



October 18, 2017

"I WANT WHAT MOVED YOU"

There is a story of a monk who lived so generously that, once, when he had found a precious gem, he gave it to a stranger on the street. The stranger was overjoyed to receive such a valuable gift. But, later on he came back to the monk and said, "I want you to give me something even more valuable than this gem."

"I have nothing more to offer," the monk replied.

"Oh yes you do. I want whatever it is that moved you to give this away."

The stranger was able to see that the person who is generous is deeply blessed by a life of gratitude. This is a life that is grounded in the abundant gifts of God.

I knew a father who told his recently married daughter and son-in-law that they must not wait to have children until the day when everything was perfectly ready, because that day would never come. If they waited until all their student loans were paid off, and all the home projects were done, and they had a fund set aside to cover the cost of their child's first bike, then they would always find one more reason to wait just a bit longer. The same is true of giving money to the church. There can always be one more reason to put it off.

This Sunday, October 22, we will celebrate the offering of pledged gifts for the church's ministry in 2018. I invite you to join me and Betsy as we offer our pledges in worship. If you pledged last year, I invite you to increase the amount. One helpful benchmark is to raise your pledge by 1% of your annual income.

Some people ask why a pledge matters—Can't we just give on Sundays?

Of course you can, but these pledges, no matter the amount, help the church to plan for our ministry in the year ahead, and the sharing of our intentions is a valuable practice.

What if I'm unable to meet my annual pledge?

A pledge is an intention to give, not a contract. If circumstances change, we will understand.

Our pledges help the church to plan for ministry for the year ahead. For us, pledging deepens our spirit of gratitude and generosity, and opens us to gifts more valuable than those that can be bought.

I'll see you in church.

Peace,

Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster
Senior Minister