Hello friends in our Grace church family. For those who don’t know me my name is Toby Green. I’ve been a member since the mid-60s. As part of this year stewardship campaign our stewardship committee (Ken Maskell and Deacon Kyle) asked me to tell about my stewardship journey in our Episcopal Church.

I grew up in the little town of Chatsworth and attended the Methodist Church there. When I went away to college I decided to try different churches to learn about the difference in the Christian denominations. I always felt more comfortable in the Episcopal Churches and when I found the love of my life who was Episcopalian that sealed the deal for me. I’ve always felt that the Episcopal Church educates a person and gives them the tools travel their own journey of faith and not force you into strict unbending stigma or way of thinking.

From the time we joined the church we did pledge cards and tried to faithfully keep our pledge, which was pretty minimal. We had three children and struggled to make ends meet. But we did try to increase it a little each year.

Our family was active in church. Our kids were acolytes and youth members. Dorothy, my wife, was the president of the ladies’ guild for several years and I was a vestryman and warden for many years. As a member of vestry I was involved with stewardship and attended several workshops in that capacity. That education, as well as seeing the importance of regular giving as out monthly vestry discussions concerning budgets and fundraising made me quickly realize that the church can’t be a viable asset to its members or the greater community without the members contributing regularly of their special talents and time and monetary contributions.

As far as my own stewardship journey. I think it has evolved a lot over time. At first, it was more giving because it was “the right thing to do”. A duty. Next through stewardship education, we have done percentage giving. Trying to increase our percentage each year with the ultimate goal being “the tithe”.

Finally, I have come to the realization of how truly blessed my life is and has been. I truly feel if God gave unborn souls a choice of lives to live, there would be a line for the life I have been blessed with. Looking at my blessings though the lens makes it very easy to give a “small” percentage of God’s blessing back. Now instead of giving to the church, I give back to God through the church.