

## *Stewardship Letter*

*All things come of Thee O Lord and of Thine own have we given Thee* (I Chronicles 29).

*All things come of Thee O Lord and of Thine own have we given Thee.* These words from I Chronicles are familiar to us since they have been used in the Eucharist during the presentation of the offering for generations. The sentence is a good reminder of the relationship between God, the Giver of all gifts, and the created order. And, it is a good reminder that all we are and all we have is because of the graciousness of God working in the world.

Yet on another level, the words are a little confusing. After all, we do not give our money to God. Instead, we use our money (along with our time and our talents) to do God's work in the world. If we care about one another as well as those living on the margins; if we want our spiritual lives deepened through good music and worship; if we value the formation of our children and young people; then we want to be a part of the process that supports and develops those values.

*All things come of Thee O Lord . . .* the church is flourishing. Our beloved Deacon Miguel continues to nurture us with his gentle spirit. Mr. John Barrow continues to inspire us with his extraordinary musical talent. The St. Christopher's Praise Band (formerly known as Medina) continues to enliven our worship with their contemporary musical offering each month. Chaplain Vanessa continues to nurture our budding Sunday School with an unprecedented growth in numbers this year. Reverend Susan's spirituality infuses our sanctuary with God's presence while her sermons nourish our souls.

*All things come of Thee O Lord . . .* The Leadership of St. Christopher's continues to honor the Biblical tithe in its operations. Ten percent (or ten cents of every dollar) of each parishioner's pledge goes outside of St. Christopher's operational budget and is given directly to community outreach through Faith-at-Work. The 2014 Faith-at-Work Budget is approximately \$26,300 (\$2300 over last year) and is being directed to feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the prisoner. Of course in addition to Faith-at-Work's direct outreach, St. Christopher's remains an active and vibrant witness to the entire Key Biscayne Community.

As a further witness of the importance of tithing, **each** of the four Episcopal staff members has joined Reverend Susan in her or his individual commitment to tithe on her/his salary received from St. Christopher's.

*All things come of Thee O Lord . . .* The school, one of our largest ministry outreach areas, is thriving. This year's enrollment continues to be higher than in previous years. The school Choir, under the direction of Mireya Medina, has expanded to include 50 student members. The Chapel Service, which includes the celebration of weekly Eucharist, has approximately 200 in attendance between students, faculty and parents each week. This year's Speaker Series has been a huge success with a turnout of 20-30 people at each event.

St. Christopher's By-the-Sea Episcopal Montessori School is truly living into its Episcopal identity and is an outward and visible sign of St. Christopher's By-the-Sea Episcopal Church's mission to show people Jesus.

Once again this year, as a means of gathering your pledges, we will be using the "Pony Express." Each "Pony Express Saddlebag" will contain an envelope and a pledge card for each parishioner. Upon filling out your pledge of talent, time and treasure, place your pledge in the labeled envelope, seal the envelope and place the envelope back in saddlebag and pass the saddlebag to the next parishioner on the list.

Thanks be to God and the generosity of Joan Ambrose who will host Reverend Susan for a 'Meet and Greet' reception to kick off this year's Stewardship program on Saturday, November 15, at 6:00 PM. Our wrap-up and Stewardship Celebration will be a special service on Sunday, December 7, at 5:00 PM on the helipad. Everyone is invited to join us for both of these events!

Please, prayerfully, consider joining Reverend Susan and the Episcopal Staff in tithing of your time and your talent and your treasure! *All things come of Thee O Lord, and of Thine own have we given Thee.*

Keeping the Faith,

The Stewardship Committee