



Frequently Asked Questions

Why do we have an Annual Giving Campaign? St. Paul's is a pledging community, which means that the funds we need to operate come primarily by the generosity of financial commitments from our members. Some follow the biblical principle of tithing, giving ten percent of their income to the church, while others commit a lesser amount. Some give weekly or monthly while others make a one-time annual gift. Everyone is asked to give as they are able. Each financial pledge is a blessing and whatever you pledge is much appreciated!

Who Should Pledge? Everyone! If you enjoy our services, online or in-person, if you participate in a ministry, attend a class, sing in the choir, and/or consider yourself a member of St. Paul's, we ask you to please pledge to support the important work we do. It's our church. With the support of people in the past, the mission and ministry of St. Paul's Ventura has continued for over 134 years. With our help, it can continue long into the future.

Why should I pledge instead of just giving? Making a commitment in advance enables us to come up with a budget and plan for the coming year. We are grateful for every gift. In order to do responsible fiscal planning, we need to have an idea of how much will be donated in the coming year so we can prepare and make commitments regarding staff, facilities and programs.

How will my pledge be used? Pledges fund our operating expenses. Your pledge makes it possible for us to pay salaries, maintain our facilities, run our office, print our bulletins, present our programs, and serve this community and the world through various kinds of outreach. For a detailed look at how the money will be spent, we are happy to provide you with a copy of this year's operating budget.

Do pledges alone bring in enough funds to meet our operating expenses? No. We also depend on funds brought in by leasing of portions of our property. We currently have four educational tenants (La Famiglia Preschool, VSAGE Charter School, Kindermusik, and Pulse Drumming). We also have two rental houses, one on San Pablo Street, the other on Dunning (the Gooden Center). Not only do these help to bring in a steady income for the church, they help to meet important needs in the community. The Gooden Center is licensed to a Women's Center which offers support for those who have recently committed to sobriety.

For the past few years, St. Paul's has been running a deficit budget and using savings to make up the shortfall. The main reasons for this have been lack of lease income and the effect of the pandemic. Because of the Gooden Center rental, we are now in a much better position financially. Though we will likely still have some deficit next year, we look forward to operating on a balanced budget as soon as possible. We appreciate your help!

How are Legacy Gifts used? On occasion, we are blessed to receive gifts from parishioners who have remembered St. Paul's in their estate planning or by families and friends who want to give a memorial gift in honor of a loved one. These gifts are often used for special purposes and help us accomplish things that are only possible because of their generosity. In the past year, generous gifts were made in honor of Adele Bowker, Carol Wright, Lucille Paine, Dorothy Rankin, and others. The family of Lillian Alfriend continues to donate to the Alfriend Memorial Fund to support Christian Education. During the pandemic, the bequest left by Judy MacGregor funded the purchase of cameras and production equipment making it possible for us to livestream services, and funds left by Katie and Rod Weldon made the renovation of the Gooden Center possible. If you would like assistance in arranging to bless St. Paul's with a legacy gift, we would be most grateful.

How much should I pledge? This is a personal decision and one that is between you, your family and God. We invite you to pray about it. If you are not sure where to start in considering your pledge commitment, you may want to compare your other financial commitments to what you pledge to your faith community. For instance, consider what you might spend on fast food, coffee drinks, or other optional expenses for a year, versus your gift to the church. The biblical standard for giving is to tithe a portion of your income, traditionally 10%. The church suggests working toward the tithe if you can. Whatever you do, know that God's blessing will be upon your prayerful decision.

Should I consider increasing my pledge this year? We give to God because we are grateful for all our blessings. God loves us where we are, but also calls us to grow from there. At this challenging time, the church needs your pledge more than ever! We are grateful for pledges of any amount. If you are already giving all you can, we thank you. If you might be able to do more, we would be so grateful!

How do I make a pledge? Please think and pray about this important decision, and then let us know by completing a pledge card or simply communicate the amount of you'd like to pledge in any way that is convenient for you – mail, call, email, etc.

What if my financial situation changes? Can I change my pledge? If it becomes necessary to change your pledge during the year, simply contact the church office. Your pledge can always be changed.

If you have other questions...

Additional resources have been posted to our website and will appear in the Weekly Enews. If you would like to see a proportional giving chart, get information on how to make your pledge by automatic payment, or take a look at our current budget, click on "Getting Involved" and choose, "Give/Donate" at www.saintpaulsventura.org

Thank you for your generous support of St. Paul's, Ventura. You are a great blessing!