

## Everything you ever wanted to know about pledging but were afraid to ask...

The stewardship of our gifts and our church is a year-long thing. As our former Bishop Mark Beckwith used to say, “All we do, with all we have, all year long.” In the Episcopal Church, however, the fall is considered Stewardship Season,” when we’re asked to consider the role God and the church play in our lives and decide how our gifts of time, talent, and treasure reflect that relationship. Here are some common FAQs about pledging.



**What’s a pledge?** Your pledge is a commitment to be “in a relationship” with Holy Spirit. You will be asked to complete a form inviting you to select ministries you’re interested in. The form also invites you to make a monetary pledge that can be paid weekly, monthly, or annually. You don’t need to pledge to be a member of Holy Spirit.



**Why is my pledge important to Holy Spirit?** First, your pledge tells us that you’re willing to make a commitment to help make your relationship with Holy Spirit a reality. Second, from practical standpoint, it helps the clergy, wardens, treasurer, and vestry develop programming and a budget for the upcoming year.



**Let’s talk money. Why is my financial pledge so important?** Unlike some denominations, each Episcopal congregation develops and is responsible for its own budget. We don’t receive funding from the Diocese of Newark or the national Episcopal Church. Take a look at the pie charts on the back of this page. Our funding comes primarily from pledges (62%) and our expenses are primarily payroll (71%) -- always the largest expense in a church.

**Pledges are the money we can count and plan around.** For example, because of a pledge increase in 2023, we had the confidence to raise Fr. Jerry to full time status (the only church in the diocese to be able to do so!) and increase Rev. Katherine’s hours to be more in-line with her actual hours.



**How do I know how much to pledge?** People decide in different ways. Maybe you are comfortable giving \$XX a week. Another way to think about is as proportional giving. What proportion of your income do you feel comfortable giving? The biblical tithe is 10%, but that’s by no means mandatory. Maybe you want to start small - say 2% -- and see how that feels to you. And no, no one is checking to see if you’re basing it on gross or net income! It’s entirely up to you.



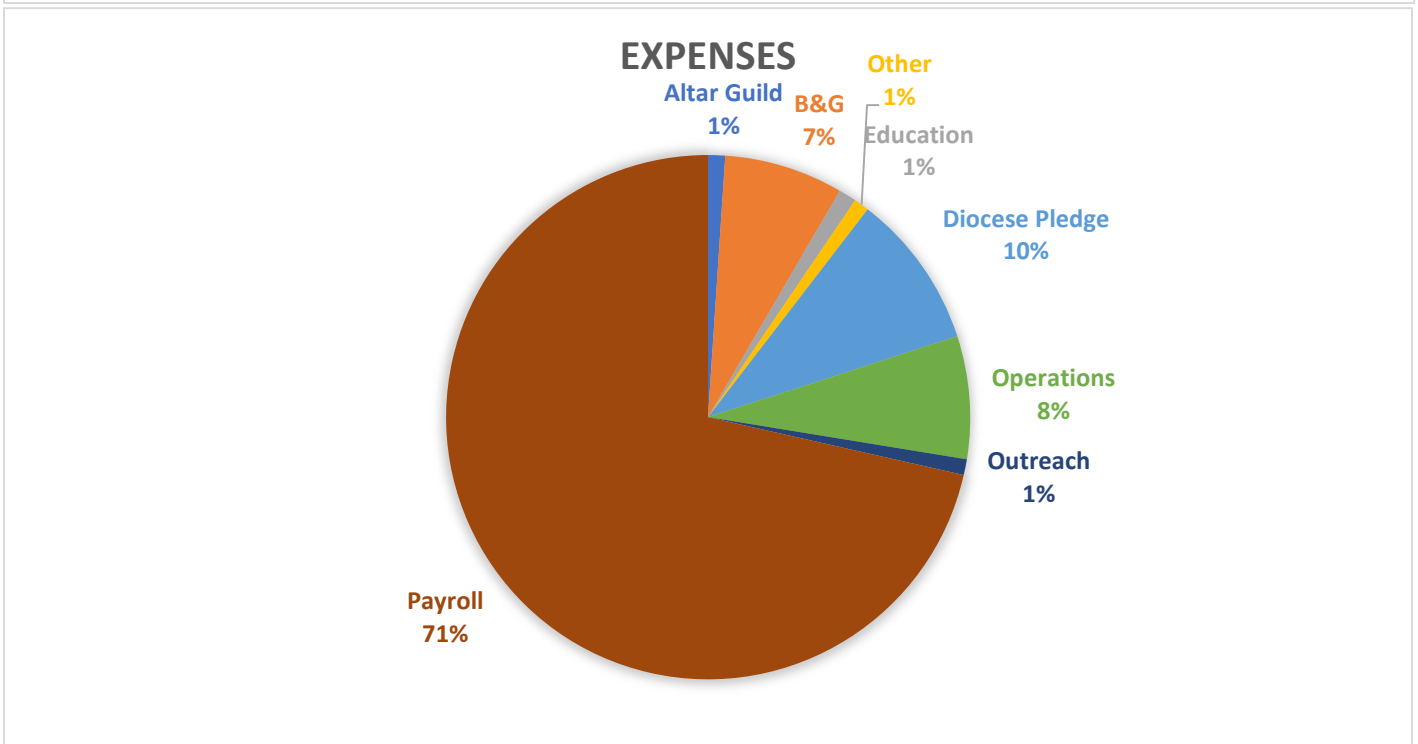
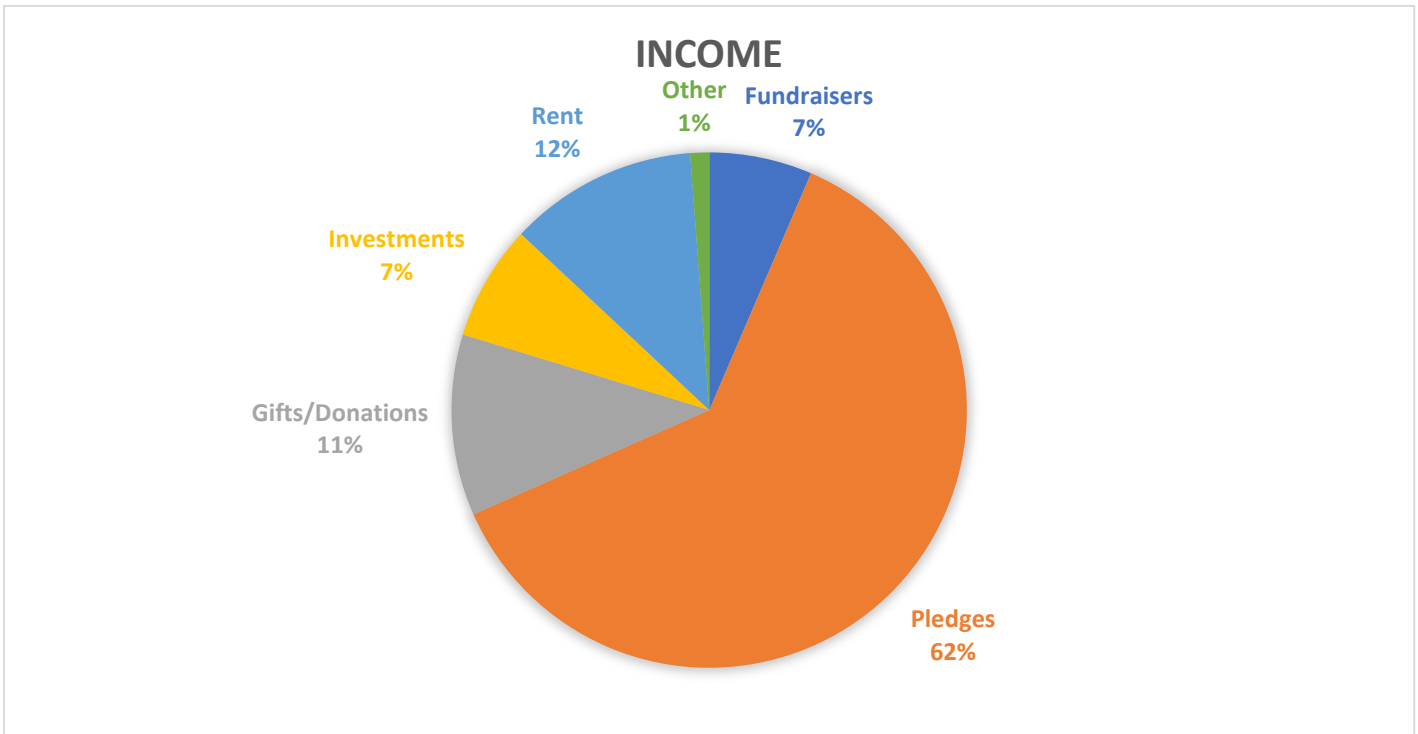
**What if something comes up and I can’t meet my pledge?** That’s okay. Just let us know. We understand and want to help.



**I put money in the plate when I’m in church, isn’t that enough?** Plate income is helpful, but it fluctuates from week to week depending on attendance and the number of services we hold. It’s not something we can count on when we plan for the upcoming year.

If you have any questions about stewardship, pledging, the budget, or how Holy Spirit runs, please reach out to Fr. Jerry, Patti Walsh, Jane Eliasof, Tricia Smythe. We will try our best to answer your questions!

## 2024 Budget Allocations



Our total budget for 2024 is \$224,305. Every year, once pledges are in, we craft a budget that is voted on by the Vestry first, then comes to the congregation for approval at our Annual Parish Meeting in February. As you can see, pledge income represents most of our income and payroll expenses (i.e., Fr. Jerry, Rev. Katherine, Parish Admin, Organist, Music Director, Sunday School teacher) represent our largest outlay.