

The Parish VISITOR



"Be Transformed...By the renewing of your minds." - Romans 12:2 - NIV

Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood
4011 Clinton St., Los Angeles, CA 90004-2298
The REV. STEPHEN M. BAROLDY, Pastor

cpchollywood.org

FEBRUARY
2022
VOL. LXXVI NO. 2



TEST ME

your pastor writes

By REV. STEPHEN M. BAROLDY

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to all the readers of the *Parish Visitor!*

As we start the New Year, I wanted to share with you something the Holy Spirit had me to do last year. I hope it will encourage and bless you.

Test Me, Mal. 3:8-11, originally given on 01/02/22 at CPC

Introduction: I'm looking forward to finishing our study of the Revelation. We essentially have one chapter to go and we should finish it this

Continued next page

**Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood
is an intentional, healing community;
proclaiming and demonstrating the wholeness
of life offered in JESUS CHRIST.**



**WELCOME
BACK**

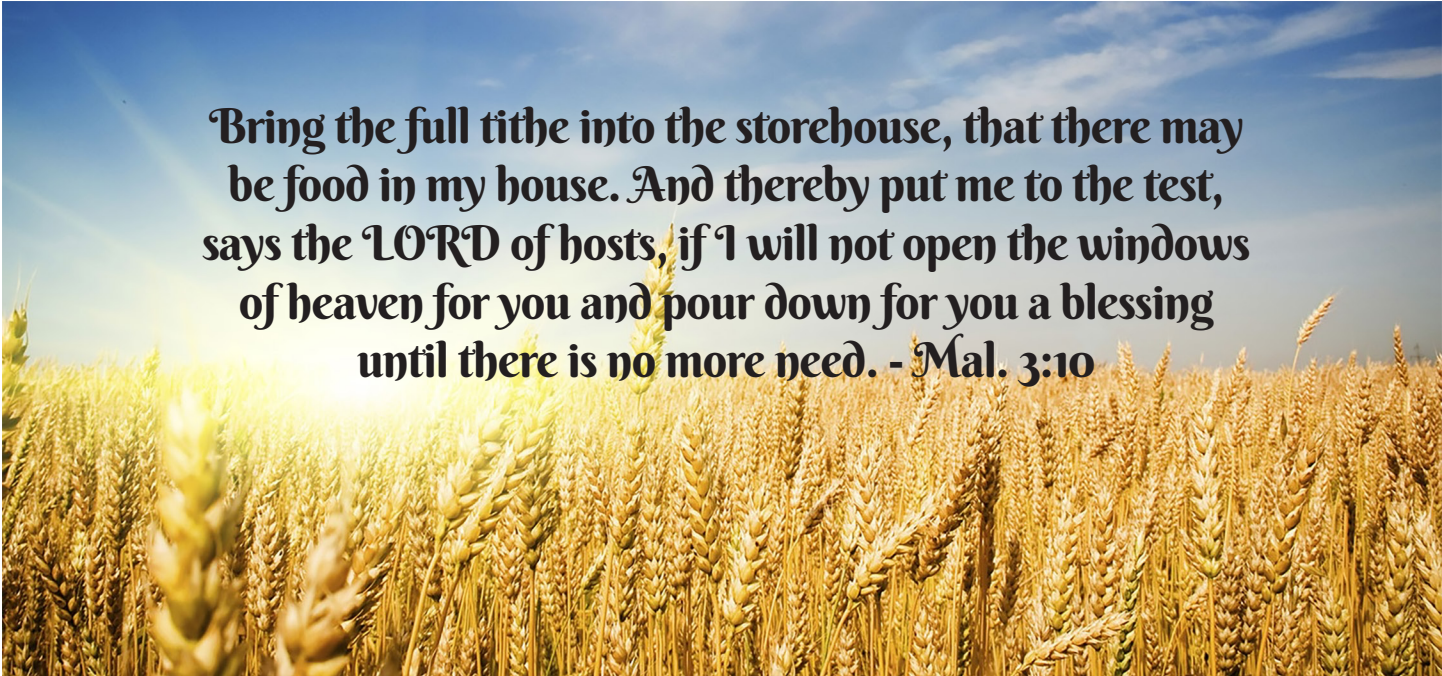
in our Sanctuary!



In addition to the in-person worship, we continue to stream the service on Zoom for those unable to attend in-person.

The invitation for joining the service can be found at the events page on our website at cpchollywood.org.

You can send in your prayer requests PRIOR to the service via email to sbaroldy@gmail.com or text at 323-202-5078.



Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. - Mal. 3:10

month. Yet, this is a short week, so I thought I would address something the Holy Spirit put on my heart recently.

God has been gracious to CPC this year. You all, and friends of the church, have given generously, which made this year a great year financially. So, this is a good time to talk about this subject because it won't be seen as me trying to pressure the congregation to give more.

The subject for this morning is the spiritual discipline of giving, specifically the principle of tithing.

In the gospel of Matthew, chapters 5-7, Jesus gives his classic teaching on living life in the kingdom of God. And in Matthew, chapter 6, Jesus highlights three spiritual disciplines.

In Mat. 6:2, Jesus says, "when you give," and, he then gives instruction on giving. Notice, Jesus says "when you give," not, "if you give."

In Mat. 6:5, Jesus says, "when you pray," and then gives instructions on how to pray. This is where Jesus gives the disciples the Lord's prayer.

And, finally, in Mat. 6:16, Jesus says, "when you fast," and gives us instructions on fasting.

So, Jesus highlights giving, praying, and fasting as three important, spiritual disciplines in the kingdom of God. Today, I want to talk about the first discipline, the discipline of giving.

Now, this morning, we will join together the discipline of giving with the power of God's word. Today, we will see how the discipline of giving and the power of

God's word work together. This is the key insight. And to do this, we will look at Mal. 3:8-11.

Principle of the tithe: First, let's set the context for Malachi. The book of Malachi was written about one hundred years after a remnant of Jews returned to Jerusalem, from captivity in Babylon, to rebuild the temple.

Malachi is the last Old Testament prophet to speak to the remnant of Israel in her own land. The name Malachi means "my messenger."

So, through Malachi, God is sending a message to his people. The remnant needed to hear from God because they were downcast and dispirited. The remnant had enjoyed a brief period of revival described in Nehemiah, chapter 10. The daily, public reading of the word of God, to the entire community, had ignited the revival.

Yet, now, the revival was over and the remnant has grown spiritually cold and morally lax. A symptom of their spiritual coldness was the people were neglecting the temple, the house of God. They were bringing inferior sacrifices to the temple, and they were not giving the tithes demanded by the Law.

God addresses this problem in Mal. 3:8-11. Here God speaks through Malachi. God says, "*Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full*



God creates everything
so GOD OWNS
EVERYTHING.
Giving the tithe is a
tangible expression, it is
an outward recognition,
that EVERYTHING
BELONGS to God.

tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the LORD of hosts.” (Malachi 3:8–11, ESV)

Here, God, speaking through Malachi, bluntly accuses his people of robbing him. They were robbing God because they were not bringing the full tithe to God’s house. So, let’s talk about the tithe for a moment.

A tithe is a tenth. The Law required that each person, or family group, bring a tenth of all “increase” to the temple. For example, increase would include a tenth of all crops harvested, or a tenth of all lambs born that year, or a tenth of all the olive oil produced. A tithe was owed on anything that brought increase. Today, a tithe would be a tenth of your paycheck, for instance.

The tithe had both a spiritual and practical application. The practical application was the tithe supported the priests who maintained regular worship in the temple. The tithe allowed the priests to be clothed and fed. And, it allowed the temple structure to be maintained.

The spiritual application behind the tithe is this. God creates everything so God owns everything. Giving the tithe is a tangible expression, it is an outward recognition, that everything belongs to God. Not just our finances, but our whole lives. A person giving the tithe recognizes this and so gives the tithe joyfully.

According to Old Testament law, the tithe was not optional. The tithe was **owed** to God. In fact, if you

added up all the tithes and offerings required by the Law, the average Israelite gave around 23% of their income, or increase, in tithes and offerings each year.

Here, in these verses from Malachi, God rebukes the remnant because they were not obeying the Law. People were either not bringing the tithe at all, or they were not bringing the full amount of the tithe. This is why God accuses the people of robbing him.

By law, God was owed the tithe and the people were not bringing it. In fact, God says the people are under a curse for not bringing the full tithe into the temple. There is always a curse attached to disobedience to God’s law.

Now, let’s address something that may be on your mind. Today, we are no longer under the **law** of the tithe. Today, those who have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior live under grace, not law.

Yet, the spiritual and practical applications of the tithe remain the same. God’s people still need to give so the church can maintain regular worship. And God still owns everything. Giving remains a tangible expression of this.

As far as I can tell, Jesus never rescinded the concept of the tithe. Jesus did rebuke those who gave the tithe, yet, ignored other spiritual issues, like the care of the poor, and the protection of widows. But he never rescinded the principle of the tithe.

In Luke 6:38, Jesus said this about giving. Jesus said, *“give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”* (Luke 6:38, ESV)

“Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”

(Luke 6:38, ESV)

Jesus strongly exhorted people to give. Here, in the original language, Jesus is saying, "I exhort you to give and keep giving." Jesus says when we give, it will be given back to us.

Jesus did not tell the people they had to give ten percent. The people understood the concept of the tithe and I believe Jesus knew that some of them, and some of us, might be able to give more than ten percent.

Yet, Jesus reiterates the discipline of giving. Not just financial giving, but giving of yourself to help and encourage people. Jesus says what we give will be given back to us, in equal or greater measure. So, the spiritual and practical principles behind the tithe are still relevant today.

not test God. We are told to not put God to the test. Yet here, God says "test me." So we need pay attention here.

How are we to test God? God says, "*Bring the full tithe into the storehouse [of the temple].*" And if we do this, God says he will respond in a specific way.

God says he will open the windows of heaven for his people and pour down a blessing for them until there is no more need. God also says he will rebuke the devourer so it will not destroy the fruits of their soil, and their vines in the field shall not fail to bear.

In other words, God says he will send just the right amount of rain for their crops, and vines, and trees. And, then, God says he will protect the harvest.

God says he will keep away pests, and any diseases,



Test Me: Now, God says something unique in Mal. 3:10-11. God says, "*Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the LORD of hosts.*"

Here, God says "test me." This has always caused my ears to perk up. Most of the time, the bible tells us to

that would damage or devour their harvest. The end result will be a harvest of great abundance.

Also, plentiful rain would provide an abundance of grass for their herds to eat so they would grow fat, and produce many offspring. God says test me in this.

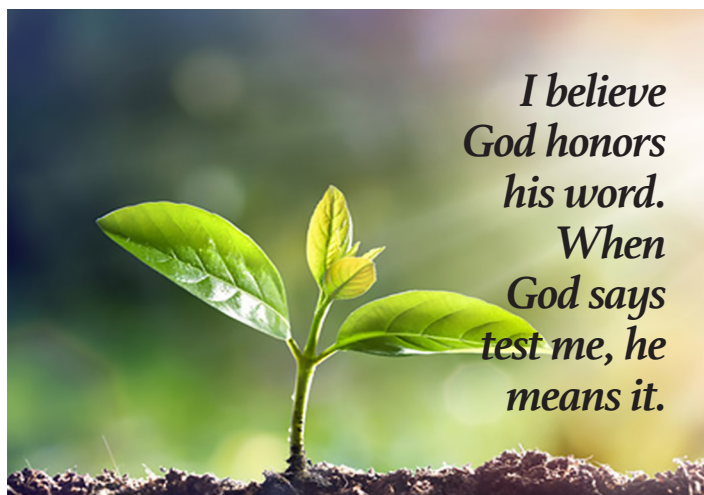
God says if you will bring the full tithe into the temple, I will give you abundance in your harvests and your herds. You will have a plentiful increase. Again, we see the principle here that Jesus gave us in Luke 6:38, "*Give, and it will be given to you.*"

I test God. Now, a few months ago, the Holy Spirit

brought these verses from Malachi to my mind. And, here is what I was prompted to do. First, I started reading these verses out loud every day. And I asked God to honor his word.

Next, Simone and I have always tithed, yet I was careful to make sure we were tithing on all our increases, not just my salary and our social security payments, but also on any realized investment gains. In other words, gains made on investments that were sold.

And also, please understand, CPC gives away 10% of all non-designated monies received. The Old Testament priests tithed on the tithes they were given, and we follow the same model by giving 10% away to missions.



Then, I modernized these verses by asking God to pour down a blessing for our finances until there was no more need. And I asked God to rebuke the devourer so that our investments would not fail to bear a good return.

And here is what happened to Simone and I personally. First, Simone and I received a California stimulus check for \$600 that we were not expecting.

Next, Simone was sent a check from Post University, where she had taken some online classes, with no explanation of what it was for.

Then I was notified that Social Security had underpaid me. They sent me a one-time check to make up for the shortfall and increased my monthly payment.

Finally, some of our investments did way better than I was expecting. God was honoring his word.

And, here is what happened to CPC's finances. "This is Us" chose us to film one of their scenes. This was after



they chose another location the previous three times they contacted us.

Also, our church had its best financial year in memory. I just ran the financial reports for December and for the year 2021. The church received over \$40,000 in December.

So we have a \$26,000 surplus for the year! And we still have a few checks that came in this week that have not yet been posted. Amen! And remember, this is after giving away 10% of all non-designated money. Isn't that incredible!

Now, I don't believe this is all coincidence. I believe God honors his word. When God says test me, he means it. Bottom line, I believe God still honors the principle of the tithe.

Now, I want to be careful here. God is not a slot machine. If we put in \$10, we are not guaranteed to get a hundred back. Yet, God does honor his word.

I believe when we honor the concept of the tithe, we place ourselves in position to receive God's abundant blessings, not just financially, but in all aspects of our lives.

I believe when we read these scriptures out loud, and do what they say, the Holy Spirit aligns us mentally and spiritually to receive God's wisdom and discernment about financial matters. So, we make better decisions.

So, this is what the Holy Spirit put on my heart for today. And I encourage you to test God yourselves according to Mal. 3:8-11. What would happen if we all consistently prayed these verses out loud, and honored the concept of the tithe? What would God do? Amen!

*“If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.
27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” (1Cor. 12:26-27)*

PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER

Praise and thanksgiving: Paul Tiguelo’s MRI and body scan came out 100% clear! Simone had a major tooth infection resulting in a tooth extraction. The procedure went exceedingly well and Simone is recuperating quickly. Tere’s daughters tested positive multiple times for covid. They are now back in school.

For those who are grieving: Hazel McElfresh, loss of her daughter. For strength and wisdom to be both grandmother and mother to her 16-year-old orphaned grandson, Christian. Stella Kenner lost her son. The Rev. Bob Whitaker lost his wife. Maria Cardenas lost her longtime dog companion, Marley. Tom Chinen has lost his brother. Kevin Miller has lost his job.

For those who need physical healing: Joy Boyajian who had para-thyroid surgery. Tom Chinen has a pinched nerve in his neck and shoulder that needs surgery. Yuri lives with extreme chronic pain. Ron Jung renewed strength and encouragement.

For those who are home bound or in a care facility: Joan Janecek, Ron Jung, Barbara Kashiwagi,



Kimi Fujitani, Karen Koranye, Frank Morimoto, Janet Nozaki, Jean Sakai, Irene Mayeda caring for her mother Harumi, Esther Ingram caring for her husband Charles.

For those kept home because of COVID: Sueko Arakawa, Jimi Yamagishi

General: Patti Torres moved to a new home in South Pasadena.

Our Missionaries: Christian Zebley and family in Japan. Specifically for additional financial support. Also, cover the children in prayer as they are boldly proclaiming the gospel at school.

For Church leadership: Pastor Ernesto and Juana Salguero, and our sister church Faro De Luz. Pastor Steve and Simone Baroldy and our Christ Presbyterian church community. For all the leading elders to have discernment and wisdom for guiding their church communities to proclaiming the gospel and demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness and self-control.

How can we pray for you?

If you have prayer requests, you can send them via email or text PRIOR to our service each Sunday.

My email is sbaroldy@gmail.com.
You can text me at 323-202-5078.



Ukulele Revival at Christ Presbyterian Church

Up down, Up down, Up down
Goes the ukulele strum.
Sing with Tom a merry song,
It is so much fun.

In October 2021 Tom Chinen and friend Warren started a Ukulele class. Providing instruments, music and expertise, Tom and Warren set out to teach anyone interested to play the Ukulele.

The first steps, Tom and Warren say, is to learn the history of the Ukulele and the Hawaiian Vamp. (Although my first step was learning how to spell Ukulele.)

Up down. Up down. Up down. Up down.
Goes the one finger strum.

Vamp in the Key of C: D7, G7, C is the base for so many songs.

"A vamp consists of a pattern of 3 chords that introduces the song, connects the verses, and ends the song." (Island Joy – Hawaiian Music book #2).

The ukulele originated in Europe and was introduced to Hawaii in 1879. A Portuguese man introduced his 4-string small guitar to Hawaiians but it was the Hawaiians who named the instrument the "ukulele", which is translated "jumping flea". The ukulele was the heart instrument of the Hawaiians. Even the reigning monarch Kalakaua learned to play.

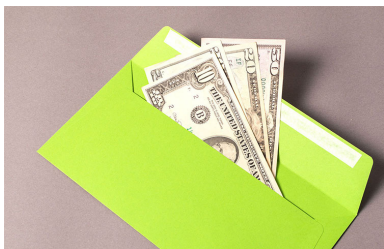
In the early 1900's, at the Panama Pacific International Exposition, the Hawaiians captured the hearts of the Americas with their dance and song accompanied by the ukulele. In 1913 a reporter for Harford Courant described how "the wonderfully sweet voices and weird melodies of the ukulele

(sic) players strike a plaintive heart-note never to be forgotten once heard." From time to time a new pop star, such as Elvis Presley, The Beach Boys, Tiny Tim and even the Beatles, brings back the ukulele. George Harrison once penned, "Everybody should have and play a uke. It's so simple to carry with you and it is one instrument you can't play and not laugh! It's so sweet and also very old."

Ukulele revival has broken out at Christ Presbyterian Church. Lessons are starting up again this February. Come and learn to play the ukulele by Warren's and Tom's excellent teaching. Join the fun, song and fellowship: Sunday mornings at 10am to 10:45am in the Conference room. At 11am be a part of the church family in worshipping by song accompanied by piano, guitar, and ukulele, by hearing GOD's word read and taught, and by visiting with one another to encouraging each other into a new week of walking with our Lord Jesus Christ. Take your Ukulele with you. - (Simone)



Gifts & Offering



We are grateful for your continued generosity in supporting our ministry.

Please consider sending a gift or donation to:

**Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood
4011 Clinton Street, Los Angeles, CA 90004**

FINANCIAL REPORT

JANUARY
2022



	<u>JAN. 2022</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Receipts	\$ 10,929	\$ 10,929
Disbursements	\$ 18,861	\$ 26,850
Increase (Deficit)	(\$ 7,934)	(\$ 7,934)

“ Simone and I are honored and touched by the Session's generosity. They and the Pastoral Compensation Committee voted to give me a bonus for last year as I have not had a raise in several years. Simone and I thank the members and friends of the church for making the bonus possible. The bonus is the reason for the abnormal deficit for January. Blessings and thank you. Pastor Steve and Simone.”

CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOLLYWOOD



**SUNDAYS at 11:00 A.M.
IN-PERSON OR ON ZOOM**

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/384758031?pwd=ZnEySjBjL1VkUmhiTWRCREdmZVhJZz09>

Meeting ID: 384 758 031
Password: 351955
One tap mobile
+16699006833,,384758031# US (San Jose)
+13462487799,,384758031# US (Houston)

"Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood is an intentional healing community; proclaiming and demonstrating the wholeness of life offered by Jesus Christ."

DATED MATERIAL

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

the Parish Visitor
Published by
Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood
4011 Clinton St.
Los Angeles, CA 90004-2298
(323) 665-3581

