
On Making a Will – and Supporting the Church!

An article from the *Cathedral Times*.

Thank you! There are some things in life, and in the church, that we often assume we don't need to say. They should be obvious, either from common sense, or from custom and courtesy themselves.

One of these obvious and customary statements has to do with making a will in your life, regardless of the size of your estate, and no matter whether you are a church going person or not. We will all die, and one of the most considerate things we can do for our successors is to leave a will!

Thus, it is noteworthy that the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer includes a specific direction in this regard: *"The Minister of the Congregation is directed to instruct the people, from time to time, about the duty of Christian parents to make prudent provision for the well-being of their families, and of all persons to make wills, while they are in health, arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, not neglecting, if they are able, to leave bequests for religious and charitable uses."* (The Book of Common Prayer, page 445).

So, I need to instruct: Make a will!

But the second item in that instruction is also worth repeating: Please do leave bequests for religious uses – and especially for this community, the Cathedral Parish of St. Philip. The church where you have been baptized and married, the church where you have been nurtured and challenged, the church where you have honored the holy, the church where you may well have your funeral, does not serve in all those ways without you contributing financial gifts – and portions of your final estate.

The Cathedral of St. Philip is able to serve with grace and hospitality because so many of you contribute annually to our needs. Thank you! You get it. You know there is no way this church could serve if every parishioner threw only a couple of dollars each week into the plate, or gave only some token amount. We would not be able to conduct Sunday services and beautiful weddings and critical outreach projects and holy funerals. We depend upon a faithful and generous community of people. Thank you!

Sometimes I admit that the church and volunteer staff have their faith tested when they serve so tirelessly for people who do not know our community so well. We all know it is true; but we still laugh that the weddings and funerals of regular parishioners go so easily here, while the weddings and funerals of not-so-regular guests are so demanding (and with such less appreciation, including less financial appreciation from those who obviously have plenty of assets). Still, of course, we serve everyone with the grace God has given us.

Again, maybe some things shouldn't need to be said. But I must say them. It is both common sense and common courtesy to appreciate a church financially when its community has served your baptism, or your wedding, or your loved one's funeral – or your class or your event or your prayer. And if a particular church has conducted your good friend's funeral, consider making a donation to that particular church in memory of that friend.

Ultimately, of course, the church is a community – not a building. And it is a community that conducts baptisms and weddings and funerals and prayer services, all in the faith of Jesus Christ our Lord. And it is that ongoing community of faith that is supported by our financial estate planning and by our financial giving. Thank you!

Sam Candler

© The Cathedral of St. Philip. All rights reserved.