

ST. MARK'S CHURCH
— Episcopal —

November 14, 2011



Dear St. Mark's:

The 1928 Prayer Book, if I recall correctly, had a quotation from the King James Version of the Bible that read, "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver," to which someone once added, "but He also accepteth from a grouch!"

As we move toward Parish Commitment Sunday on November 20, it is good to remember that giving can be fun! We know the joy of giving a loved one a special gift that, when opened, brings a smile to their face and joy to their heart. *The joy of giving* is an important thought to remember. Giving can be fun! In fact, that bible verse – "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver" – holds an important clue for us when we look at the Greek word in the original language of the New Testament. The Greek word for "cheerful" is *hilaros*, the root of the English word *hilarious*. In other words, "The Lord loves a hilarious giver!" You've heard the phrase, "Give until it hurts." Instead, what we should be living by is, "Give until it feels good!"

One way of giving joyfully is to give our gifts to organizations such as Church World Service and Episcopal Relief and Development.

Several weeks ago the members of the Vestry and I spent a Saturday morning reflecting on our individual stewardship and pledging. I asked them to consider how they would tell others about their stewardship with these three statements: This is what I/we do; this is why we/I do it; won't you join me/us? People have many reasons for giving to the church, yet one of the most common reasons is so that the church will continue to be there for our children and grandchildren.

Next year, 2012, will be an important and happy year because you will call a new Rector, and together you will begin a new and exciting era of ministry. Your 2012 financial commitment to St. Mark's will help ensure a solid financial foundation for that new work, and the Vestry and I invite your commitment and participation. If you have decided to work toward percentage or proportional giving, the back of the enclosed pledge has a guide to assist you as you prayerfully consider your 2012 financial commitment to St. Mark's Church.

Thank you, and may God continue to bless you and St. Mark's Church!

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peter E. Van Horne".

(The Rev. Dr.) Peter E. Van Horne
Interim Rector