

A Cup of Generosity
Pastor Dana Karen Reardon

Blessed are you, O God, ruler of heaven and earth. Day by day you shower us with blessings. As you have raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise you and to respond to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

ELW 107

In our church since the beginning of the pandemic we have not taken up the offering in the usual way with usher passing a plate. I suspect that we are not the only church. It was just one more way that people could potentially spread the virus.

I never took the Offertory out of the bulletin however and occasionally I say a few words about giving. The offering plate is by the entrance to the sanctuary and when we remember someone puts it on the altar during the offertory time.

The truth is many people give by mailing a check or even by electronic transfer. Not too many people put an envelope in the offering plate so my guess is we will not go back to having the ushers pass a plate.

But I do not want to take the Offertory out of the bulletin because I believe that we need always to be reminded that giving is an act of worship.

One of my seminary professors, Tim Wengert used to say that April 15 should be a religious holiday and we should process to the tax office or the post office to mail our tax returns. Paying taxes is one of the ways that we care for others, supporting social welfare programs.

Perhaps we should look at more ways of seeing giving as an act of worship. Maybe there should be a prayer to say as we mail that check to church or set up that transfer. Perhaps I will write a liturgy to go with the online giving I do to LSS or LIRS. Maybe there should be a liturgy for paying our bills or balancing our checkbooks. After all your bill and our checkbook are a good indication of what you value and who you serve. Perhaps I will write a prayer for when I tip at a restaurant or when I get my nails done, because I know that people who work mostly for tips are feeding families with that money.



Stewardship is not just about what we give to the church, but how we spend and use everything that God has given us. Everything that we give comes first from God and passing it on is a way of affirming our faith that God will continue to bless us. Some of us are given more and some less and yet we are blessed both in the receiving and the giving.

May God continue to bless you with abundance as you continue to share your blessings with others.

Pastor Dana