

Good Morning.

Today I want to speak to you about Stewardship. For those of you that do not know me and for those that need a name refresher, my name is Nathan Barker. You have probably seen my name in the announcements next to my soon-to-be wife Kirsten's name for what seems like forever.

Kirsten and I first visited Christ Church in May 2017 looking for a church community where we could grow both in our faith and as a family. We visited other churches in the neighborhood and could not find one that felt right, the one to call home. Our first Sunday here, I listened to an excellent sermon that spoke directly me and the challenges I was facing that week.

Check. Our first Sunday here, we were greeted by a warm, welcoming congregation [*Name a few people in the congregation*] and, of course, Reverend Cara. Check. Kirsten and I knew, that Sunday, we had found a church to call home and a group of people to call our church family in a place far from Georgia and our own families.

Over the past 2 years, I have had many wonderful opportunities to be involved at the church and to serve our surrounding community. Kirsten and I are members of the 20s/30s group and volunteer to help at events such as

the Summer Grill 'n' Chills, the Saint Pat's and the Saint Nick's dinners. The Men's group, of which I am a member, recently painted the fence at Shirley's Place utilizing the Church's Outreach budget funded by the congregation's yearly giving. I have been a proud member of the vestry for almost a year now and it has been quite the experience to serve this church and each of you during this period of transition and beyond.

As a young couple just starting out after college and living in the expensive city, we didn't have a whole lot to give to our new church home. So, we invested our time volunteering at Christ Church and pledging what we could give. Thankfully, we have been able to increase our pledge each year as we've established ourselves. Christ Church is our home and like any homeowners you must invest your time and money into that home so it can grow, prosper and serve the community around it.

None of this is possible with out us all doing our part. I will continue to make sure this church home of mine is a priority with my giving, and I encourage you to do the same this coming year.