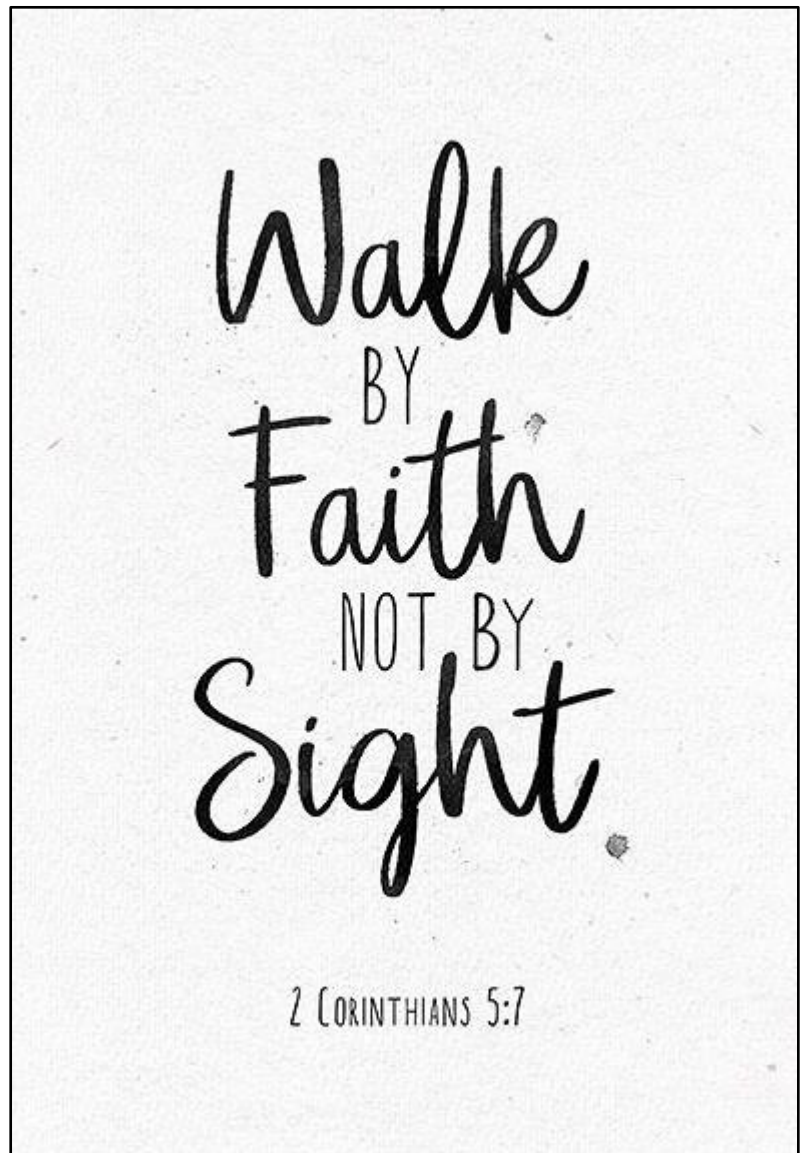
**PRAY
ABOUT EVERYTHING**

PHILIPPIANS 4: 6-7



*When the time is right,
I, the Lord
will make it happen."*

ISAIAH 60:22



**Walk
BY
Faith
NOT BY
Sight.**

2 CORINTHIANS 5:7

