

Fairlawn West United Church of Christ 2011 Tithe and Offering Pledging
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"We thank God for the gift of his Son dollar by dollar, minute by minute."

(Christian stewardship is an act of love.)

Matthew 14:15-21

15 Toward evening the disciples approached him. "We're out in the country and it's getting late. Dismiss the people so they can go to the villages and get some supper."

16 But Jesus said, "There is no need to dismiss them. You give them supper."

17 "All we have are five loaves of bread and two fish," they said.

18-21 Jesus said, "Bring them here." Then he had the people sit on the grass. He took the five loaves and two fish, lifted his face to heaven in prayer, blessed, broke, and gave the bread to the disciples. The disciples then gave the food to the congregation. They all ate their fill. They gathered twelve baskets of leftovers. About five thousand were fed.

(Jesus' feeding of the five thousand is with "nothing but five loaves and two fish." Often thinking we don't have enough we fail to see and take seriously what we already have. It is from what we have, not what we don't have, that we find what we need...and then even more!)

Luke 17

5 The apostles came up and said to the Master, "Give us more faith."

6 But the Master said, "You don't need more faith. There is no 'more' or 'less' in faith. If you have a bare kernel of faith, say the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this oak tree, 'Go jump in the lake,' and it would do it.

This church does a lot with little. Our income is not huge, but our budget is. Our budget helps many people via dollars. But our whole budget is not just dollars. It is lives that are faith based, and love driven that are willing to give whatever they have to share with others as God did with us with Jesus Christ.

Our building costs alone average around \$100,000 a year. Our utilities are at least 1/3 of that. So we have sought to help leverage that by sharing the building and the costs with New Covenant Community Church. We also seek to use this bldg in ways that help people to know love through 12 Step Recovery meetings where people's lives are at the breaking point and they are enabled to trust God with their life completely. We use this bldg to host and house families who in most cases find themselves homeless for the first time. We use this bldg to house a weekly preschool to enable children to know the love of God as the core of their life.

There is more to our life than this building. It is people coming to worship and to deepen their faith in a setting where they know they are safe and will not be judged. They come expecting to grow. It is a ministry that listens to people as they seek to share their pain and find a way not just to be healed, but to grow in faith beyond the pain. It is ultimately a community where we come to be with God and worship God which we cannot do or be in any other setting on the earth. There are many settings of beauty and grandeur in the world where we can know God and see God's work, but none more real and profound than a body of people who live in Christ.

This church needs your pledge for 2011! We ask you to talk about your pledge with at least one other person. We ask you to pray with God about your pledge. We ask you to listen to God about your pledge.

Consider reflecting on your pledge offering to God as a specific percentage of your income. God asks us to be cheerful givers. God asks us to give our whole life. The more you "invest" in the ministry of this church, the more it will serve God's will.

Please return your pledge by Sunday, November 14, 2010. If we do not hear from you via the pledge form, we will call to see if you intend to pledge for 2011.

The Council (Mary Austin, Paul Richert, Alison Oswald, Dick Pasher)