

Extravagant GENEROSITY

COMMITMENT SUNDAY IS COMING!

By Pastor Taylor Fuerst

On October 30, in the 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. worship services, we will offer our commitments to grow in generosity and support of First United Methodist Church through our gifts to the Ministry Plan in 2017. This will be the culmination of Extravagant Generosity, this season in which we have focused on the elements that make up a generous life.

Commitment Sunday has both spiritual and practical components. Some say that how we handle our finances is evidence of our faith in God. Perhaps there is some truth to that—perhaps our finances follow our faith—but experience has often shown me that my faith grows when I take a step to risk trusting God and giving more of myself away. Through that practice of stretching through giving, I learn to trust God with what I have, and as a result of my giving, I reshape my lifestyle to align more closely with what I believe.



Perhaps over these last weeks, you have sensed God nudging, calling you to take a step in faith through your giving. For you, that may mean pledging for the first time. It may mean making a shift from putting something in the plate “every so often” to intentionally setting up a regular gift online or through your bank. Maybe you hear God calling you to move, step by step, toward tithing 10% of your income. Wherever you are on this journey, Commitment Sunday is the day to say, “I’ve heard you, God, and I’m ready to respond. I’m ready to take another step.” On this day, we will consecrate our commitments—we will make a “holy promise” to give financially as a practice of faith.

More practically, your commitment to support the mission and ministry of First Church enables our leaders to be good financial stewards and to accurately plan a budget for the year. Commitments to give help us to know how to handle the church’s financial resources. If you indicate your desire to grow your giving and grow the ministry of the church, your commitment enables us to make those changes to our budget with confidence in your support.

Hopefully, you have received your Commitment Card in the mail and you have already begun praying about your commitment, asking how God wants to use your gifts to change the lives of others in ministry. I encourage you to come prepared to mark this important day of Commitment on October 30.

Following worship, I hope you will attend the Church-wide Celebration Picnic on the Capitol lawn. Sign up today at www.fumcaustin.org/picnic.



All are invited to celebrate our commitment and growth in generosity at our church-wide picnic on the Capitol lawn after the 11:00 service.

Bring a picnic blanket and come prepared to purchase lunch from Austin food vendors. Have a favorite outdoor game to share with others? Feel free to bring games—washers, kickball, or even a soccer ball— as we gather together for fellowship and fun!

To help us estimate a head count for the food vendors, please register TODAY at www.fumcaustin.org/picnic.

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PEOPLE WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE IN MY SPIRITUAL LIFE

CHILDREN

Olivia

Kathryn because she and I talk about God together and we support each other.

YOUTH

Devon

Debbie Shaw because she helped to make the bible more inviting and exciting!

ADULTS

Anonymous

My husband challenges me and encourages me to think deeper about things.

Anonymous

The entire Eklektikos Sunday School Class and teachers. They are always there to prop me up for the coming week when I have problems. Their love and support has saved me on many occasions.

Courtney

I'm new to FUMC and wanted to join the choir. Scott Davis welcomed me with open arms. He was the catalyst for me to join FUMC as a member. His joy of the music for Christ is contagious.

Christal

Cathy Stone who helped my son on his spiritual journey.

Christie

Robbie Ausley for her courage, conviction, and unwavering commitment to her beliefs and the vision that the world can be better and that we must be part of that transformation.

Davis and Trevor

Brandon and Kaycee Crisp. We were invited to the Modern Families Sunday School class by this wonderful family and it has change our lives. The family, the fellowship, and the love shared by these wonderful people has shaped our relationship with God and each other.

Jane

The children and their amazing and surprising insights.

Judy

Jim Bowen for enlightening the Eklektikos Sunday School Class on topics that help us to grow in our faith; Randy and Ann Teich and Scott Wilder for their tireless work with the homeless; and Terri Sohn for her dedication to the Mercy & Justice Team.

Lisa

There are so many individuals at First Church who inspire me, challenge me, and move me to grow spiritually by just observing their own spiritual walk and their willingness to stand up to injustice and speak out. Adama Brown and Cathy Stone have specifically guided and challenged me to grow spiritually by bringing more awareness and education about systemic racism and racial injustice that continues to exist in our society. Through book studies and videos and by discussing, reading, listening, and learning in more depth about racisms past, its present, and what we can do to move towards racial equality, it has required me to look very deep within myself and get very uncomfortable so that I can see where I might unintentionally/unconsciously contribute(d) to this inequality so I can then work towards being part of the solution instead of the problem.

Melanie

Pastors Henry Radde, Thomas Q. Robbins, and Raul Gutierrez were my leaders as a child and young adult. Deborah Jung showed me a creative joy in church that I later saw in Jen Stuart and Sara Hickman. Everyone in the Genesis Sunday School Class has taught me so much!

Michael

Curtis and Mary Higgs, through their participation in Stephen's Ministry, helped me get through a difficult time in my life and Scott Davis, who challenges and thrills me through his leadership in Music Ministry.

Raymond

The Downtowner's Sunday School Class has filled my life with wonderful friends. My wife Nancy and I were charter members of the class. The members of the class are all giving people, not only for our class but also for others.

Suzanne

My mammaw for her love of Jesus. She is still an example today at 93.