

Stewardship Prayers

Gracious and Holy God,

Giver of all we have and hold as stewards,

Grant us a deep and abiding awareness that all things come from you – our lives, our health, our families, our friends, the abilities and talents that we use in our work and ministry, the income we derive from our work, and every generous impulse.

Send your holy spirit to help us as we swim against the rising tides of materialism, envy, individualism and greed in our culture.

When we are tempted to think of money as a private matter, remind us that you invite us to make generous offerings from what you have entrusted to us as a symbol of your love and thanksgiving.

And help us to help others in this Grace of Giving (thanks-giving), for you are the lover of our souls and call us to nothing less than transformation in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

**Holy One, we know that we cannot serve both you and our wealth. We will put our trust in one or the other. By serving you, we are saying that we trust you, that we love you, that we choose ... you. When you look at what we hold back, perhaps you wonder about that. Help us to give, Lord, for our own sakes, so that we can be free from the god of wealth, and so that we can find joy in our service for you. Amen
– from Responding to God: A System for Congregational Giving and Sharing**

Prayer over Pledge Cards

Gracious and loving God, giver of all that is good and true and beautiful and life-giving. These cards represent our sweat, they represent our lives, they represent our dreams. The pledges which we make on them are but tokens of the awesome gifts that have been given to us and they are pledged in thanksgiving for all we have received, for all we have been inspired to be, for all we are challenged to become, in this place. May they be the first fruits of all we have and not what we have left over, so that we may live out as closely as possible how you give to us. May we see them as our offering to you, sacred, holy, yet earthy, filled with possibilities. May we hold this image in our hearts and minds so as we watch our offerings each week come to this table, we can see our very selves being part of this offering, it is us on the table, living sacrifices to you. AMEN.

Blessing of Pledge cards

Most Loving God, we place on this altar of love these pledges of our very lives. These little pieces of yellow paper represent many things, our time, our gratefulness for this place called St. James', They represent our dreams, our hopes, our vision of the future, our life together as a people committed to following you and sharing you with others. May our lives lived outside these walls reflect that vision. May our gifts, these and others, not be viewed as leverage with you, but rather as gifts of thankfulness for all that we have been given. We pray for the continuing mission of St. James', that it may continue to be a place of comfort and guidance to all people and a place where all are welcome no matter who they are or where they are on their journey of faith. And now we ask your blessing on these cards, all they represent, and especially the pledge we have made to you through them and with our lives. Amen.

Other prayers

Our Lord and Master, we know that we cannot serve both you and our wealth. We will put our trust in one or the other. By this act we are saying that we trust you, that we love you, that we choose ... you. When you look at what we hold back, perhaps you wonder about that. Help us to give, Lord, for our own sakes, so that we can be free from the Mammon god, so that we can find joy in our service for you. Amen

– from Responding to God: A System for Congregational Giving and Sharing

Grant that this offering might be a response to your love and not a function of duty. Let it be a sign of grace and not a dictate of law, an act of freedom and not a gesture of compulsion. Create in us the joy of the generous heart and the spirit of self-giving that is in Jesus Christ.

– from The Abington Guide to Funding Ministry, volume 1

The following prayer method can be used when incorporating the offering with a children's time at the front of the church.

Tell the children you have a prayer that has a part for you and a part for them. Tell them that when you nod your head, they can say, "Thank you, God." Practice several times to make sure directions are understood. The prayer would be something like this: "The trees have green leaves in the summer." (Nod) "Thank you, God." For your prayer, use examples from the world that God made and gave us to care for.

– From STU Bear, Stewardship Materials for Young Children.