

“Go, and Do Likewise”: A Take-Home Guide

On October 30th we will come together as a congregation to offer pledges of financial support for the work of First Congregational UCC in 2017. During worship we will gather and dedicate our pledge cards. **As you prepare to fill out your card, we hope you will spend some time in individual or family discernment about the gifts you can offer in the coming year.** If you make your financial decisions independently, you may wish to spend time in prayer, journaling, or drawing. If you are a part of a family unit, you may wish to come together for discussion or family prayer. These three questions, written by the Rev. Anthony B. Robinson, a UCC pastor, may be useful during your time of discernment.

Questions for Reflection, Discussion, and Action:

1. What is your personal stewardship story? What lessons have you learned about money, about giving, about stewardship? Who have been your teachers? What's been helpful to you and what has proven unhelpful?
2. Discuss or reflect upon the connection between your money and your life as you see it and experience it.
3. What was an experience of giving and generosity in your own life that was meaningful to you and by which you were, at least in some measure, changed or transformed? This may be in or outside the church.

(Robinson, Anthony B., *Stewardship for Vital Congregations*, page 32)

Prayer

Still-speaking, Still-loving, Still-giving God, be with us now in this time of discernment about our financial gifts to First Congregational United Church of Christ. We confess that we harbor anxieties about money....and that it is often so very difficult to say no to the lies offered to us daily by our consumer-focused culture. But we also know that you, O God of Life, are making all things new. We trust in your witness, your prophetic voice, your dreams for the future....and we know that you need us to be a part of it all.

Calm our fears. Renew and equip us to better serve you and your world. Help us to reconnect with the joy in giving...for we know that a strange thing happens when we give: we are moved from a fear of scarcity to a trust in abundance. We thank you for this place, where we are blessed. Help us as we work together to be a blessing to all we encounter. In the name of Jesus, who teaches us how to give, Amen.