



The Rev. Dr. Sarah Gaede, Interim Rector  
The Rev. Dr. Billy Walton, Deacon

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*The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of a fine pearl;  
on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.*

In my 60-plus years of church-going—Presbyterian, evangelical, Baptist, Pentecostal, ELCA, Roman Catholic, and Episcopal—I have experienced the equivalent of plastic pop beads, cultured pearls, and the genuine item. All Saints'/Christ the King is the most genuine pearl of a parish I have ever been blessed to be a part of.

Few of us will ever possess a string of real pearls, either because we aren't into jewelry, or because we don't have the income to cover such luxuries. And in the end, pearls are purely ornamental. They don't add value to our lives. But all of us can make an investment in our church, the place where we, as members of the body of Christ, have found a home. Our parish is as important to us as our mortgage, the electric bill, cable, and all the other monthly obligations we are obliged to pay. It is impossible to put a value on this place, where, to paraphrase the Servant Song:

We will weep when you are weeping,  
When you laugh, we'll laugh with you,  
We will share your joy and sorrow  
'Til we've seen this journey through.

We spend our money on many things—necessities and luxuries that give us pleasure. But in my opinion—not professional, but from a life spent in Christian community, both plastic and authentic—there is no greater return on my investment than the faithful support of my parish church.

The God of the Hebrew scriptures encouraged the people of God to give their first fruits, not what was left over when all the bills were paid. Jesus advised his hearers: “Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and God will give you everything you need.” I can witness to the truth of this statement—when I put God, and the needs of God's kingdom, including my parish home, first, all my needs will be met, beyond my wildest expectations.

Pledging, especially tithing, helps us to step out in faith, and trust that God will supply our needs as God has promised. It allows us to open our hands and hearts, to let go of the fear that we won't have enough, and to see what God can do. As one of my favorite hymns puts it: “God never yet forsook in need the soul that trusted him indeed.” I believe this. I know it is true from experience. God wants to bless our offerings of time, talent, and treasure, more richly than we can dream of.

All Saints' and Christ the King are at a momentous turning point. You'll welcome a new rector, you'll have the entire Diocese as your guests at February's Annual Council, and you'll do all of this as you begin your 150th year. This requires your commitment, not next year, but right now.

Posted to our web site is [important information](#) about what is needed now to prepare for 2020, together with a [commitment form](#) that asks for your response. I encourage you to pray about this, and seriously consider what God is calling you to give, in every area of your life, to further the kingdom of God here in this place.

-The Rev. Dr. Sarah Gaede+