



## The Virginia Plan for Proportionate Giving

Since 1958, the Virginia Plan has helped shape our stewardship of personal, parish and diocesan financial resources.

### **Giving as Grateful Thanks to God**

All Christian giving is rooted in joyful thanksgiving to God for all material and spiritual blessings God freely bestows on us. And while God's claim on us is total and absolute, God graciously permits us to keep what he gives, asking us to return a portion of our material bounty, the "first fruits of our labor", to himself as a sign of his Lordship over us and our possessions.

The joyful offering of at least a tithe of our incomes for the work of the Lord remains, for Christians, the least that God expects from us. Christians who have adopted tithing (giving one tenth of income) as a way of life have expressed joy and freedom from the tyranny of possessions, which opens the heart to genuine love and thanksgiving.

### **Giving as a Ministry of Stewardship**

Once having decided to give thankfully to the Lord, we are led to understand our giving fulfills three holy purposes:

*Mission*—giving fulfills our Lord's injunction to preach Good News to all people. Mission giving enables the Church to carry and preach the Gospel outside the congregation, to make new disciples, to plant new churches, and to raise up lay and ordained ministers to carry on their ministries beyond the membership of their congregations.

*Outreach* —giving fulfills our Lord's injunction to "love your neighbor as yourself" and "love one another as I have loved you." Outreach giving enables the church to meet the pastoral, spiritual, emotional, and material needs of people, particularly of the poor, ill and disadvantaged.

*Ministry*—giving for the development of the ministries of our own membership and for the institutional support of our parishes and diocese ensures that we may worship the Lord and receive his sacraments, progressively deepen our discipleship, learn to exercise our spiritual gifts, minister to the pastoral needs of our own members, be stewards of physical church property and carry on other work of the Church.

### **Proportionate Giving by Individual Christians and Families**

Individual Christians and families are therefore bid to commit a minimum of a tithe for the work of the Lord. If they are not now doing so, they are bid to work toward the tithe. In addition to tithes, other gifts of thanksgiving are encouraged for godly purposes which address human needs and relieve suffering.

### **Proportionate Giving by Parishes and Missions**

Each parish or mission of the Diocese expresses its grateful thanksgiving to God by returning a proportion of its income to the work of the Lord, through support of our shared mission and ministry as a Diocese.

Since 1998, the Virginia Plan provides each parish with a range of asking for support of the Diocese.

<u>Total Parish Operating Income</u>	<u>Minimum Percentage Giving Range</u>
\$1,000,000 or more	16% or more
\$750,000 - \$999,999	14% -16%
\$500,000 - \$749,999	12% -14%
\$100,000 - \$499,999	10% -12%
\$99,999 and under	8% -10%

### **Proportionate Giving by the Diocese**

In like fashion, the Diocese of Virginia is bid to express its grateful thanksgiving to God by returning a proportion of its income to the work of the Lord through support of the mission and ministry of the broader church. It should be noted that the Diocese models adherence to the asking range of the Virginia Plan. In 2017, the Diocese is giving the proscribed 16.5% to The Episcopal Church out of our budget, *not including other resources of time and talent contributed by our staff, clergy and lay professionals toward the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ.*

### **The Example of Spiritual Leadership in Proportionate Giving**

As spiritual leaders of this Diocese, each Vestry or Vestry Committee member, Bishop, individual clergy, Executive Board member, Standing Committee member, delegate to Annual Convention and each individual in a position of leadership is encouraged publicly to commit and annually recommit, to principles of Biblical stewardship, including offering a tithe to the work of the Lord, or to adopt a plan which will achieve a tithe within a short time.

