Eastern Shore Chapel

2027 Financial Commitment/Pledge Campaign

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the 2027 Financial Commitment/Pledge campaign?

A: In the fall of each year, Eastern Shore Chapel solicits financial "pledges" or commitments for the coming calendar year to allow the church to more effectively plan and budget. Whatever your financial commitment, it is important to return a pledge card for our records and planning purposes. Annual pledges and the Sunday offering are the main source of funding for ESC's operating expense. We use both the phrase "financial commitment" and the term "pledge" to represent our parish family's commitment to give a certain amount of money to help the ESC community sustain itself and grow.

Q: Why should I make a financial commitment/pledge to Eastern Shore Chapel?

A: Making a financial commitment to ESC is different from contributions you might make to your alma mater or another charitable organization. A pledge acknowledges that everything we have comes from God and you are simply giving back a part of God's gifts to you. Practically speaking, Eastern Shore Chapel depends on your financial contributions in addition to your participation in other parish activities, to do its work and ministry. Making your financial commitment/pledge enables our clergy and vestry to better plan how to use our resources. The vestry establishes an annual budget based upon the total amount committed to the church. While regular non-pledged giving is important, a pledge helps ESC's leadership plan and enables our ministries to thrive and grow for this generation and the next.

Q: Is there a new giving goal for 2027?

A: Yes. In a Vestry-commissioned study this year, there was near universal emphasis on the need for ESC to focus additional time, energy and resources into our youth and young adult ministries. To that end, we will be looking to add an additional staff position in 2027 to address this critical need. If our parishioners are able to raise their annual pledge by just 10%, we will be able to not only fund this new position, but also cover the rest of the parish's ongoing ministerial and material needs.

Q: How much should I commit of my 2027 finances to the support of Eastern Shore Chapel?

A: Your pledge is about your relationship with God and Eastern Shore Chapel, and therefore should be made thoughtfully and prayerfully. Proportional giving is based on the premise that the first fruits are given back to God in grateful response to what God has given to us. This refers to a conscious effort to determine an appropriate level of giving. Each parishioner is asked to consider making an annual pledge/commitment in proportion to income. While not many of us can begin by giving at the Biblical norm of a 10% tithe, all of us can begin with a percentage, a proportional gift. Every financial commitment in every amount is accepted with deep gratitude and recognition of the sacrifices each of us makes in our lives. If you have not pledged before, please give serious thought to making a financial commitment this year. If you are among the many generous-hearted people who have pledged before to Eastern Shore Chapel, please consider raising your pledge amount by 10% to further support our parish.

Q: How do I make my 2027 financial commitment/pledge?

A: You may complete the enclosed 2027 pledge card and return it to the church either by mail, by placing it in the offering plate during worship services, or by delivering it to the ESC church office. You may also fill out a pledge form online at the link on our website, *www.easternshorechapel.org*. The QR code on the pledge card will take you directly to our online giving page where you can make a pledge. If you have any questions or problems making your pledge, please contact Bob Suter, our Parish Finance Administrator (*rmsuter@easternshorechapel.org*). **We will bless all financial commitments/pledges at our in-gathering services on November 22.**

Q: How do I fulfill my financial commitment/pledge?

A: Returning your pledge card represents your promise to make a financial contribution to Eastern Shore Chapel. You may pay this amount on any schedule that suits your needs: weekly, monthly, quarterly, or in one annual payment.

- Direct Giving: You can place your gift in the offering plate during Sunday services or by mailing your check to Eastern Shore Chapel. You may also give by clicking the GIVE button on our church website.
- Automatic Giving: You may schedule automatic payments of your gift through the online bill pay service at your bank. You may also schedule safe and secure online giving options at the GIVE button on our church website. If you are continuing your automatic giving from 2026, please review your giving amount and send an email to Bob Suter (*rmsuter@easternshorechapel.org*) to confirm.

Q: In addition to my 2027 financial commitment/pledge, what are some other ways to financially give to Eastern Shore Chapel?

These are some of the ways to financially give to our parish

- Plate offerings
- Pledge offerings
- One-time or on-going ministry monetary donations
- Ministry specific giving (almoner's fund, Chapel Pantry, family assistance ministry, flower guild, music ministry)
- Building the Future Fund (building and grounds support)
- End of year giving
- St. Francis Legacy gifts and planned-giving (bequest in a will or trust, life income gift, life insurance, life estate)

Q: I would like to talk to someone about planned-giving and including Eastern Shore Chapel in my estate. Who is the contact for this information?

A: There are many tax benefits available through the transfer stocks, securities and IRA accounts to Eastern Shore Chapel. For more information, contact your personal financial advisor. Our ESC contacts for these transfers are Hank Marriott (*hankmarriott@outlook.com*) and Bob Suter (*rmsuter@easternshorechapel.org*). Those that include Eastern Shore Chapel in their estate giving are included in the Francis Fund Society and recognized in the Francis Garden with their name engraved on a brick after their death.

A Letter from the Rector

Eastern Shore Chapel
Episcopal Church

Dear Friends,

As we've journeyed together in faith over the last year, we have been given so many gifts by our loving and providential God. In my letter to you last year, I concluded with the hopeful expectation of "what our nets would bring in" as we sailed our ship into the deeper waters of prayer and discernment. Our communal catch has been a good one. While we continue to see positive signs of parish growth, both in the number of congregants and the vitality of our many ministries, we have also been the recipients of significant guidance and insight as we plot our future course together.

In the first half of the year, our Vestry commissioned a study seeking to gain a deeper understanding of the hopes and dreams of our parish family vis-a-vis a variety of creative and forward-looking projects and proposals for programmatic and capital improvement. Consultant Allison Bough of SparkNonprofit spent significant time with a cross-section of our membership trying to identify themes and patterns in how the Holy Spirit was nudging hearts and minds. The takeaways were of immense value in setting some guidepost for the clergy and lay leadership of the parish moving forward.

First and foremost, the study highlighted the mutual positive regard and hope-filled energy that is in our midst. Allison shared with me personally that she was both impressed and inspired by what she witnessed during her time with us. I continue to be impressed as well. As I move through the many daily, weekly and seasonal expressions of ESC's mission and ministry, I get a privileged point of view on God's work in our church family. I am reminded of the words of Jesus to the messengers of John the Baptist in Matthew 11:2-5:

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them.

Do you wonder what the Kingdom of God looks like? As an important part of this parish, you don't have to look very far. Glimpses of that future Kingdom are being made manifest in the very midst of us. The hungry come to us and walk away fed, not just in body, but also in spirit, as they are treated with dignity and respect as God's children. People stagger through our doors in the chains of addiction and self-doubt and find a place that supports their journey toward freedom and wholeness. The young hear and sing about the love of God in Jesus for the first time, while the chronologically experienced gather in circles of

mutual prayer, shared service and future hope. Dead hearts are raised to new life, and angelic choirs with human faces praise God around a sanctuary that bridges what is with what will be.

Of course, all of that has everything to do with God's grace working in us infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. And still, that same God isn't even close to being done with us. While we give thanks for what Christ has already accomplished here, we also lean eagerly forward into what He has planned for us next.

An important part of that faithful, future-oriented mission is working diligently to ensure that Eastern Shore Chapel remains an outpost of God's Kingdom on Earth for many decades and centuries to come. To that point, one of the strongest conclusions of the recent study was the near-universal emphasis on the need for our parish to focus additional time, energy and resources into our youth and young adult ministries. To that end, we will be looking to add an additional staff position in 2027 to address this critical need. Please lift this up in prayer, as we give thanks for this special person as of yet unknown to us, but already known to God.

Prayer is critical, but our collective support of this new role also depends on earthly resources. As we seek to grow the footprint of God's Kingdom here in Virginia Beach together, please consider your current generosity and ask if there is room in it to help move our mission forward. If you've never pledged before, I invite you to take a leap of trust and consider it in the coming year.

I don't have any doubt that God has wonderful surprises planned for Eastern Shore Chapel. May the season ahead of us see God's Kingdom come and God's will be done, as we work together to make things on Earth just a little bit more like they are in Heaven!

Gratefully in Christ,



The Rev. Cn. Shawn Malarkey

Rector, Eastern Shore Chapel Episcopal Church