

Your Support for the Diocesan Budget for 2015

Dear leaders of congregations in Arkansas:

On December 9 the diocesan Executive Council met and reviewed the proposed 2015 diocesan operating budget. The vast majority of funding for the budget comes from the contributions that each of the congregations makes as a pledge each year. For several years we have asked you to tithe your congregation's operating revenue, and we continue that request for 2015. In the past there has been some hesitancy to estimate your congregation's income for the upcoming year, and there has been confusion over making pledges to other specific activities, such as Camp Mitchell or youth work, on the same form as the operating pledge form. We want to simplify that process. Therefore, this year the Executive Council has decided that the standard for giving by congregations to the 2015 diocesan operating budget will be 10% of your 2014 operating revenue, as recorded in your 2014 parochial report. (This is the report that you will prepare at the beginning of 2015.)

Within a week or so after December 31, you should know your 2014 operating revenue. Your vestry will then send in a pledge card with the amount of your tithe for 2015. Operating revenue includes such things as pledge and plate income and income from investments or endowments that you use for operations, but not gifts for building campaigns or gifts to be placed in endowment funds. Please remember that we will approve a 2015 diocesan budget in late January, so we need your pledge card returned by January 20.

For additional simplification, we are not including Sharing Our bounty requests this year. Instead, we encourage each congregation to respond to the Camp Mitchell pledge request letter that you have received and support the important work that occurs there. Additionally, during 2015 there may be requests to support specific diocesan projects, such as youth events.

This new procedure takes the guesswork out of how much to pledge. As your bishop, I am truly thankful for your support of the work of the church beyond your congregation, and I hope that we continue to understand that we all benefit from the ties we have with one another as we offer mutual support for the varied ministries in the church in Arkansas and beyond.

With every best wish I remain,

Faithfully yours,

Larry R. Benfield
Bishop of Arkansas

Congregational Support for the 2015 Arkansas Diocesan Operating Budget

For 2015, _____ Church
in _____, Ark. (name of city or town)
pledges \$_____ for the support of
the 2015 diocesan operating budget based on our 2014 operating revenue*
of \$ _____. (The Executive Council-approved standard
is 10% of operating revenue.) To pay this pledge, the congregation will make
12 monthly payments of \$_____ each.

Signed: _____
Warden

Rector, Vicar, or Priest-in-charge

*All money, from whatever source, that is used for the general operation of the congregation is operating revenue. Thus, operating revenue includes any pledges, non-pledged gifts, plate offerings, rent income in excess of expenses for the rental property, and money taken from investments or endowment funds to support the general operation of the congregation.

Operating revenue does not include money received for building or renovation campaigns, money given specifically for outreach, financial support from the diocese, or gifts that are placed in endowment accounts.

Please complete this form and then scan it and email it to mjhodges@episcopalarkansas.org or mail it to: The Diocese of Arkansas, P.O. Box 164668, Little Rock, AR 72216.