

Giving at Trinity Fellowship

How is the local church supported financially?

Legally speaking, churches are non-profit organizations. The budget of a local church is supported entirely by the free-will contributions of those who attend the church on a regular basis. In biblical times, it was typical for the individuals within a church to take up a collection for those who were performing the pastoral work. Paul writes to the Corinthian Christians, “In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel” (1 Cor. 9:15). In the Old Testament, the people were commanded to set aside a tithe (10%) of their earnings to give to the Levites— those individuals who performed the priestly duties. In addition, the people often gave free-will offerings and fellowship offerings beyond their tithe. It is through tithes and offerings that the local church is still supported today.

What does stewardship mean?

Stewardship in the Bible means being faithful managers of all that God has given to us. Jesus tells his disciples in the book of Luke, “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much” (Luke 16:10). Throughout the Bible, there are several clear principles about what it means to be a good steward. First, being good stewards of our resources means that we recognize that everything belongs to God. He is the one who gives us the ability to earn a living (Deut 8:17-18). Second, being good stewards means exercising self-control and living within our means (Prov. 13:11). Thirdly, being good stewards means giving sacrificially to the Lord’s work. Jesus praised the widow who put her last two copper coins into the offering (Luke 21:4). Fourth, good stewardship means giving from the heart, not out of obligation (2 Cor.9:7).

What about tithing? How much should I give?

The practice of tithing (giving 10% of one’s income) was given as a command to the Hebrew people of the Old Testament and is not specifically commanded in the New Testament. However, tithing is always presented positively in scripture, and Jesus told the Pharisees they should tithe (Matt. 23:23). Tithing teaches us to trust that God will provide for our needs if we honor him first. This is a personal decision; however a helpful phrase we use at Trinity Fellowship is “not equal giving, but equal sacrifice”. We realize that each person must take a step of faith and respond to what the Lord is calling him or her to give. We also keep records private so that only the financial recording secretary knows how much each individual is giving.

Can I designate my giving?

Since we are a congregational form of government, we have relatively few designated funds at Trinity Fellowship. Right now the designated funds are missions, building fund, and scholarships for POWERHOUSE Student Ministries. Capital expenses for things such as new construction or mechanical equipment are approved by the congregation as part of the annual budget. Giving to the general fund supports all ministries and provides money for heat, electricity, office supplies, and other furnishings. Please mark your giving envelope accordingly.

What about Gifts-In-Kind?

We realize that many times people desire to donate material gifts in kind to help the church. The leaders of the church must choose whether or not to receive any gift-in-kind. The value of such a gift is up to the donor to substantiate for tax purposes. The church also accepts gifts of appreciated property or stock. These gifts benefit both the church and the individual. The church, because of its non-profit status, can sell the property or stock and receive full value; while the individual reduces his or her tax liability as a result of the charitable donation and also pays less capital gains tax.

How is the offering collected each week?

At Trinity Fellowship we do not pass offering plates during the service. This is done primarily because we do not want visitors to feel an obligation to give. Also, allowing individuals to place their offering in the box emphasizes the giving as an intentional act of worship. There are three offering boxes at Trinity Fellowship. Two are located in the back of the multi-purpose room, and one is located at the east entrance. We ask that you place your offering in the box at some point during the morning service. If you have questions about your offering or how to give, please see a member of the Impressions team.