

Guidelines for Preparing “My Commitment for the Lord”

Everyone's gifts at St. Matthews, both large and small, are a blessing and enables God's mission and ministry at St. Matthews to move forward. We encourage you to make your commitment out of love and gratitude for all God gives you. We encourage you to give a percentage or portion of your income as you have received it. We also want to encourage you to consider opening the door of your heart to tithing (10% of your income). Tithing reflects a growing faith in Christ. Tithing will help our church to remain strong and to fulfill its mission and ministry. The most important thing is that you give with a loving, generous, and cheerful heart. Growing in relationship to the Lord means growing in our giving.

In 1 Corinthians 16 the apostle Paul writes, *‘Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. ‘On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income. And in Malachi 3:8-10 we read these words: ‘ Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, ‘How do we rob you?’ “In tithes and offerings. ‘ You are under a curse—the whole nation of you—because you are robbing me. “ Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.*

Step 1: Locate on the proportionate giving chart the dollar amount that most closely matches your current weekly or gross income. Circle this dollar figure.

Next, using the income figure you circled, move to the right on the same line and find the dollar figure which most closely matches your current weekly offering for the Lord's work. Circle this dollar figure. At the top of this column, circle the percentage of your total income contributed for the Lord's work.

Step 2: Pray about your giving. In John 5:14 we read, this is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. This certainly includes the matter of our offerings. Therefore, pray to the Lord regarding your current level of giving. Ask the Lord to show you how richly He has blessed you. Ask Him to guide you as you make a decision regarding your offerings.

Step 3: Reflect on your giving. Personally think about your current level of giving. Ask yourself if you are pleased with your present level and consistency in which you give. Ask yourself if your offerings represent the “first fruits” or best of your blessings from God or whether they are the leftovers? Are they a meaningful and sacrificial response to God's love for you in Jesus Christ? Ask yourself, at what level can my giving be this year? If married, discuss these same issues with your spouse.

Step 4: Make a commitment. Having prayed and reflected, you are now ready to make your commitment. Using the chart again, consider if you are able to take a step of faith and grow to the next percent or higher in your giving. Thank you and the Lord bless you!

Step 5: Simply Giving. Consider using the “Simply Giving” program to help you follow through on your offerings. “Simply Giving” automatically deducts your offering from checking account at times that you determine (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, etc.). The advantage of this program is that your offering will help support the mission of St. Matthews even when you cannot be physically present.

As we read in God's Word, He is the owner of all things and we are to be His stewards for all the gifts he has given us. Our understanding of this means we recognize, accept and give back joyfully with our time, talent and financial gifts.