

Building Up the Body of Christ

In the Old Testament we read about Nehemiah. After seeing the crumbling walls of Jerusalem, he called the people to “Rise up and build.” Nehemiah doesn’t do it alone. He inspires the people, sharing his vision. And the response of the people? “Let us rise up and build.”

This story and the words of Nehemiah (2:19) call us today, not just to building and rebuilding with bricks and mortar, but also to a deeper, spiritual building – the rebuilding and renewal of our faith. As Orthodox Christians, we are called to respond to God’s gifts with faithful stewardship. Like Nehemiah, we are called to “rise up and build,” carrying on God’s work in our parish our community and in the world.

This call of Nehemiah to “rise up and build” invites us to become active members of the Church, the Body of Christ, to join in ministry and contribute according to our abilities. As Orthodox Christians, we understand that stewardship is a joint effort of all the members of the community. Every member has a role to play.

how much is it?

Stewardship is not a matter of “how much is it?” or “how much is needed?” Stewardship and generosity are aspects of spiritual discipline and an indication of our spiritual maturity. In stewardship we acknowledge that all we have is a gift from God and we are to use His gifts in ways that honor Him. This transforms our understanding of the blessings in our life. It prompts us to use our blessings for the good of others and for the glory of God.

Just as the walls of Jerusalem were broken through neglect or indifference, a neglected spiritual life can also become dilapidated and broken. The words of Nehemiah call us to renew and rebuild our commitment to our faith, and our dedication and support for our Church and her ministries.

compassion and faith

Nehemiah’s response is a great example for us. He was moved by compassion and faith. He saw the need, and his heart was stirred. He didn’t ignore the problem; he embraced it as his own. This is the first step in true stewardship: seeing the needs of God’s Church and responding with love and sacrifice.

Nehemiah prayed. Before any action, Nehemiah turned to God. He understood that true rebuilding, both physical or spiritual, begins and ends with God. Stewardship is not about our own strength, but about God working through us

practical and intentional

Nehemiah planned and acted. Prayer without action is just empty words. Nehemiah meticulously planned, secured resources, and then courageously led the work. Stewardship is practical; it is intentional, requiring wise planning and diligent use of our God-given abilities and resources.

Nehemiah inspired others. He didn’t just command. He shared his vision. He ignited a spark in the hearts of the people, reminding them of their importance in this process. This is crucial for our parish stewardship ministry. We lead by example, inspiring one another to participate, to offer their unique gifts for the good of our Church.

This is our call today. We are called to be like Nehemiah in our own lives and in our parish.

We can **rise up and build** the walls of prayer by dedicating time each day to personal prayer, Scripture reading, and participation in the liturgical life of the Church.

receive the presence of Jesus

We can rise up and build the walls of worship by being present in Divine Liturgy, offering our time, our worship and our gratitude for His blessings. We offer our whole being to God in worship, and we receive the presence of Jesus Christ within us.

We can rise up and build the wall of generosity. Stewardship is not just about money, though it is vital for our Church’s mission. Stewardship is offering our time, serving in ministries, being ready to help, wherever we are needed. It is about offering our talents and our unique skills – whether in music, administration, hospitality, or technology – for the glory of God. It is about offering our treasures, giving a proportional and sacrificial portion of our income, recognizing that all we have comes from God.

We can rise up and build the wall of Christian love, seeing Christ in all people, forgiving with patience, and compassion. In Christian love, we serve those in need, both within and outside our parish family, in our neighborhood and around the world.



RISE UP AND BUILD

NEHEMIAH 2:18

BUILDING UP THE BODY OF CHRIST

**YOUR Time, Talents & Treasure
Make this possible.**

**2026 STEWARDSHIP
ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL**



2025 A Year of Impact, Thanks to You!

Outreach

Connecting with our Neighbors through service and compassion

“Truly I tell you, Whatever you did for one of the least of these...you did for me.”
Matthew 25:40

2065 Hot meals served to those in need, prepared by Annunciation Community Kitchen. The growth of community Kitchen was tremendous over 2025. Many of the groups in the Cathedral participated: GOYA, Jr GOYA, Dance Groups, and more!

Elpida donated Backpacks to children in need in the community.

Hygiene kits were assembled and passed out to those in need.
Successful sock Drive held.

The Dance programs participated in a Diakonia project, providing service and outreach to our community by collecting and donating items to help those less fortunate.

Our Cathedral Moving Forward

A full time New Priest and Pastoral Assistant
The implementation of the Realm giving software
2023 & 2024 Financial Audits completed
Parish Web Site redesign
The End of our Construction Lawsuit.
Successful Greek Food Festival with our Best Year!
Many Ministries had tremendous growth

Evangelism

“Go into the World and preach the Gospel to all creation.”
Mark 16:15

Over 200 Food Festival Church tours
Evangelism Sunday the 1st Sunday of the month created
Speaker Series for Evangelism Sunday created
Growth in our Intro to Orthodoxy classes

Giving is not just about making a donation,
It's about making a difference.

Stewardship occurs in many ways. When done Selflessly, it honors the giver, the receiver and most importantly, God. Jesus' ministry was defined by the transformational ways he gave of himself and embodied Eucharistic Stewardship. Your Selfless giving to Annunciation, and ultimately to God, allows the parish and its ministries to Thrive and grow.

YOUR 2026 STEWARDSHIP will make a Difference in the Following Ways:

- Continue to offer abundant worship, music and ministry experiences
- A New Full Time Priest and Pastoral Assistant
- Increase our office team
- Continue to implement and enhance site safety
- Expand our music ministry to include Byzantine Music
- Increase outreach giving and community engagement
- Focus on Evangelism, both internal (welcome back past parishioners) and external(Converts)
- Expand our community profile
- Grow our existing ministries
- Expand our ministries to include: Seniors & Women's Fellowship

“What shall I give to the lord in return for all His goodness towards me?”
Psalm 116:12

Our Stewardship Mission at Annunciation Cathedral is to joyfully steward God's gifts ~ our time, talents and resources ~ in a spirit of gratitude, generosity, and faith, so that we may strengthen the ministry of our church, serve our community, and advance God's work in the world.

Our Goal for 2026 Stewardship is \$400,000. This is an increase of nearly 14%. You are invited to join us on our transformational journey to becoming a parish giving from the heart with an increase of time, talent and treasure to God and in doing so, our Church will continue to grow into the image and likeness of God.

Help make a
Difference in
2026

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How can I become a Steward?

A: The easiest way is online! To pledge, simply go to our website annunciation.org and click the Giving Tab and this will take you to our Donation Links. Under “Set your Yearly Pledge” enter your total pledge mount for the year and then select if this should be setup as a recurring donation, or setup as simply a pledge.

If you prefer to submit your stewardship form in person instead of online, stewardship pledge forms can also be found throughout the church facilities, including the Narthex, information area and the church office.

Q: How do I decide what to give financially?

A: Begin with prayer. Reflect on your income, responsibilities, Blessings and the needs of the parish. The biblical tithe (10% of your annual household income) is an ancient guide (Lev. 27:30). We understand that families give to multiple charities/ non-profits as well, so some families might consider a half (5%) or quarter (2.5%) tithe. Even a modest, consistent gift - given with love - becomes a powerful act of faith when joined with others.

Q: What is the easiest way to fulfill my pledge?

A: The easiest way is online! If you went online, entered your pledge amount for the year and selected recurring payments and credit card/ account information, you are all set. By the end of the year your Stewardship pledge will be fulfilled.

If you simply pledged online (no recurring setup) or submitted a Stewardship form, you can still fulfill your pledge online. Simply go to our website Annunciation.org, click on the “Giving” Tab and select “Pay Stewardship”.

Offerings can also be made by check or credit card payments, though these may not be as convenient.

Q: When should I make my stewardship commitment?

A: Our stewardship year follows the calendar year (January 1 - December 31). We invite pledges and would ask you to pledge your commitment by January 31st. This helps the Parish Council plan ministries, pay staff, maintain facilities, and support outreach. You may submit payment or update your pledge anytime during the year online, by mail, or in person.

Q: I don't like to fulfill my pledge until December. Should I still pledge in January?

A: Yes. January pledging allows for effective parish fiscal budgeting. Pledge your annual amount, then fulfill by giving weekly, monthly, semi-annually or annually.

Q: Is my giving amount kept private?

A: Absolutely. Only the Parish Treasurer and Stewardship Chairman see individual pledges, and they are bound by confidentiality. We may publish a list of participating stewards to honor commitment, but never the amounts.

Q: I already pay for Greek dance, Greek School, Basketball, etc. Why stewardship too?

A: These programs operate independently from the church operating budget. The church provides the facility in addition to expenses enabling their operation. It is also important to know that families participating in these ministries must be currently pledged stewards.

Q: If I donate to a memorial fund, building, festival, or event, does that count as part of my stewardship?

A: No. Your stewardship is represented entirely by your stated pledge and goes to support general operations.

Q: What if my financial situation changes during the year?

A: Your pledge is a statement of intention, not a contract. If circumstances change, simply contact the Priest or Stewardship Chair. We will adjust your record with understanding and without judgment. God honors faithfulness, not perfection.