

What you really need to know about Stewardship

When the word “stewardship” is used in a Christian community, it is usually code for a conversation about the financial support of the church. At St. James’, we believe that Stewardship means a great deal more. Understanding Stewardship as a discipline in our life as Christians clarifies our priorities...and may even change them—for the better!

Stewards manage someone else’s belongings.

Today, “steward” is not a term much used outside the Church, but it used to be—often for those who managed livestock or property. If we are stewards, whose belongings are we managing? The Church believes we are stewards of gifts that God has given to us—everything from the gift of time on this earth, the gift of relationships, and the gift of skills and talents we possess, to the gift of money—that is, the currency by which we transact in our world, pursue opportunities, and secure our material well-being (among other things).

Stewardship is a response.

If we consider that everything we have comes to us as a gift from a generous and gracious God, our decisions about how we use those gifts will increasingly reflect God’s generosity and trust in us. *How* we make those decisions may shift; past priorities may fall by the wayside and others may become more central.

Stewardship is personal, but not individual.

Each of us has to decide how to use the gifts God has entrusted to us. Those are personal decisions. But every decision we make has an effect on someone else. As Christians, we know that we are created for relationship with God and with one another. So when it comes to making decisions about the use of our time, skills, and financial resources, we are asked to think about how these decisions will help fulfill our commitments to all those whom God made and loves.

Good stewardship requires some homework.

Pull up your calendar for the last three months and the three months ahead, gather up your credit card and checking statements. If someone didn’t know you, could they tell what matters most to you from what they see in these records? Are you spending yourself in ways that you think would please God and that make you glad? (You are, after all, one of the precious gifts God has given the rest of us.) If not, what can you change right away and what will need some planning and incremental steps?

Don’t give until it hurts; give until it feels good.

In the Hebrew Scriptures, a tithe (10%) was the standard for giving to God: The first ten percent of the crop and the first (and best) of the newborn livestock were given in worship. In the New Testament, Jesus tells a rich young man who wants to follow God what he must give: Everything. Tithing can help you shape your life so that all of it (everything) reflects your commitment to God.

At St. James', we ask that members pray, work, and give for the kingdom of God that Jesus' proclaimed. Those are the essential marks of discipleship. What would it mean to give 10% of your income for the work of God's kingdom (through giving to St. James' and to other organizations that proclaim the Gospel), to devote 10% of your time and talent to the building up of God's kingdom (whether through ministries at St. James' or through other organizations), and to commit yourself to daily prayer and weekly worship in the community? It would likely disrupt your calendar and your finances! Which is precisely why tithing can help shape the "everything" that Jesus wants from us. For if we make those commitments, there are others which we will have to let go. If we make those commitments, we will discover new opportunities and grace we hadn't thought possible. If we make those commitments, we will discover how freeing it is to be a steward.

You don't need to wait!

As a part of your life at St. James' you will receive a financial commitment card. If you have never tithed, it will give you some ways to think about getting started. But you don't need to wait. You can start reordering your life now. You can recognize your capacity as one of God's stewards now. And if you want to talk about anything here, please call and speak to one of the clergy. We'd love to discuss this (and whatever else on your heart).

We're so glad you are here.

Covenant of Membership

To join St. James' Church is to become a member of a parish in the City of New York where parishioners actively share the love of Jesus Christ with each other, our city, and the world. For Christians, the most important "membership" we have is our membership in the Body of Christ. All are eligible for this membership, there are no dues, and it never expires. The first step toward parish membership is baptism. Once you have been baptized, we welcome you to formally commit to serve God at St. James'. To be a member of St. James' is to take up the responsibilities of Baptism through the worship, mission, and ministries of this church. We are committed to pray, work, and give for the spread of the Kingdom of God.

Pray Worship is at the heart of who we are. Make prayer with the gathered community a part of your personal spiritual practice by participating in Sunday and weekday worship whenever you are able. The clergy are available to help you in developing a life of personal prayer.

Work Look for ways, either in the world or through the ministries at St. James', to offer your talents in God's service as we seek to share the love of Jesus Christ with each other, our city, and the world.

Give Prayerfully commit a portion of your personal or household budget to our common life and ministries by making an annual financial commitment. The key to giving is to be prayerful and generous. The Biblical standard is to give ten percent of your annual income.

I have read and understand the expectations of my membership at St. James'.

Printed (First, Middle, Last) _____

Signed _____

Date _____

Worship

Sundays

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Chapel)
9:10 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Church)
11:15 a.m. Choral Eucharist (Church)
6:00 p.m. Candlelight Communion

Weekdays

Mon., Tue., Thu., Fri. 8:00 a.m. Morning Prayer
Wednesdays 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
 12:00 p.m. Centering Prayer
Mondays 6:00 p.m. Evening Prayer
 6:30 p.m. Centering Prayer
Fridays 12:00 p.m. Centering Prayer

Open for prayer and meditation

Sundays 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Mon. - Fri. 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Information Form

about you

GENDER: Male Female

MARITAL STATUS: Married Single Divorced Widowed

TITLE: Mr. Mrs. Ms. Dr. Other _____

FIRST: _____ MIDDLE: _____

LAST: _____

NICKNAME: _____ MAIDEN NAME: _____

DATE OF BIRTH (MONTH/DAY/YEAR): _____

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY (MONTH/DAY/YEAR): _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ ZIP: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ CELL: _____

WORK PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

EMPLOYER: _____ POSITION: _____

BAPTISM DATE (APPROX.): _____

DENOMINATION: _____

CONFIRMED OR RECEIVED (APPROX.): _____

DENOMINATION: _____

NAME, CITY & STATE OF PREVIOUS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY):

about your spouse

GENDER: Male Female

MARITAL STATUS: Married Single Divorced Widowed

TITLE: Mr. Mrs. Ms. Dr. Other _____

FIRST: _____ MIDDLE: _____

LAST: _____

NICKNAME: _____ MAIDEN NAME: _____

DATE OF BIRTH (MONTH/DAY/YEAR): _____

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY (MONTH/DAY/YEAR): _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ ZIP: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ CELL: _____

WORK PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

EMPLOYER: _____ POSITION: _____

BAPTISM DATE (APPROX.): _____

DENOMINATION: _____

CONFIRMED OR RECEIVED (APPROX.): _____

DENOMINATION: _____

NAME, CITY & STATE OF PREVIOUS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY):

about your children

GENDER: Male Female

FIRST: _____ MIDDLE: _____

LAST: _____ NICKNAME: _____

GRADE: _____ SCHOOL: _____

DATE OF BIRTH (MONTH/DAY/YEAR): _____

BAPTISM DATE: _____ DENOMINATION: _____

GENDER: Male Female

FIRST: _____ MIDDLE: _____

LAST: _____ NICKNAME: _____

GRADE: _____ SCHOOL: _____

DATE OF BIRTH (MONTH/DAY/YEAR): _____

BAPTISM DATE: _____ DENOMINATION: _____

GENDER: Male Female

FIRST: _____ MIDDLE: _____

LAST: _____ NICKNAME: _____

GRADE: _____ SCHOOL: _____

DATE OF BIRTH (MONTH/DAY/YEAR): _____

BAPTISM DATE: _____ DENOMINATION: _____

GENDER: Male Female

FIRST: _____ MIDDLE: _____

LAST: _____ NICKNAME: _____

GRADE: _____ SCHOOL: _____

DATE OF BIRTH (MONTH/DAY/YEAR): _____

BAPTISM DATE: _____ DENOMINATION: _____

Membership at St. James' Church

There are 3 ways to join st. James' (we will take care of transferring all documents and files):

- Transfer from another Episcopal Church
- Received as a baptized member from another Christian denomination
- Baptism (if you have not been baptized, we will help you prepare for baptism)

NAME: _____

I would like to:

- Transfer from another Episcopal Church
- Be received from another Christian Denomination
- Be baptized (a member of the clergy will reach out to discuss the process and answer any questions)

NAME: _____

I would like to:

- Transfer from another Episcopal Church
- Be received from another Christian Denomination
- Be baptized (a member of the clergy will reach out to discuss the process and answer any questions)