



All Saints Parish

FAQ FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PLEDGING TO ALL SAINTS

Q: What is a pledge?

A: A pledge is a sign of your commitment to God and to the church to share your financial resources for God's work. Everyone who finds spiritual sustenance at All Saints is asked to make a specific financial commitment in proportion to your income and ability.

Q: I put something in the plate every time I'm here so why should I make a pledge?

A: Making a pledge is something like a sacrament—"an outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual grace." It is a sign of your intention to make generosity a priority in your life, not something that is left to the whim of the moment. Pledging is also a great help to the people who manage our financial affairs so they know what income to expect and how we should budget for our expenses.

Q: Is there a standard for giving in the Episcopal Church?

A: The Episcopal Church recommends a biblical tithe—10 percent of what you make—net or gross is up to you. At All Saints we encourage you to "give as generously as you are able," and you are the only one who knows what is generous for you.

Q: Does everyone here pledge?

A: No, but everyone is encouraged to. In 2022, 106 households pledged, and in 2023, 109 households did. That is wonderful, but we have approximately 190 households on our mailing list, and we need everyone to make our goal of 100% participation.

Q: What is an average pledge at All Saints?

A: Last year the average pledge was \$4,274 per year. The median pledge was \$2,670 (which means that half of our pledgers gave more than that and half gave less). Pledges usually range from less than \$100 to over \$30,000 per year.

Q: How much does it cost per pledging household to pay all of All Saints' expenses each year?

A: If you divide our annual operating expenses by the number of pledges we had last year, the answer is \$6,755. There is a big gap between that number and our actual average pledge of \$4,274. If every household pledged, an average pledge of around \$3,800 would cover expenses, but the greater your generosity to this shared work, the more we can accomplish together.

Q: Does our operating budget rely entirely on pledges?

A: No, but pledges are what make up about 70 percent of our total budget each year.

Q: Where does the rest come from?

A: We have a conservatively managed endowment from which we draw a portion (about 17 percent last year) of our operating budget. Donations for facility use by community groups contributes 13–15 percent; we also receive some miscellaneous gifts and grants.

Q: Where does the money go?

A: A church runs on people, so more than 72% of our budget goes to supporting our outstanding staff and the programs run by them and parishioners. Around 16% goes to maintaining our beautiful buildings and grounds. The rest goes to administration and diocesan support.

Q: How should I determine what to give?

A: Start with your income. Look at last year's income tax return, find your total income line (or adjusted gross income—or your taxable income, if you like), then divide it by ten. How does that feel for your commitment to God and to God's work? If that's a shock to your system, then think about all of your commitments (your mortgage or rent, car expense, vacations, etc.) and consider your priorities. Is God's work in the world in the right place in your priority list? How could you make your commitment to God and to the church a higher priority? Could you work toward a 10 percent pledge? If 10 percent doesn't sound like so much, consider aiming for something more—sharing your good fortune with others.

Q: What do I do next?

A: Pray—giving thanks for what you have been given. Then pray for All Saints and think about what it means to you. Ask God to guide you in the commitment you make for the coming year. Allow yourself to be led by the Spirit. Talk with your spouse, partner, or a trusted friend. We're all in this together, and we all care about our parish. You will arrive at the right number to put on your pledge card. Discernment is important, but don't wait too long. Let's make it easy for the volunteers who have to follow up and try to get all those pledges in and the folks who have to plan our budget for 2024. Pledging early is a sign of your care for those who care for this parish.

Q: How do I make a pledge?

A: It's easy. There are many ways to make a pledge:

- Online: www.allsaintsbrookline.org/pledge
- By email: pledge@allsaintsbrookline.org
- By mail: fill out a pledge card and mail to the church
- In church: fill out a pledge card and drop it in the offering plate

Q: What's the connection between pledging and All Saint's Day?

A: On All Saints Sunday (the first Sunday in November) everyone is invited to place pledged gifts on the altar during the service. Blank pledge cards and "I pledged" cards are available. We hope that you will join this ritual of commitment.

Q: I've pledged, now what?

A: Remember to fulfill your pledge, paying weekly, monthly, or all at once, online, by check, or even through a funds transfer from your bank or a stock donation. You'll receive a thank you note from the Stewardship Committee, and at tax time the treasurer will provide you with a statement for tax purposes indicating your donations for the year. You could also think about including All Saints in your estate plans; our planned giving coordinator would be glad to talk to you about that.

Q: What if something happens and I cannot fulfill my pledge?

A: Your pledge is a sign of your intentions not a legally binding agreement. It is always possible to modify your pledge (by reducing or increasing it) at any time during the year; just let the treasurer know.