



May 27, 2018

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 .

'What sacrifice of mine will make this world just a little bit better?'

Most of us know that Memorial Day began as Decoration Day, when people of the South and North looked for some way to make sense of, and live with, the carnage of the Civil War. After Americans lost more soldiers in more wars, Memorial Day became a nationwide observance on the last Monday in May.

Memorial Day is now part of a three-day weekend, making it more a mini-vacation than a dedicated holy day of remembrance. But the joy of summer's unofficial beginning still has in its shadow the grief for those loved and lost in service to the nation.

Veterans (and their families) are particularly attuned to this grief and the unfulfilled wish that their war would be the last war; that the sacrifice of their friends would not only contribute to a valiant and historic victory but that it would end all future suffering. Still, the fighting goes on.

It is right and good to remember that although we work and pray for peace, sometimes peace is broken. Evil is real and while war is always the failure of humans to find creative ways to solve their differences, there are times when the alternative is worse. Let us pray without ceasing that our leaders always know the difference. Acting otherwise cheapens the ultimate gift that so many gave to change the world.

Our ancestors marched into battle bravely, sometimes reluctantly but always with the hope that if they fought gallantly not only would they be remembered, the world would be better because of their sacrifice. Those of us who are their descendants and benefactors cannot do any less. I encourage you to spend some time this weekend asking, 'What sacrifice of mine will make this world just a little bit better?' I implore you to spend the rest of your life living into the answer.

- Rev. William P. Worley, PSEC Conference Minister