

Principles of Financial Stewardship

An annual stewardship campaign is conducted every fall. This is an opportunity not only to participate in God's work in the world, but make giving back to God a priority in your life. Several important biblical principles underlie our effort.

1. Giving should be systematic and regular. Paul urges us to put aside a gift "on the first day of every week." Your gift may be weekly, monthly, quarterly or yearly. Regularity is the principle. God is committed to each and every one of us and giving is a living commitment to God.

2. Scripture says that "the choicest of our first fruits we shall bring into the house of the Lord," (Exodus 23:19). Offering the "first fruits" of our resources is a way of declaring God comes first in our priority. We encourage people to make a yearly pledge (or declaration of intended giving) not only as a way of helping the Session determine its budget but also as a way of offering to God our first fruits, and not our leftovers.

3. Giving should be done freely, "not reluctantly nor under compulsion for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9:7). We do not "take a collection," but rather "receive an offering." You will receive a quarterly giving statement for your records, but will never be harassed about your giving.

4. Giving proportionally, perhaps working our way toward the biblical model of a tithe ("bring the full tithe into the storehouse... and see if I will not pour down for you an overflowing blessing" (Malachi 3:10), is an important goal in giving systematically.

E-Giving

United Presbyterian Church has an additional option available for the giving of your pledge. Rather than preparing an envelope, you can elect to give by Electronic Funds Transfer, EFT. Used by many businesses, this method automatically and electronically transfers your pledge from your bank account to the church. Some of the benefits of EFT are:

You have the satisfaction of paying God first.

It is less work for you the member as you do not need to write checks.

It is safe, fast, and easy and less risky than writing checks.

It is easier for personal budgeting.

There is less work for church volunteers in processing paper checks.

It provides a predictable and steady income flow to the church which helps in budgeting and paying bills.

Setting up E-Giving is very easy. All you need to do is fill out a short form with your banking information and provide a voided check.

If you are interested in establishing an electronic funds transfer for your pledge, please contact Sabrina McGrath, the church financial secretary. Her telephone is 309-693-2002 and email is finance@unitedpc.org.



United Presbyterian Church

of Peoria, Illinois

Sharing the love and grace of God with all

Stewardship and Giving

A Faithful Response to God's Goodness and Grace



Stewardship

Stewardship is the careful and responsible management of something entrusted into one's care. It begins with the foundational principle that "the earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world and those who live in it" (Psalm 24:1). Stewardship is a way of living in response to God's goodness and grace in the ways we use our time, our talents, and our financial resources. It means not only recognizing what God has given us, but also seizing the opportunity to be a part of God's work. Although stewardship is not limited to finances, how we use our money is an important way of expressing our faith. Nearly a third of Jesus' teachings have to do with this topic.

As we prayerfully consider the ways we use our resources, we have a chance to participate in multiplying Christ's ministry to make real differences in the lives of real people. We do not give to United Presbyterian Church; we give through the church to ministries and missions that shape people's lives. Stewardship is not just about supporting the annual budget; it is about responding to a personal calling to reach and love others – with our treasures, our talents, and our time - in Christ's name.



The Church Budget

The Session develops and adopts an operating budget each calendar year, based on projected offerings and the ministry plans of the various church committees. This detailed budget is reviewed monthly by the Session. The budget is a roadmap of the ministry the church plans to do each year in four broad categories: worship, education, mission, and fellowship. Gifts to the church budget enable UPC to maintain our beautiful building and grounds and make them available to church and civic groups, provide opportunities to grow in faith and worship God, serve our community and world, and strengthen the bonds of community. Beyond the budget amounts, the church always gives a considerable amount in special mission offerings.

Each year, we rely on financial pledges from faithful members of the church to continue the work of God through this congregation. The gifts given to UPC truly make a difference in the lives of members of the church, neighbors in the community, and our neighbors around the world. UPC shares the love and grace of God with all because its members share their gifts with God through the church.



MAP

MAP is the Mortgage Abatement Plan of the church. When UPC built the new sanctuary and addition in 2006, we took out a 20-year mortgage for \$1,992,000. We need continued pledges to MAP so we can continue to make our monthly mortgage payments of \$12,555 per month and pay down the principal in order to shorten the length of the loan and save thousands of dollars in interest. Our goal is pay off the mortgage by 2020.

Your pledge card includes a place to pledge to the MAP program as well as the Operating Budget. You can start a new pledge to MAP at anytime or make a special gift to MAP to help pay principal on our mortgage. We have been able to cut several years off our mortgage because of special bequests made to the church in faithful members' wills. If you would like more information about how you can help us reach our MAP goal through a pledge, gift, or estate planning, please talk to a pastor.

2020 Vision