

Casting our Crowns

Annual Stewardship Campaign

Dear Members and Friends of Holy Trinity Anglican Church,

Every year, we ask our parishioners and friends to kindly estimate their giving for the coming year. This year, for the second year in a row, the Vestry and I have asked Vestryman Andy Figueroa to lead our efforts for the planned giving campaign which we are calling "Casting our Crowns." Why Andy? For many years Andy has experienced a call to address the subject of Christian giving. As his ministry developed, he has helped parishes, schools and dioceses, in both the Episcopal and Reformed Episcopal Churches to learn about Christian giving and to develop planned giving as part of the ethos of Christian discipleship. With his abundance of experience and his clear sense of calling, the Vestry tasked him to lead our efforts at Holy Trinity Church. As Rector, I am grateful that God has abundantly blessed our parish in so many ways, including sending Andy, with his gifts and skills, to our fellowship. I ask you to consider Andy's helpful guidance as you make your plans to give your gift to God and his Church.

May God continue to bless us all at Holy Trinity Church.

Fr. Brad Cunningham+

*Rector, Holy Trinity Anglican Church
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Jesus Does Not Want the Widow's Mite

Andy Figueroa 11/2/2014

And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had." (Luke 21:1-4 NKJV)

Next week, cards will be inserted into each bulletin with the heading "2015 Estimated Tithes and Offerings," and a box will be placed just inside the nave where you may put your completed cards before departing. If you are not ready to complete your card that Sunday, the box will remain in place through the end of the month. If your household receives more cards than you need, you may leave blank cards in the narthex after worship.

This process is often not as easy as it sounds. Last week I wrote, "Giving well doesn't happen by accident, and is often quite difficult." A former boss once reflected to me, "Ones needs expand to meet ones means." In other words, unless one is

blessed with wealth, there will never be more money left over after meeting ones needs. For most people, to give more in order to give well, it is necessary to expand giving into the "need" column, and move something else from the "need" column, to the "miscellaneous" column.

In the real world, this is usually hard. It may mean lifestyle change. I have heard numerous personal testimonies from people who had arrived at the conviction that they should tithe to their local church. Many found themselves at the beginning of a journey measured in years, finding that too many of the dollars needed to tithe were tied up in obligations that, in the short term, could not be avoided.

How about the poor widow story? Too many "poor widow" sermons have been preached using guilt to squeeze more money from the poor. That is not a good model for Christian stewardship. Jesus is using the poor widow's gift as a model for giving well for all of us who are not so poor. Compared to the rich in the story, the poor widow gives proportionately more, more generously, and more sacrificially. Those are some of the things we might weigh as we plan our own giving for the upcoming year and beyond.

You will find a copy of this article at <http://2chronicles36.org/>