

Annual Giving 2018



Moving First Forward *The Future at First*

I graduated from seminary exactly forty years ago, and I've been working in churches ever since. All kinds of churches, and over the years the churches I've served have had to deal with all kinds of challenges, both large and small. As I near the end of my career, there is one very large challenge facing the church. What is it?

The world in which we're trying to "do" church these days is a very different one than it was forty years ago. There's no special place in our society reserved for the church as there was then, nor is everyone simply "expected" to belong to some faith community. Even Sunday

mornings are no longer sacrosanct in terms of community activities. Church is just one activity among many others. We're not special anymore. What does that mean for the church?

It means that the commitment of the church's members is more important than ever. We can no longer depend on anyone else for the church's support. It's up to us, and because of that, a lot of churches are going to disappear over the next generation or so. Which means that those churches that will still be here—First Church certainly among them—will be more important than ever to insuring that a strong witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ continues in our communities.

It is very important to me that I hand over the reins of this church to your new pastor next year with the church in as strong a position as possible to face this challenge. For that to happen, we have to depend less on our endowment and more on our own congregational giving for each year's operating budget. It's up to us.

Jesse Garner



The First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia

Annual Giving Q&A

1. What are our goals of the 2018 Annual Giving Campaign?

For 2018, we have set a goal of reaching \$520,000 in pledges. We believe that we can accomplish this goal if, after prayerful consideration, those who are able to do so pledge an amount 10% greater than 2017 contributions, and those who did not pledge in 2017 would do so in 2018.

2. What is our long term strategic objective related to these short-term goals?

Our strategic imperative is sustainability: being prepared for the Future at First. There are 3 components of that imperative:

i. **Prudent management of our endowment:** We have been blessed with an endowment of over \$7 million, funded by many generations of this congregation. We must move towards using less of our endowment to fund the church's operating expenses. This will preserve the endowment for long-term strategic capital expenditures for future generations.

ii. **Sustainable maintenance of our building:** In order to insure the ongoing presence of our building for our community, neighborhood, and ministry, the Capital Budget Planning Committee is developing a Facilities Assessment and Maintenance Plan (FAMP), which is critical to moving away from an "ad hoc" mindset toward our building's maintenance needs.

iii. **Support our Pastor Nominating Committee's work to insure a smooth transition:** The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) is diligently searching for our future pastor to take the reins from Jesse Garner, who will retire next summer after having led First Church well and thoughtfully through the past 16 years.

3. Why do we need to change our approach to spending our endowment?

Vanguard, the investment advisor for our endowment, recommends that we reduce the amount that we are withdrawing from our endowment for current operating expenses. Vanguard advises that our current approach is not sustainable given investment forecasts for

the next 10 years. Our goal is to reduce the "drawdown" over the next several years to a more sustainable level.

4. I hear that our building is very expensive. How are we dealing with the challenge and privilege of preserving this asset?

We have engaged the architectural firm of Atkin Olshin Schade (AOS) Architects to provide us with a Facilities Assessment and Maintenance Plan (FAMP). This project will start in mid to late October and be completed no later than March/April 2018. The Capital Budget Planning Committee (Phil McMunigal, Craig Boddorff, Cade Massey, Heather Coyne, and Jesse Garner) has been working on this project for the past nine months.

This is the initial step in not only getting a thorough understanding of the church's status as regards physical and mechanical needs, but also establishing a framework to maintain the building in a timely and responsible manner. The FAMP will provide a snapshot of the building's current condition, and more importantly, will allow us to establish strategic priorities with guidelines and protocols for projects on an ongoing and timely basis. The implementation of the FAMP will need further discussion and vetting since it will touch on budgeting and resources such as our endowment and borrowing options available to us through the Presbytery. The Congregation will be kept fully apprised of all reports, recommendations, and any implementation efforts.

5. I am interested in the external community needs that First Church supports. What community programs and agencies do we support through our congregational contributions?

We support the worldwide mission of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and its agencies such as Presbyterian

Disaster Assistance ministering to the needs of people both here and abroad.

We also support numerous community organizations in Philadelphia, among them The Arc of Philadelphia, MANNA, Reading Buddies, Urban Tree Connection (UTC), University City Hospital Coalition (UCHC), Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia, and the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia. In addition, we support international mission efforts such as Urban Mosaic (Mexico) and Stand with Iraqi Christians (Middle East).



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Annual Giving Q&A (continued)

6. Why is there a transitional expense for 2018?

The PNC is searching for our next pastor and hopes to identify a candidate by next spring. As was proposed and approved by the Session, the new pastor will serve along with Jesse for several months, so we will have 2 full-time co-pastors for a portion of 2018.

7. I see that the church carries some debt. Please explain why we are borrowing money when we have an endowment.

The church has achieved a much higher rate of return on its endowment (14%) than the rate of interest paid on the loan (3.5%) through the Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program (PILP).

8. Why does pledging matter?

Pledges help us to prudently manage the finances of the church. Otherwise, it is very difficult to budget responsibly. Last year, 66% of regular givers recorded a pledge, which accounted for 80% of annual giving income. This suggests that pledging contributes to greater reliability of income for the church.

9. How do I pledge?

Pledge cards will be mailed to your home. You can also find them in the church office, and there will be cards available in the pews on Stewardship Sunday, November 12, when we will present our pledges together as a congregation. You may also make a pledge on our website (www.fpcphila.org/moving-first-forward/).

10. What are the different ways that I can contribute to Annual Giving?

Everyone receives contribution envelopes which are set up for weekly giving. But it's not necessary to use them! There are a variety of ways to give. You can set up automatic electronic withdrawal from your bank (eft transfer) for any period—weekly, monthly, quarterly. You can pay electronically through your own online banking system when you wish, you can give online via the First Church website, and we are in the process of setting up a method for instant giving via smart phones.

11. What can I do to help my church meet our goals?

Each of us has a part to play in insuring the sustainability of First Church for future generations. We have been blessed with an endowment of over \$7 million funded by generations of past members. We must prudently manage and grow the endowment for future generations, as past generations did for us. Please pledge, and prayerfully consider an increase of 10% in your annual contribution.

Stewardship Journey

For most of my life, I was a habitual giver. From the time I was small, I received offering envelopes in Sunday School, and I knew I was expected to bring them back weekly, with a part of my allowance for the church. I learned that this is what you do when you belong to a church, but I never paid much attention to why.



Until Gwen and Will, our now-spunky toddlers, arrived eight weeks early, before either we or they were really ready. This church community fed us, literally, during that time: soups and stews and casseroles (and, on St. Patrick's Day, four days after they were born, corned beef). All of this food lasted in the refrigerator and freezer many of the seven weeks that the babies stayed in the hospital. We don't give with an expectation of this sort of experience, but this experience showed us how important the church community is in our lives, and how grateful we are to be a part of it. When I made our annual giving commitment last year, I reflected on that time, and I did again this year. Now, rather than being a habitual giver, I am a deeply grateful and joyful giver, for this place and this community.

We are all asked to think about the many aspects of "The Future of First" during this stewardship season. In our family, in doing so, we especially make a commitment to the children of the church, as the future of the church and the wider community. Our gifts help to ensure that the church will be vibrant as they grow. With that in mind, we commit to making a financial gift for 2018, joyfully and in honor of the future of First.

Rebecca Melley



pledge /plɛdʒ/

n a serious promise; *v* to make a promise

We've been told lately that *pledge* can be a scary word, and that it makes people nervous, especially young people. And if you're not familiar with pledging to a church, it can seem intimidating. But it doesn't have to be! A pledge is simply an estimate of how much you are willing and able to give to your church. Ideally, we would all reflect on the things we value at First Church--the worship, the missions, the music, the building, the fellowship--and consider what we can do to support the church, for now and for years to come. That way, our giving becomes intentional. And that is how an *estimate* becomes a *pledge*.

Moving First Forward Stewardship Sunday November 12, 2017

The Moving First Forward Pledge Card

There are several ways to pledge:

- Fill out the enclosed pledge card and bring it to church on Stewardship Sunday, November 12.
- Mail the pledge card to the church using the return envelope.
- Pledge online at www.fpcphila.org/moving-first-forward/.
- Print a copy of the pledge card from the website and submit to the church office.



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2016 Giving Profile

Annually	Number of Givers	Total
\$15001-\$100000	3	\$113,352
\$10001-\$15000	4	\$49,187
\$6001-\$10000	9	\$67,555
\$3001-\$6000	24	\$101,286
\$2001-\$3000	17	\$43,151
\$1501-\$2000	11	\$19,628
\$1001-\$1500	30	\$37,651
\$501-1000	24	\$18,761
\$301-\$500	13	\$5,341
\$0-300	25	\$3,873
Totals	160	\$459,785



First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia

Moving First Forward The Future at First

I/we want to be a part of Moving First Forward in 2018.

- \$ _____ per week
 \$ _____ per month I/we pledged online.
 \$ _____ per year

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Return during worship on Stewardship Sunday, November 12, 2017, or to the church office at your earliest convenience. You can also pledge via our website (www.fpcphila.org/moving-first-forward/).



Moving First Forward

Keep this part for your records:

I/we pledged for 2018:

- \$ _____ per week
\$ _____ per month
\$ _____ per year

This commitment may be revised at any time by calling the financial office.