



Annual Giving Information – READ THIS FIRST

The title of this year’s annual giving offering from your diocese is “All Things in Love”, which is the theme of our 236th Annual Convention in November 2020. As we move into our Annual Giving season, the letters we send to our congregations will likely have a different focus than they have had in years past. The pandemic which limited our income options did not limit our need to serve our communities. We hope that you will use this opportunity to be more transparent with your congregations about your financial situation, particularly as you move forward in mission and ministry together. We offer these suggestions as you begin to craft your “ask” letters for your coming Annual Giving campaign. It is our hope that you will look over our offerings, and see which ones will best serve your parishes and communities. These are suggestions only – and we hope they will be helpful.

- Try to keep the “ask” letter to one page.
- Include ample white space – it attracts the eye.
- Use a font size and type which will be easy to read.
- Include bullet points of the ministries that have been able to continue during the time of the pandemic (the Vestry is a good resource for this information).
- Include bullet points of where you see your ministry serving your community In Love as you move forward – **particularly if your budget increases.**

In separate writings (or in the letter if you so choose), please consider the following suggestions:

- Include graphics and numbers if these work in your parish context.
- Include photographs of the work you do, if you have them.

Read the sample letter provided and edit as is necessary for your parish. There's no need to completely reinvent the wheel. This letter is "overwritten" to give you options of what information will best serve your congregation. **In particular, the italicized areas are places where you can personalize your message.**

A possibility for keeping the Annual Giving campaign alive and attractive to your parishioners is a "Ministry Moment." Choosing a member or two (or three) from your congregation who is willing to share how ministry at your church has affected their ability to do All Things in Love, and how that ministry has affected the community around you is a powerful witness to the Love of God in Jesus Christ. These can be done in person, during your announcement time, printed in a bulletin insert, or added to your parish newsletter. If you are still worshiping remotely, these can be pre-recorded and added into the service during the announcement time.

Using the parish newsletter, or the bulletin, as a reminder of the good work your parish has done and is continuing to do is another way to keep the Annual Giving campaign in the forefront of people's minds as they prayerfully determine what they choose to give. "Impact Bullets" – short writings each week that highlight one or more of the bullet points in your initial ask letter give focus to a prayerful thinking process.

We offer: a suggested timeline – shorter than usual and ending BEFORE the election in November; a sample "ask" letter; a sample pledge card; a logo which can be used in stationery, or on postcards; suggestions for thanks; a sample thank you; and ideas for your campaign. Use any, use some, use none – the choice is yours. We hope that these offerings will be of use to you as you begin to contemplate what your 2021 lives will look like. We cannot go back to what was – we can only move forward to find opportunities to thrive as we seek to God's work – All Things In Love.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Helen K. Spence, Chair Diocesan Stewardship Resource Team

St. Thomas's Episcopal Church, Newark

The Rev. David Andrews, Rector, Saints Andrew and Matthew, Wilmington

The Rev. Jeff Ross, Rector, St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Lewes

Mr. Eric Valentine, St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church, Milton