

## Why I Pledge



One Sunday morning, when I was about four years old, my father came into my room and stacked ten pennies on the dresser. He said, "Becky, you are old enough to receive an allowance. There is only one condition, that you take one of these pennies with you to church and put it in the collection plate when it comes by during worship."

At four years old, I was more excited about putting my penny in the collection plate than I was about the other nine pennies! I wanted to participate! I wanted to be so grown up as to be included in the ritual of "offering." I especially liked writing my name (once I was able) and 1¢ on the little white envelopes, upon which I had been doodling for ages! That next year, I even received my own envelopes WITH MY NAME PRINTED ON THEM! (It probably cost the church more money than I was giving to print the envelopes!)

I have always loved the church. It was in church that I first felt God's presence, that I first learned about awe, and mystery, and holy friendship. It is where I learned about social justice and about the stories found in that big book, itself its own library. When I went away to college and studied art history, I was thankful that I could identify biblical characters, even though no one else could. Imagine my surprise to find that none of my peers knew the stories of the Bible!

Since that time, I wish I could say that I have always been a "ten percent-er." I haven't been. Yet I have always thought of myself as generous, and I can confidently say that my life has always been better when I have pledged. Not because God has done me any special favors as a result, (I wouldn't want a relationship with God based on a quid pro quo, because I could never live up to God's ability to give!), but because I felt close to God, knowing that I intended to return back to God a portion of the many blessings that God has given me, both tangible and intangible. It feels good to trust, to see the glass as half full, to feel gratitude for life itself, and to express that gratitude in a tangible way.

Long gone are the days when a penny in the offering plate was enough to express my gratitude. I do try to raise my pledge a little bit every year. This year, I will increase my pledge by 24%. I even have aspirations to someday go "beyond the tithe" and with the grace of God, I may even get there.

With deep gratitude for all who make Covenant such a bright light,

Becky

*\*In this context, apocalypse means the revelation of something very important that was previously hidden.*

