

A THRIVING MESSIAH

2021 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

The Episcopal Church of the Messiah

All members of Messiah's community are asked to contribute financially, as best they are able, to do the work of the parish. Below are some frequently asked questions about pledging.

What is a pledge?

As a form of Christian stewardship, a pledge is an undertaking to contribute a specific amount to the support of Messiah and its ministries for the coming year. Your pledge can be fulfilled in weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annual payments. Pledges can be paid by check, paypal or credit card and can be mailed to the church office, placed in the collection plate on Sundays (once we begin gathering again in worship) or done electronically. All contributions to Messiah are welcome, in any form and at any time; making a pledge implies a commitment to the ongoing life of the parish.

How much should I pledge?

That is a matter between you and God. Theologically, we believe that everything we have is a gift from God, and that our task as baptized people is to "keep the gift moving" – to share what we have so that more can be given. "All things come of thee, O Lord, and of thine own have we given thee."

How can I pay my pledge?

Your pledge can be paid in numerous ways. Pledges can be paid by check, paypal or credit card and can be mailed to the church office, placed in the collection plate on Sundays (once we begin gathering again in worship) or done electronically. For electronic pledges, please go to the home page of our site (rhinebeck-episcopal.org) and click on the DONATE box at the bottom of the page on the left side. You'll be given the choice of paying by credit card or paypal. Or feel free to call the church office (845 876 3533) for one-on-one help with this. Regardless of how you decide to pay your pledge, please return your completed form to the church office.

What is proportional giving?

Rather than choose a fixed sum to pledge every year, you may want to prayerfully and realistically determine what proportion of your income you want to set aside for ministry, and pledge accordingly. The proportion will vary from person to person, and over time. Some may start at 1%, others at 3% or 4%; others may seek over several years to approach the Biblical standard of 10%. We give back to God a fair proportion of the gifts we have been given.

If you are unsure of what percentage to offer as a pledge, we suggest beginning at the national average of 3% and building from there.

Do I have to pledge to be a member of Messiah?

No. Anyone who walks through our doors and worships with us regularly is considered a member. We hope all who consider themselves members will make a pledge.

Who knows how much I pledge? Does the Rector know?

At Messiah your pledge is confidential. Only the Parish Administrator and the Treasurer know the amount of an individual pledge, and that is only so a record of your pledge history can be sent to you quarterly for tax purposes. The Rector does not know what you pledge. The confidentiality of our pledges is crucial to our life together.

Do the Vestry and Rector pledge?

Yes, the Vestry and Fr. Richard pledge just like everyone else.

Why doesn't the Diocese of New York contribute to our parish budget?

In the Episcopal Church all independent parishes must be self-supporting. Actually, each year, churches are asked to contribute money (proportionate to their operating revenues) to the diocese in part to support the work of parishes that are not self-supporting. From those who have been given much, much is demanded. This mutual interdependence and accountability under the leadership of the Bishop is a hallmark of our Episcopal heritage.

Does Messiah have an endowment? Are our pledges necessary?

While Messiah has had an endowment in the past, the Vestry made the unavoidable decision to use it to finish the restoration of the church building. So, unlike in years past, when we used a small portion of the income from the endowment to supplement operating expenses, we no longer have that luxury and pledges are more important than ever.

What happens if I have pledged and my circumstances change in the upcoming year?

Your pledge is always dependent on your real income and can be adjusted if need be.

Is my financial pledge the only commitment that matters to Messiah?

No, we believe and affirm the three part stewardship commitment of time, talent and treasure in your annual pledge of our parish. In this mailing you have the necessary forms to address your financial commitment as well as your commitment of time and talent in 2021. All three parts of your pledge are vitally important to the health and well-being of Messiah.

Can I pay my pledge via automatic deductions from my bank account?

Paying automatically from your bank account is easy. Please call the church office to get started.

Can I use a credit card to pay my pledge?

Yes. Go to the home page of our site (rhinebeck-episcopal.org) and click on the DONATE box at the bottom of the page on the left side. You'll be given the choice of paying by credit card or paypal. There is a fee of approximately 3% of the amount charged and if you add this to your offering it will mean that Messiah does not incur any fee for your payment. Or feel free to call the church office for one-on-one help with this.

Why is it important to fill in a pledge card?

While we are grateful for any and all contributions, we cannot commit to staff and programming unless we can count on the financial support of our parishioners. Just keeping the lights on and the buildings heated and cooled is a significant cost. But our largest expense is our staff, without whom we wouldn't have clergy-led worship, music, education and community outreach. Simply put, we can't keep people on staff if we're not certain we can continue to pay them.

Please understand that submitting offering envelopes throughout the year without making a pledge in advance is very much appreciated but does not allow us to forecast our income for the year and make these crucial financial commitments.