

Stewardship talk for the 2018 campaign.(@3:30)

I am Paul Judkins, the “people’s warden” - or Junior Warden, here at St Mary’s. Maybe I am better recognized as the man who drives a big pickup truck to this distinguished Episcopal church! Perhaps you have noticed my big, red Ram in the parking lot.

I like that truck. I like its size, its power, the view I have while in the heavy traffic, and its usefulness. I have had up to 7 people in its cab, it carries stuff you can’t put in your diminutive S.U.V.’s and sedans. It pulls our big camper down the road like nothing was behind it. It’s a man’s wheels!

There is a cost to that joy; I had to find a dealer and purchase it, it has to be insured, it has to be parked when not in use, it has to be kept clean, it has to be maintained and most painfully, it has to be refueled. I find a way to pay those costs because that truck is important to me!

Well, a truck owner is not all I am. More importantly, I am an Episcopalian. I am a Christian. I am a child of God. I not only have to talk and look the part, I am burdened to be useful and live the part. To do my spiritual duty, I have to see and be seen. I have to pull my load in a way that a Christian is expected to. I can’t do that well without a support structure. Spiritually, I have to be cleaned, and refueled. I have to be maintained. I need the insurance! Sure, it’s possible to be a Christian without a church, but how long will that last without the care and inspiration that fellow laborers and professional spiritual maintenance people give us?

Being an active part of a church is vital to my life as a Christian. I choose St. Mary’s to be that church. Being part of a church is far more important to me than the joy of driving my big truck. However, there are similarities; I need to provide for both and that requires my personal effort and money. We don’t question that we pay

the bills associated with our transportation around this world. Why do we have to struggle with the costs of making way in God's kingdom?

I couldn't really appreciate my truck if I expected someone else to pay the cost. Could I long enjoy and be served by my church if I did not contribute to the costs?

Jesus told us very clearly, "Where your treasure is, there your heart is also." Where is your heart, Christian? It's not like what we hear on TV, "What's in your wallet?", God's question to you is, "what's in your heart?"

St. Mary's needs the support of our parishioners. We need to make a budget which makes our church more than the beautiful structure you see here. We must be more than a comfortable place to sit once a week. A big, pretty service station with no gas is useless to me. A church which has little to give to parishioners and its community is useless to us, our community and to God.

Please get behind St. Mary's. Give our church of your time, talent and treasure. Our focus in this season is money, but it's not what's in your wallet that counts, it only makes a difference when it is what is in your heart.

We can do great things here, be a part of it. Make a pledge this year. St Mary's will appreciate you, but more importantly you will appreciate St. Mary's more.

Remember, you can't out give God!