



First United Methodist Church

201 N. Mount Street • Fairfield, Texas 75840

October 26, 2009

Dear First United Methodist Church Member,

I'm writing to each of our members this year to let you know that this Sunday, November 1, 2009, is the time when we invite every member to return their estimate of giving card for 2010. There are two reasons we ask each member to fill out and return these cards each year. First, this allows the church to accurately plan for our ministries for the coming year, developing our ministry budget based upon what our members tell us they plan to give. Second, the act of filling out a card is a way of inviting each member to prayerfully set a goal for giving for the coming year.

For me and Cynthia, this is an important decision each year, and one that we make as an expression of our faith and commitment to Christ and an investment in the work of the church. We know that our giving is a way of furthering the mission and vision of the church. By our offerings we have helped more than 100 children and over 50 teenagers to grow in their faith. Through our offerings we provided pastoral care, nursing home visits, discipleship opportunities, and other ministries in the church. And by our offerings we provided over \$40,000 to missions causes outside the walls of our church.

I am including three items in this envelope: A "Giving Guide" that can help you as you consider your commitment for 2010, an estimate of giving commitment card, and an envelope. I invite you to pray about the commitment you would make to Christ for the coming year and then bring your card with you to worship this weekend.

My hope and prayer is that your giving is a source of blessing and joy in your life.

In Christ,

Rev. T. Paul Kethley

Notes in reference to the Church Budget and Debt

The Current Church Budget for 2009

Benevolence / Apportionments	\$ 60,285	9.8%
FUMC, Fairfield's contribution to the work of the church beyond Fairfield. This is our tithe to enable the ministry of our global church.		
Education & Program	\$ 36,575	6%
Sunday School, vacation bible School, materials for children, youth and adult Bible studies, music, worship and fellowship events.		
Office Supplies & Equipment	\$ 22,700	3.7%
Paper, postage, printing, and advertising.		
Payroll Expenses	\$ 198,264	32% *
Pastor, secretary, youth director, music director, musicians and nursery staff.		
Utilities & Care of Church Property	\$ 161,000	26%
Electricity, gas, water, insurance and the maintenance of vans, church buildings, and two parsonages.		
Debt Retirement	\$ 139,589	22.5%
The total church debt is approximately \$1,033,121. For the past three years of the building campaign your "Building Pledge" paid toward the completion of the building and we borrowed the balance. The service of this debt (\$11,632 per month) has been brought into the annual budget of the church. As you make your commitment this year please remember to include this debt service in your prayerful decision.		
Total	\$ 618,264	100%

* Noah's Ark Day School

Noah's Ark is a self-supporting ministry of First United Methodist Church. Families pay monthly tuition that covers the cost of materials and payroll. FUMC supports Noah's Ark by providing facilities and the school is fully covered by our liability insurance. Many Noah's Ark families have become part of the First United Methodist Church Family because we reached out to them and their children through Noah's Ark.

FUMC Budget Process

- 1) Finance Committee sets the budget making agenda.
- 2) Staff members and their Committee Chairs are asked to submit budget request for the coming year.
- 3) After all request are in, the new budget is compiled and reviewed by the Finance Committee.
- 4) The compiled budget is presented to the church for approval at Church Council.

It is the responsibility of the Finance Committee in consultation with the Stewardship Committee to recommend both an accurate estimate of the cost of FUMC programs and operations and a realistic funding plan based on pledges from the members of the congregation.

As the Finance Committee works to finalize the 2010 Budget we are doing our best to support all the ministries of our church and to control spending where possible. A detailed, "line by line," budget for our current year is available from the church office. The 2010 budget will be made available as soon as it is completed.

Please continue to pray for the ministries of the church and for the members of the finance committee as they address these very real needs of the congregation on your behalf.

Giving Guide
Enough Stewardship Campaign
First United Methodist Church

This year we invite you to celebrate the joy of generosity as you offer your estimate of giving card for 2010. We encourage you to find greater contentment and simplicity in your lives as you put God first in your giving and living and to experience the joy that comes from knowing our gifts honor God and change lives. Our challenge as members is to find ways to grow deeper in our faith. One way to do this is to offer our financial blessings to God through our tithes and offerings. Through these gifts, we invest in God's vision and purpose and create an opportunity for God to work through us. Our gifts to God each week are an act of worship; and our offerings are vitally necessary to change lives.

Why is giving important?

The Bible has much to say about wisdom and finances, with 2,300 verses that tell us to be generous and good stewards of our resources. Jesus taught generosity and sacrifice. He demanded that his followers serve not wealth but God, and in the parable of the talents he taught that God will hold us each accountable for what we do with all our earthly possessions.

What is expected of me?

The Bible teaches us to give a tithe, or the first 10 percent of what we earn, to God and the church's work. For some, giving one tenth is a very difficult goal. For others, it is the starting point, and their giving far exceeds 10 percent. The important thing is that you start somewhere, that your giving be in proportion to your income, that your giving reflects an appropriate offering to God given your means, and that your offerings express both your desire to serve the Lord and your investment in God's work. Begin by determining what percentage of your income you are giving to God. If you are not yet tithing, consider taking a step toward tithing this year. For example, if you now give 3 percent of your income, consider increasing your gift to 4 percent, and add 1 percent each year until you reach the tithing goal. Our prayer is that everyone will grow in his or her faith through giving financially to the ministries of the church and experience the joy and blessings that come from financial generosity.

Everything we have belongs to God.

"A tithe [tenth] of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD." —Leviticus 27:30 (NIV)

Why do I need to return an estimate of giving card?

There are two reasons why it is important that every member of our church family return an estimate of giving card. First, the process of prayerfully asking God to guide your decision and then making a commitment to serve the Lord with your financial gifts is an act of worship, an expression of gratitude and praise to God. Second, on a more practical note, your commitment allows our church to budget and better plan for our ministries and mission outreach programs.

What if financial hardship prohibits me from making a commitment this year?

Don't let your inability to give at this time keep you from worship. Remember that God honors your faithfulness and that your acceptance at First United Methodist Church is not based upon your capacity to give. We ask that everyone return an estimate of giving card even if it is a limited financial commitment at this time. You can always increase or decrease your commitment if your situation changes by calling the church. Also, be sure to let our pastor know of your situation so that he can pray for and support you during any difficulty. We will also be offering classes to assist members to become better managers of all that God gives them in the Spring. Watch the newsletter and website for information.

Why do I need to turn in a new commitment card each year?

Financial situations change from year to year, and if we are growing in our faith, our annual commitment should likewise reflect that giving growth. Each year, our church budget is based upon the growing commitments of our congregation.

To whom much has been given . . .

“From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.” —Luke 12:48 (NIV)

Enough: Discovering Joy Through Simplicity and Generosity

We thank you for your generous acceptance of stewardship and pray you may find the level of giving that is right for you as you progress in your journey of faith and commitment. Your pledges and contributions are a critical part of how we can make a difference in our church, our community, and our world.

Please complete this estimate of giving, and return it in the offering plate or to the church office. You may change your commitment at any time by notifying the church office.

Name	
Address	
City/State/Zip	
Email	
Phone	

Yes! I/We will support First United Methodist Church in the year 2010

Choose One:

\$ _____ weekly for 52 weeks

\$ _____ semi-monthly for 24 periods

\$ _____ monthly for 12 months

\$ _____ as follows _____

Signature _____ Date _____

I/We would like information on how to provide for First United Methodist Church in my/our will.