

THE HABIT OF GIVING...by faith

Through our faith in God, we are called to give generously to support our church and those in need. In 2 Corinthians 9:7, Paul writes that God loves a cheerful giver, meaning we should give with our hearts and not be reluctant about doing so. In my view, giving is a personal and faithful act that demands intentionality. To me this means turning the act of giving into a habit – a routine occurrence that happens without hesitation.

The beauty in giving is that it can take various forms to fit within your means. Some may have the means to give large sums of money, while others may not have as much to give monetarily. Some may have the means to provide a service using their unique skills, while others may lack the necessary skills to help. Some may have the means to give their time towards a cause, while others may be short on the necessary time to assist. The point is, God has blessed each of us, and it is our responsibility, as Christians, to bless the lives of others using those God-given gifts to further His kingdom on Earth.

In my experience, the church is the best place for us to put our faithful giving into action. Opportunities to practice our giving such that it forms a habit in our lives are bountiful at Hayes Barton UMC. Giving of our tithes and offerings, teaching a Sunday school class, leading a Bible study, participating in an outreach mission, joining a church committee, and singing in the choir are just a few of the many examples we have to express our thanks to God through giving of our time, talents, and treasures.

Just as my parents and grandparents helped to instill a habit of giving in me as a young child, so too am I trying to model the same to my children. Acts of giving that we can perform as a family provide wonderful teachable moments that help my kids better understand what giving is all about. My son and I have participated in a couple of Rise Against Hunger meal packaging events through the church, and most recently this past summer, we gathered as a family at the church one evening to assemble cleaning kits to be distributed to those impacted by floods, hurricanes, and tornadoes. I have found these interactive giving experiences to provide more meaning to my kids rather than just preaching to them about the importance of giving.

My hope is that each of you will prayerfully consider the ways you can give by faith this coming year. Seek out giving opportunities through the church that will enable you to grow in your own spiritual journeys, and in turn, this will help to ingrain a giving mentality that becomes second nature in your life, but also in the lives of others.

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