OUR CHURCH'S WIDER MISSION IN SOUTHEAST PENNSYLVANIA WWW.PSEC.ORG

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Communitas

PENNSYLVANIA SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE

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Has Your Church Held a Planned Giving Campaign?

God's abundance is poured on all of us each day. We are stewards of all we are and have, including our accumulated assets. We need to become aware of all of our abundance, to now from whom it comes, and thereby to be overwhelmed with a sense of deep gratitude.

We need to understand, we are God's caretakers or managers, to do as God would have us do with our abundance, including our assets. We need to understand that we are made in the image of God, who is the Great Giver. Therefore, to become all we are meant to be, we must increasingly develop a giving spirit, a giving attitude in all dimensions of life.

As God's children, we have a "need to give" to become fully human. Moreover, when we develop that giving spirit and learn to give generously we will experience two of God's wondrous surprises. We are filled with an inexplicable joy and we discover that the more we give, the more that keeps coming back to us! We cannot out-give God!

One way to give to the church is thru **Planned Giving**. **Planned giving** is the process of donating **planned** gifts. A **planned gift** is a contribution that is arranged in the present and allocated at a future date. Commonly donated through a will or trust, **planned** gifts are most often granted once the donor has passed away.

Has your church held a Planned Giving Campaign? Are you aware that the United Church of Christ has a resource for you to utilize….a ***Local Church Planned Giving Manual***. This resource guide can be found at: http://www.ucc.org/giving_local-church-planned-giving .

"You Don't Have What it Takes"

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you." **- Acts 1: 8**

It's graduation season. Caps and gowns, pomp and circumstance. Smiles and degrees. A huge sense of expectation held at bay with alcohol.

And the speeches. The commencement speakers tell the young, "You're amazing. You're awesome. You've got what it takes. You're the best and the brightest, the leaders for a new generation." Which would drive any sane person to drink.

I wonder how graduation might go if the speaker said, "Listen, not gonna lie to you, you actually don't have what it takes. Neither do I. Nor do all the professors here arrayed before you. If you're feeling a little anxious today, good. You should be. But listen, you and I aren't left to your own resources alone. There's an amazing holy power at work in the world. A power that God pours out on those who ask, those who trust. No, despite what the college says, you ain't all that, but God is."

Ascension Day, is another sort of "graduation." Only it's Jesus who is flying up. In the forty days since the resurrection he has been teaching and preparing the apostles. Now, he's leaving and entrusting the new chapter to them.

He doesn't say, "You've got what it takes." Sort of the opposite. He says, you haven't got what it takes . . . you need to wait, to wait for the Holy Spirit to come upon you.

There are many times, and big moments, in our lives, when we wonder if we are up to the challenge, up to what lies ahead. Do we have what it takes to do the things the world needs doing? The tendency is to suck it up and tell ourselves, or for others to tell us, "Don't worry, you've got what it takes."

It would be truer and wiser counsel to say, "Don't be ridiculous -- you actually don't have what it takes and neither do I. But God does. God has the power you will need and she will not refuse to lend. Ask for the power you need, and wait for its coming. It will come, I promise."

- Tony Robinson, a United Church of Christ minister, is a speaker, teacher, and writer. His newest book is Called to Lead: Paul's Letters to Timothy for a New Day