



A Guide to Giving

Kenmore Presbyterian Church 2009

Giving at KPC

We do not harp on about money. However, we do need to talk about it with our church family, because growing in generosity is part of growing as Christians, and because consistent giving enables us to plan ahead as a church.

“But just as you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us – see that you also excel in this grace of giving.”

2 Corinthians 8:7 NIV

As Christians we are to be generous. We have benefited from God’s great generosity to us in Jesus, and the Bible encourages us to be like our heavenly Father. We are to be generous toward the work of the gospel, toward each other, and toward people who are in need.

“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.”

2 Corinthians 8:9, NIV.

The purpose of what follows is to guide you with regard to financial giving. It aims to help you to think about giving from a biblical perspective, and evaluate (or re-evaluate) the practicalities of how you give.

Step 1: How much to give?

a. The principle is generosity...

In the Old Testament, God's people gave a tenth of all their produce to God in response to his generous blessings to them ('the tithe'). The idea of giving a tenth is first seen in Abraham and Jacob (Gen 14, 28), and is then made explicit in the Law of Moses. It was to be given generously with much rejoicing, not legalistically or begrudgingly (Num 18, Deut 12, 14, 26, 2 Chr 31, Mal 3). Having received the tithe from Israel, God then redirects it to his work - to the priests and Levites, as well as to those in need, such as widows and orphans.

In the New Testament, there is no command to tithe! But we are to give in response to God’s generous blessings to us (note the language of "an offering acceptable to God" in Phil 4:18). **Tithing is not the principle in the New Testament, generosity is.** Indeed we have benefited from God's generosity to us in the death of his Son, who though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, so that through his poverty we might become rich (2 Cor 8:9). If we truly understand the gospel, we will cheerfully give as much as we can, and even beyond our ability (2 Cor 8-9)!

So how much should we give away? Whatever we can! Don’t be limited to thinking in terms of a tithe. For example, Paul commends the Churches in Macedonia because out of their poverty, they gave with great generosity for the support of their fellow Christians. How much you give will depend on you, your income, your situation, but the principle is other-person centeredness and generosity.

b. Generosity In practice...

There are many ways this might work out. Here are some examples:

- Plan a household budget for the year and decide how much to give in total to all Christian ministries in relation to spending in other areas and total income.
- Give a fixed percentage of your total income, then budget to live on the remainder yourself.
- Budget to live on a certain amount and divide the rest up to give away.
- Decide who you want to give to, and how much, and adjust your lifestyle to live on your remaining income.

Whichever way you choose to go, as with any lifestyle decision, it will be a matter of prayerfully reviewing what you are doing, perhaps each year, and making adjustments as different situations and opportunities arise.

Families with older children might like to let their children become part of the decision making process, to model a proper attitude to money and giving.

If you have never budgeted before, it might be a very useful exercise to do. It helps you to see where your money goes, identify areas of overspending or under spending, and then work out how to direct it into the areas you would like it to go.

Step 2: Who to give to?

In the Old Testament, the Israelite tithe was channelled by God to those who needed it - to the priests and Levites who had no other source of income because of their duties, and to the poor of the land.

We see a similar pattern in the New Testament, where Christian giving is directed to meeting the needs of those who labour amongst us in the Lord, as well as towards the poor. As Paul puts it in Galatians 6 "Let him who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches" and then a few verses later "So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith".

In practical terms, this means directing our money not only towards KPC, but to the work of the gospel further afield, and to those in need.

a. Giving to KPC

The ministry of KPC receives its support from the giving of KPC regulars. Most, almost all, of the budget is spent on gospel work - supporting our paid workers, as well as 'missionaries'. An increase in our income does not mean any individual gets paid more! But it does mean the possibility of growing our ministry team - and as our church continues to grow in number we need to work towards putting on more staff.

b. Giving Beyond KPC

There may be other Christian organisations and individuals that you may wish to support such as:

- missionaries and missionary organisations (eg. CMS)
- Friends in ministry or other gospel workers (at universities, overseas, evangelists etc)
- people in need in our Church family
- a specific person in need or perhaps a Compassion child
- an aid organisation (eg. TEAR Australia)

Step 3: How to give?

There are two main ways you can financially support the work of KPC.

a. Internet Transfer or Periodical Payment

This can be done by setting up a regular electronic transfer. It is possible to do this in a way which is reasonably anonymous. Here are the church bank account details:

Account name: Kenmore Presbyterian Church

BSB: 034 055

Account number: 209894

Transaction description: 'Morning Church Giving'

A major advantage with electronic giving is that once you have decided how much to give, you can't forget, even when you are on holidays.

b. Through the boxes on Sunday Morning

You can also give by cash (or cheque) each week at church. We do not pass-the-plate, instead we have a couple of boxes to use for this purpose.

Questions and Answers

1. Why don't we 'pass-the-plate' during church?
We have deliberately decided not to. One of the reasons is that we do not want visitors to feel compelled to give. Another reason is that we would rather our regulars not give impulsively. We would rather each one prayerfully consider their on-going support and give accordingly.
2. Isn't KPC a church plant that is subsidised by the denomination?
We were, and are again for a while. In 2007 KPC was declared to be a 'sanctioned charge' – a church that can support itself. However in 2009 we began receiving another subsidy to help get the second full-time position up and running. Our continued growth will mean the subsidy is short-lived.
3. Where does money go when it is given to KPC?
The vast majority of our church budget goes to paying for our staff (Steve, Brad and Dan). Some is given in support of mission and other organisations. Some goes to the Presbyterian Church of Queensland. The rest covers running costs. The budget is reviewed annually and we want to be open and transparent
- about where money goes. Our accounts are independently audited each year and are open for your inspection. Our Committee of Management approves expenditure, larger expenses need to be taken to a members' meeting.*
4. Are there plans to buy a church building?
Our priority is to grow followers of Jesus rather than building a building. So we will put money into paying additional staff before buying land. We have not set out to build a mega-church either, so we will plant other churches before entering into building plans. So, owning a church building could be many years away.
5. Does my giving need to be anonymous?
Do your best to be anonymous. Secrecy safeguards sincerity!