

TAKING THE NEXT STEP MAY 20, 2018

This is a time to consider your personal spiritual journey. You have known places where the grace of God has been in your life. How is gratitude for that grace reflected in your Christian giving? Pray about what God is calling you to do in a planned offering of thanks. These thoughts and prayers will ready you to respond.

On May 20th, you will have an opportunity to complete your Estimate of Giving Card, presenting it as an act of worship and an expression of faith. We invite you to join in the joy of making a loving response to our loving God. As all celebrate in this offering of intentions, know that we hold the content of those intents confidential and sacred.

If you are unable to attend worship on Sunday, May 20th, we will mail a letter of encouragement and an Estimate of Giving Card to you the following week.

Pray that God will grant you wisdom and understanding about your personal decision as you contemplate...



PLEASE JOIN US IN



**TAKING THE NEXT STEP SUNDAY
MAY 20, 2018
WORSHIP SERVICES
8AM, 9AM & 10:45AM**

We will affirm our financial support for the work of God in our church, community and the world during our special Taking the Next Step worship services.

During the service, you will be given the opportunity to complete an Estimate of Giving Card as we celebrate the continued growth of Portage Chapel Hill's ministries in our community, our conference and our world.

Taking the
Next Step



Portage Chapel Hill
United Methodist Church

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Rev. Barry Petrucci, Pastor

Thoughts on Faith and Giving

Followers of Jesus are called to manage all that God provides for us, including finances. This management, *stewardship*, is a matter of spirit more than money. Planning for our giving, and the giving itself, both reflects and builds our faith.

Jesus spoke frequently, and directly, about money and possessions. In fact, he had more to say about money, and the attraction of money, than anything else! He does that because misuse of resources shifts our primary concern away from God. In faith, we give resources as an outward and visible expression of thanks and appreciation for God's grace in our lives.

Too often, we are tempted to simply talk about the financial needs of the church and figure out ways to meet those needs. As well-intentioned as that process is, it misses the mark because it forgets that faith is about the management of all things as followers of Jesus.

In *Taking the Next Step '18*, our primary concern is to make use of this time to

build our individual and collective faith, before we build the budget. We will hear stories and see images from our community that will put the emphasis on the spiritual nature responding to the love and grace of God. The money committed and given does an amazing thing, though. The ministries God does in and through Chapel Hill are not only sustained, but they are expanded to meet emerging needs!

As the Body of Christ, we take the model Jesus gave us of what it looks like to love God and humanity. Our resources of time, talent, gifts, service and the stories of God in our lives enable that love. In growing love, we surrender attitudes and habits that trip-up our relationship with God and learn to hold to the Spirit of God that is always within our reach.



During this time of celebration, we encourage you to:

- ✦ Pray for God to lead you further along on the path of your faith journey
- ✦ Deepen your sense of gratitude and respond with generosity
- ✦ Discover again, or for the first time, the joy of giving
- ✦ Give according to your resources and give with an intentional plan
- ✦ Understand that stewardship is about raising up ever-stronger followers of Jesus, not about raising money

OUR VISION:

A home where every person belongs to God and so to one another

A transforming community of faith where each discovers and responds to God's call

OUR MISSION:

To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world