

## A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE



**A deep spirituality  
will desire to weave itself into all parts  
of our lives.**

**In the Tithé we can enter into a spiri-  
tual practice of living mindfully  
with our personal economics.  
We manifest our faith through inten-  
tional financial planning.  
As individuals and in community,  
where our money is,  
there is our heart also.**

**In the Tithé  
we recognize that all we have comes  
from our Creator.**

**In the Tithé  
we live out the call to  
respond to the needs of the world with  
compassion, justice and generosity.**

## Tithing specific scriptures

Tithe first began with Jacob as part of covenant with God  
(GENESIS 28:20-22)

All tithes on land/produce belong to God; if redeemed add 1/5  
to value (LEVITICUS 27:30-31)

Every tenth animal belongs to God (LEVITICUS 27:32-33)

Annual tithe of produce/stock to be eaten in God's presence  
with thanksgiving (DEUTERONOMY 12:6-7, 17-19; 14:22-29)

Tithes provide for needs of Levites (NUMBERS 18:20-24,  
DEUTERONOMY 12:19; 14:27-29)

Third year tithe is for Levites (DEUTERONOMY 14:28-29)

Levites give a tithe of the tithe to Aaronite priests (No 18:25-32)

Tithes provide for needs of Levites, foreigners, orphans, widows  
(DEUTERONOMY 26:12-15)

Hezekiah reconstitutes priestly orders and sacred duties,  
including tithe (2 CHRONICLES 31:2-13)

Nehemiah has people pledge to reconstitute tithe (NEHEMIAH  
10:35-39; 12:44-47; 13:10-13)

Tithe helps redistribute wealth (EZEKIEL 18:5-20; LK 3:7-14)

If Israel will quit cheating on its tithes, God will bless them  
(MALACHI 3:6-12)

Scribes and Pharisees tithe little things, neglect important  
things (MATTHEW 23:23-28; LUKE 11:39-42)

Pharisee does proper rituals but is not justified because not  
humble (LUKE 18:9-14)

Source: United Methodist Church, USA  
<http://www.laityumc.org/tithing.htm#4>

## Toward Daring Discipleship



March, 2010  
**Tithe**  
as Spiritual Practice



## Spiritual Practices

"...the things (Christians) do in  
community that form them in God's  
love for the world."

Diana Butler Bass, *Christianity for the  
Rest of us*

## THINKING ABOUT TITHING

### A midrash

Jesus received an invitation to dinner at *St. Fund-raiser United Church* for 7:00 p.m. When he arrived, however, he found that the dinner was well under way. It appeared that the meal had started at 6:00. Had he misunderstood?

It appeared not. He was warmly welcomed by the Chair of the Board as the guest of honor, seated at the head table and invited to offer a 'short prayer'.

Most of the other guests were almost finished their meal. Jesus was slightly baffled, because although he had a plate, there was little food left on the table platters.

The Chair of the Board had it all well in hand, however. He took Jesus' plate, and passed it around the table. Everyone scraped the leftovers from their own plates onto his plate, and returned it to him. With warm smiles, they waited expectantly for his thanks and his first appreciative bite.



### Why 10%?

Why not 10% ?

If we move away from giving the change in our pockets, to an **intentional** way of living our faith in our finances as well as other aspects of our lives...



If we want to integrate all parts of our life into spiritual practice...

We need to ask...

What might the percentage be that does not impoverish us but does challenge us and allow us to express our commitment to God's purposes in the world? The answer may be more or less than 10%, but 10% is a good place to start the conversation.

Is there something to be said for holding to a Biblical precedent and following an ancient practice through which people lived out their faith?

... and let us be practical...

10% is easy to calculate!

### We are grateful.

You have given us this day and have given us this way to say Thank You.



We thank you for giving us what we need to be grateful.

We offer back to You

all that we have

all that we are.

We know our thank you

is as fragile as we are

-it can be crushed

by the care of the moment

-it can disappear

in the heat of the day

-it can be thrown away

by the winds of suffering.

And so we ask You

to take our small thank you

into Your great act of Thanksgiving:

You, Lord of the loaves and fishes,

You who are from God

With God and for God,

You in whom it is all

Yes and Amen.

Leddy, Mary Jo. *Radical Gratitude*. MaryKnoll: Orbis, 2003