



TENDING GOD'S GARDEN

ST. STEPHEN'S ORINDA 2023 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN FAQ

WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO PLEDGE?

There are multiple ways to pledge:

- You can return the enclosed pledge card.
- You can pledge online at www.ststephensorinda.org
- You can email questions to office@ststephensorinda.org.

WHAT ARE MY/OUR OPTIONS FOR FULFILLING MY PLEDGE?

You can pay pledges weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annually by check or credit card, or by bank transfer. Prepaying your entire pledge balance at the beginning of the year, if you are able, allows St. Stephen's to budget and plan properly. You can also set up automatic transfers, and you can make gifts of stock and IRA rollovers.

Please contact our Parish Administrator Liz Haughey (office@ststephensorinda.org) for more information about different ways to give.

WHAT DOES MY/OUR YEARLY PLEDGE PAY FOR?

Pledges provide almost 90% of St. Stephen's budget, and they fund all recurring expenses and daily operations: salaries for staff, music for the choir, supplies for the Altar Guild, bread and wine for sacraments, supplies for acolytes, Sunday School and Youth Group, Youth Group mission trips, SonShine Camp, office supplies, maintenance supplies, special events, hospitality at coffee hour (if not donated), minor maintenance and repair of buildings and grounds, utilities, insurance, and support for the Diocese of California.

DO I HAVE TO PLEDGE TO BE A MEMBER OF ST. STEPHEN'S?

We become members of the St. Stephen's community by participating in worship, receiving the Sacraments, serving our community with our time and talent, and by contributing financially if we are able. No one of these is more important than the others. What is important is to do them with an open heart and a desire to serve God and our fellow human beings.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I CANNOT FULFILL MY PLEDGE?

A pledge is a personal commitment that you make to further your own spiritual growth and support St. Stephen's community. We hope that you will be realistic in your planning and that no events occur that will affect your ability to carry out your intention. However, we know that things can change, so if you need to adjust your pledge amount, please let Liz Haughey (office@ststephensorinda.org) know.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I/WE PLEDGE?

Determining how much to pledge is between you and God. As you make this important decision, it may be helpful to reflect on your own vision of stewardship. Below is a suggestion for how we all might consider our personal vision of stewardship in terms of a spectrum:

- I give because I am supposed to give – a sense of duty
- I give to pay my own way – a sense of fairness
- I give to return a portion of my blessings – a sense of gratitude
- I give to keep church ministries free to all – a sense of generosity

There is no secret as to how you move along this progression. However, when you push yourself to another level, you will find your faithfulness expanding as well.

WHAT IF I DON'T PLEDGE UNTIL LATER ON?

You are welcome to make a pledge at any time. The financial plans for the parish are set by the end of January each calendar year, so pledges received after this date will not help us prepare the annual budget but will still be very important for supporting operations and the work of the church.

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE ACTUALLY PLEDGE?

Generally, about 66% of the St. Stephen's households make an annual written pledge. Last year, due to the pandemic, the percentage was less than that. For 2023, we find ourselves still working to regain household losses due to the pandemic and declining church membership.