



Christ & St. Luke's

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Stewardship testimony by B.J.Taylor, Oct 19, 2025.

Good Morning. My name is B.J. Taylor and I have been a member of Christ and St. Luke's for about 41 years. I am a Norfolk native but for 11 years I lived and worked in DC and in 1984 I returned to Norfolk to accept a post at the Medical School and was looking for a Church home. On a parallel track and with many divinely inspired moments I ran into Tim who was returning to C& SL where he was born and raised. In 1986 we walked down this magnificent aisle and the rest, as they say, is history.

There have been several Rectors and Priests in these 41 years - each with their own gifts of ministry but the same Mission. Lead with love, follow the Baptismal Covenant. Though the style of each Rector may have been different, the Mission has never changed. Lead with love, Build the body, go into the world. It is so simplistic and so poignant. "God is love and where there is love, there I am....."

Today, with the past and present in mind and with Stewardship before us Tim and I have the privilege of discerning why and how we will respond to the invitation to Stewardship of time, talent, and treasure. The models of good stewardship are all around us and we accept with joy the opportunity to be a part of that.

So here we are in the present..... why are we pledging this year? What moves us and makes us know with great certainty we are where God intends us to be...?

- We pledge because in just three years – a half dozen children has grown to three choirs of children. And children are stepping up and asking their parents to acolyte and serve as lectors and be involved.
- We pledge because we are inspired, uplifted and challenged by our clergy.
- We pledge because C&SL lives the Baptismal Covenant – open and accepting of all – an intentional inclusive and diverse community.

- We pledge because beyond the pulpit in affirmation, in joy, in challenge, and in anticipation, our clergy live their call to ministry, and their determination and expectation is thoroughly infectious.
- We pledge because the music is more than a beautiful piece. It is well-thought out for each Sunday and shared with the broader community and the world.
- We pledge because people call and volunteer to take on lay tasks and they say yes when you call them without hesitation.
- We pledge because each member of this staff serves as a unit with the whole as their guiding light – making it possible for us to feel safe in an often-crazy world. We are reminded of the world you INTEND us to have, and our strength is bolstered when we are here.

Honestly, I could go on. We are thoroughly blessed at our Church. Our history has had one mission – to live as a Christian Community – leading with love and serving God and each other...within and outside our walls.

Recently I was coming into worship and saw a friend. By no intention at all we started talking about how exciting it is to be here, how comforting and uplifting and challenging, and how much we look forward to it. We started laughing as one does when something is overwhelmingly joyful.

In 2025 we have been invited with joy to Stewardship as we are each year.

This is just a part of my list and I know you have a compelling list of your own.

That's the mission of Christ and St. Luke's.... Leading with love, building the body, lifting each other up, and sending God's love to the world. Knowing that is how we are sustained, Tim and I joyfully answer WE WILL to the invitation to pledge. Thank you.