

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Good People of St. John's please take a moment to read and prayerfully consider the following;

I have given much thought and I have prayed for guidance on how to approach you and ask for your new, continued and hopefully increased financial support in 2010. I have been reading and looking back on prior Stewardship Sermons that struck me and moved me to pledge and secondly to increase that pledge when I could. Darden and I have been at St John's for nearly 23 years and I personally have experienced ups and downs on whether to pledge or not. I open the Pledge Card envelope (I can feel it before I even open it) and start complaining..... "Well they are asking for more money again" and I threw the card in a pile. I now look back on that and realize that even when I was acting that wayand my faith was minimal..... God never felt the same way about mehis faith in me never wavered; and when I was ready to come back; God took me back and forgave me for my selfishness.

In our family's 23 years all three of my children came through the doors of St John's; two were confirmed, one was married here (so far), and our granddaughter will be baptized here. I have seen children from wee acolytes and Christmas Pageants go on to serve in South America with the Peace Corps, to acting and singing in New York, to serving our country in Iraq and Afghanistan and on and on overall to grow into wonderful, compassionate adult human beings of whom we all can be proud. All of us at St John's had a hand in what those children have become.

I have watched the loss of loved ones create an immediate huge gathering of support and fellowship within these walls of our St Johns. I have watched a wonderful preschool ministry grow literally from a spot that had grass and rock to what you see now. I have seen an old broken down concrete basketball court grow to a beautiful, contemplative, spiritual place of peace and rest for the entire community our Columbarium.

Most of what you have just read was due to the parishioners and I would agree. You can have all the financial resources in the world but without people giving of their time and talent it simply does not work. The other side of that coin is that in the real world you must have the money to support the ministries and the people as well. Look at your own lives: mortgage, unforeseen repairs, education, food, warmth, light bill, your payroll, and benefits, telephone, internet, lawn care, pest control, groceries, etc, etc.... St John's has all of those things just as you do. We need your commitment to build a realistic budget--just as you have a budget in your home.

I hope the things I mention above motivate you to pledge your financial support to St John's and inevitably to the work our Lord in 2010.

We call our yearly Stewardship Campaign an "Every Member Canvass" with the optimum words being "Every Member." Your entire Vestry and I have committed to turn our pledge cards in by December 6, 2009; we humbly ask that you do the same. The pledge card will offer you multiple options to select from and we need 100% return of the cards as we also try to update the St Johns register.

Either way I look forward to seeing you all and wish you a peaceful, prosperous 2010.

Sincerely,
Tom Baker
Senior Warden

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