



The Truth of What We Bring

On Sunday morning (or Wednesday evening) a person places a check, folded bills into the offering plate, or contributes through Simply Giving. The usher sees the hand drop some money into the plate, but what that usher cannot see is the intention of the Offering. That is known only to the giver and God. Yet the action is one of the most powerful events of the Worship service.

The Offering is the point during every Worship liturgy when most people face the intersection between God's grace and human gratitude.

Are we willing to freely give, even if it means giving up money, which in our culture signifies power? Be it a tithe, a couple of one-dollar bills, or nothing at all, our Offering is an outward sign of our inner spiritual intentions, and a unique time of truth in Worship. The truth of what we bring reveals itself in answer to such questions as these:

- *Do I give or not? Can I let go of what I consider to be mine?*
- *Why do I give? Do I give out of fear, or duty, or to contribute to the work of building up the Kingdom of God?*
- *And, how much do I give?*

The answers to those questions produce an x-ray of one's spiritual life.

To most people the Offering is about fundraising. The church's bills must be paid, so there is always tension about money. Unfortunately, church leaders are often left with a burden of anxiousness on behalf of their sisters and brothers that is unjust. Wanting to be faithful stewards, they stress over how things will be paid while other ministry leaders

wrangle with whether there will be financial support to encourage or expand existing discipleship opportunities. Truth be told, the Offering should be a profound spiritual exercise. If those things we possess are all gifts from God's abundance, then giving back to God is an act of gratitude.

Belonging to a church, a community of Christ followers, means we are giving consent to all that God is calling us to do, supporting the work of those on the front lines, while simultaneously, providing for the less glamorous expenses like electric bills, heating/cooling, water, and day-to-day operating costs.

I believe in Straight Talk that informs, equips, and moves us to action. The COVID dollars which floated the church through the most difficult years of the pandemic, are exhausted. We, your Leadership Team, find ourselves worrying about shortfalls rather than focusing on where the Holy Spirit is leading. We need you! Every Offering, great or small, is deeply appreciated and I thank you in advance.

Prayerfully consider, and listening to the intention of your gift, help us to continue proclaiming the Gospel and equipping the saints of all ages! You, sharing the gifts God has given you, is the answer to heartfelt prayers.

God's Peace,
Rev. Katherine Rood