

Pledge

Please make a commitment, of whatever amount you prayerfully decide on. Make the investment in your own spiritual discipline, in the financial stability of the parish, and the provision for the neediest among us.

In gratitude for God's blessings, I/we commit to Christ and His Church the following amount:

\$ _____ each

Week
 Month
 Year

Please automate your giving through WeShare. To begin, go to www.saintephrain.com, click on the WeShare logo, and register on the site.

Name

Name of Spouse

Street Address

City / State / Zip Code

Home Phone

Mobile Phone

Email Address

Email Address of Spouse

Participation

True stewardship goes beyond financial giving and embraces the contribution you make to the church through your unique gifts of service. Let us know what other areas you are interested in serving your parish.

MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

- Bible Study
- Adult Religious Education
- Intro to Orthodoxy
- Sunday Coffee Hour
- Bookstore
- Facilities Maintenance
- Member Directory
- Website & Email
- Bulletin (print)
- Newsletter (electronic)
- Fellowship Breakfast
- Office help

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- Finance Committee
- Stewardship Committee
- Building Fund
- Other Fundraising
- Order of St Ignatius

LITURGICAL LIFE

- Sanctuary & Altar Care
- Altar server/Acolyte
- Baking Prospora
- Choir
- Greeter/Usher
- Sound System

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Events Committee
- Women's Ministry (SEWS)
- Visitation Ministry (elderly, sick and new members)
- Youth Ministry

2023 Stewardship Form



St Ephraim the Syrian Antiochian Orthodox Church

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Why Stewardship?

Stewardship, like many Orthodox Christian spiritual disciplines, has a private component and a corporate component – that is, something we do together. Prayer can be intensely private, but we also come together in the services to pray. Confession is intensely private, but not something you do alone, but rather in the presence of the priest. Fasting is often a private discipline, and nothing to boast about or make a show of, and yet we purposefully come together as a church family to share Lenten meals together. God offers all these practical blessings to us – prayer, confession, fasting, and others – not because He needs them, but because we do. They are a means of growing closer to God.

So, before you ask, “Why does the church need me to fill out a stewardship form?”, ask yourself, “How can embracing stewardship as a personal commitment draw me closer to God?”

Promise

The scriptures are full of references to money, how we handle it, how it influences us, and our right relationship to it. As Orthodox Christians, we reject any notion of a “prosperity gospel” or some idea that God promises us riches in this life. But we also recognize the promises of God recorded in scripture.

Proverbs 3:9-10, “Honor the Lord with your possessions, and with the first fruits of all your increase; So your barns will be filled with

plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine.”

Malachi 3:8, “Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this,” says the Lord of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.”

II Corinthians 9:6, “He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.”

St. John Chrysostom wrote, “Share what you have, lest you lose what you have. Spend what you possess on the needs of others in order to keep what you possess. Do not cling to what you own, lest it be taken away from you.”

Provision

Each of us, according to our means, takes great care to see about our own homes, our own clothing, our own food, and other necessities. That is reasonable and proper. Should we not take equal care to see about what is not just the house of God, but what is also our home away from home? This is the ark we take refuge in away from the deluge of the world’s cares and temptations. Shouldn’t we care for the clothing and food of others in need?

Your stewardship commitment to the church provides for not just the facilities, but also the many ministries of the parish. It is not an exaggeration to say that without your giving, someone may go hungry, someone may miss a

rent payment, someone may not be able to provide basic necessities for their family.

Please join us in the privilege of sharing in God’s provision for the neediest among us.

Prayer

How much you give is a matter to be decided between you and God. In *Mark 12:43-44*, Jesus tells his disciples that the poor widow, who gave very little in monetary terms, “has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood.” The Apostle Paul writes in *II Corinthians 9:7*, “So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.”

Privacy

“But”, you say, “I don’t want to fill out a stewardship form because my giving is private!”. You are right! We should never proclaim our giving in public. In *Matthew 6:3-4*, Christ tells us, “But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” However, in *Acts 5:1-11*, we read the story of Ananias and Sapphira, where the matter of their giving to the church was clearly to be known by the church. **Your stewardship pledge to St Ephraim is known only to you and the church secretary.** Your giving is private, but the total giving is known to the church and is crucial to the church’s ability to plan.