



## What the leadership of Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church believes about stewardship.

*Where your treasure is, there your  
heart will be also. ~~ Matthew 6: 21*

Following the biblical principle of giving the “first fruits” of the harvest to the temple, we believe that Christians are called to give not from what we have left over, but from what we have. Everything we have is God’s. This is why one’s growth in faith is enhanced by giving that is regular, proportional to one’s resources, and sacrificial. The church, too, is called to give of itself

in all it does in order to tell the good news of our faith and share in Christ’s mission of love, reconciliation, healing, and justice. In this way, the church embodies God’s compassion.

Christians give of themselves in response to God’s generous gift in Jesus Christ and Christ’s church. We don’t give in order to get something in return, but to strengthen our faith and show our thankfulness to God in all the circumstances of our lives. We learn that God provides for us and so discover that we, too, can be part of how God provides for others. In this way, we learn to love. Thus, when we give, we grow.

Our beliefs are grounded in the words of Jesus, which provide focus for our attention, our time, and our talents. We share a vision that calls us to faithfully support local and global ministries as we also provide Christian care in our own congregation. To strengthen those commitments, we strive to provide worship that has depth and beauty, education that is timely and challenging, and community that is welcoming and joyful. In order to do this and more, we employ a professional staff and maintain buildings that are both inspiring and functional. We additionally support the wider church through local, national, and international connections.

Sometimes we give to answer a clear need or meet a shared goal. Other times we simply give, trusting the elected and appointed leaders of the church to hear what the Holy Spirit is calling the church to do. Yet every time we give, we give because we have first received—a good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over into our laps (Luke 6: 38).

This separates our approach to stewardship from fund raising.

## Questions often asked about Stewardship.

### How does the Bible describe giving?

- Faithful giving is regular (*consider 1 Corinthians 16:2*)
- Faithful giving is proportional (*consider 2 Corinthians 8:12*)
- Faithful giving is sacrificial (*consider Mark 12:43-44*)

### How much should I give?

In the New Testament, we are encouraged to give in proportion to what we have. In the story of the widow's mite, one learns that giving should be sacrificial—that we should give enough to feel it. Hebrew Scriptures call for a tithe (10% of one's income) and tell us that making our gifts for ministry a priority allows us to put the things of God first in our lives.

Consider making a commitment to giving that reflects a percentage of your resources. Also consider your balance of giving. Many worthy causes and organizations ask you to give, and you give as your heart moves you and your abilities allow. The church asks differently, however. For the church asks you to do three things at once: support the operation, staffing and facilities of the church; participate in, and trust the leadership of, the congregation as we decide how we are called to support ministries of compassion and justice outside our walls; and continue a journey of spiritual growth in your pattern of giving. The church seeks your first fruits, however you come to understand that.

We encourage members to become familiar with the church budget and learn where funds are directed. As you grow in community with your church, you will know that the work of the church is dependent on the faithful and constant attention you pay to stewardship.

### Are members asked to declare their financial commitment?

Yes. Each fall, we provide cards to members to make their financial pledge for the coming calendar year. This offers each member the opportunity to make a commitment and gives the church leadership important information for planning for the ongoing work of the church. Additional contributions are always welcome and help us to meet unexpected obligations. A pledge is not a legal contract; it is a good faith promise.

### **How does the BMPC Foundation affect my personal giving?**

The BMPC Foundation was created as a vehicle for the church to receive bequests, maintain prudent investment oversight of funds, and provide sustained revenue to support operations, ministries, and other mission commitments of the church. While the foundation receives living and testamentary gifts, they are made separately from annual gifts and pledges made directly to the church. More than 75 percent of our obligations must be met from regular giving.

### **Are members expected to participate? Is this part of stewardship?**

Yes! Stewardship embraces more than your finances. Your commitment to the church through sharing your time and talents is also of vital importance. Our programs thrive with active participation from the congregation. You reinforce your commitment when you donate your time and talent. We are all ministers.



### **What do I do next?**

We can only suggest some next steps, but believe it is important for you to begin a process that will allow you to discern what giving means to you as a person of faith. First, gather information. Take the time to read through passages of scripture outlined here and reflect on them. Look back on your childhood memories or other times in your life and consider what messages about giving you've absorbed along the way. Do they still serve you? Openly discuss giving with your loved ones, family, friends or other members of the church to learn what those close to you believe about faithful giving. Then, find a time to pray and consider how your contributions to the church will enhance and enliven your spiritual journey. Finally, make a pledge to the Church.

For more information, contact any one of the pastors, elders, trustees, or Janet White, our Director of Member Ministries and Stewardship at 610-525-2821, ext. 816.

# What Do You Believe about Giving?

## *A guide for faithful reflection*

For God so loved the world that God gave God's only son . . .

These words from the Gospel of John remind us that at the heart of our faith is the gift of love—love of Jesus Christ, love of the church, and love of others. One of the ways that we best express our gratitude for that most precious gift is by giving back.

At Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church we have a strong heritage of giving—in all of its manifestations. We understand that giving is personal, that there are many opportunities to give, and that each individual's situation is unique. We are also aware that our lives are better because we give. The world's needs are great and Jesus Christ calls us to assist those in need and build the church.

This brochure is meant to outline a statement of faith and provide a guide to help you consider practically and carefully why growing in generosity in the name of Jesus Christ is so important in today's world. It has been endorsed by our Session, Trustees, and 2007 Stewardship Committee and prepared with the input of many of our members.

Our hope is that the ideas you find here will spark conversations, brighten memories of past kindnesses, and resurrect stories of goodness that will inspire you. Together, we will make a difference in our community and world, and in our own lives. It all begins with what we believe about our faith and our giving.

We are grateful for your faithful consideration of your spiritual journey and how it can be enhanced through giving to the Church.

Mark E. Hess  
Stewardship Chair

Benjamin R. Pierce  
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James E. Crutchfield  
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