

## Pastor's Reflections

by Jeffrey E. Frantz

**Stewardship – 2010.** Our Stewardship Committee is promoting a new idea this year called *Shared Generosity*, where we gather together in Fellowship Hall (for the concluding part of our worship on November 8<sup>th</sup>, Stewardship Sunday) and present our pledge cards—together—as a symbol of *sharing the costs and the joys of Christian discipleship*.

This idea was very successful in the UCC church I pastored for thirteen years in San Diego County. So often, when we hear about Stewardship and the financial support of our church, we don't always have the sense that we are—each of us—sharing and *doing our part* to support our church financially.

Friends, we have a wonderful church family and we offer a range of wonderful services and opportunities to both the members and friends of our church and to the Miami Lakes community.

With all of our countless blessings, it is the decision of our Stewardship Committee, with the enthusiastic support of the Board of Trustees and our Church Council (the board of elected leaders that oversees the operation of the church between congregational meetings) that we challenge ourselves to become a *high commitment* church.

In a *high commitment* church, the goal is that every member and friend of the church make a personal, financial pledge to the church during the annual Stewardship drive.

This is an important decision for our church to follow through on as we prepare to meet the challenges of our future. Simply put, when everybody pledges, we share both the *cost and the joy of Christian discipleship*. We have the sense that we are *in this together*.

**So, what's this all about?** What it's about is our future. Here is the foundation upon which all of this rests:

1. Together—both members and friends of our church—WE are the church.
2. The Bible invites us and challenges us to each do our *fair share* in the financial support of our church.
3. If we are your church family; if we're the church where you come to meet God, to be in fellowship with other people of faith, and to live out your Christian faith commitments, then we are asking you to make a pledge.
4. If we all do our fair share in supporting our church financially, our church will flourish and it will be a blessing for us all.

Check it out, friends:

1. Everybody can give something. The important thing is to start somewhere.
2. What you give is between you and God. It is not a contract; and it can always be adjusted up or down, as circumstances dictate.
3. Pledging is important for two essential reasons:
  - It creates a discipline for the giver (recognizing that the church offers services and has expenses even when we're unable to attend).
  - And it helps the Church Council plan for the year ahead.

In conclusion, remember: whatever you give, God will bless it and it will come back to you as a blessing.

Our Stewardship Committee and our Church Council are asking us all to plan on attending our special Stewardship service, *Shared Generosity*, on **Sunday, November 8<sup>th</sup>**.

At that time, at the conclusion of the service in Fellowship Hall (the service will be shortened to accommodate this), we will all present our pledges to God—in a symbolic expression of *Shared Generosity*.

May God bless us in our shared faith commitments!