

# ANNUAL CALL TO MEMBERSHIP

## *A Season of Thanks and Giving*

Our Cathedral calls us to a journey of faith together.  
Become a member. Renew your membership.  
Respond to God's abundant love with thanksgiving.  
Deepen your commitment.



The  
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Cathedral  
in Paris

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*A Season of Thanks and Giving*

**Lucinda Laird, Dean and Rector**



Dear friends,

Give thanks. Thanksgiving is at the core of the Christian life. It is the meaning of the Greek word "eucharist", the communion we celebrate every Sunday as we give thanks for God in Christ. And it is the way we are called to look at our lives.

Autumn has always seemed to me to be the time for thanks, as the year comes to its maturity. The poet John Donne says,

*In paradise the fruits were ripe the first minute  
and in heaven it is always autumn;  
God's mercies are ever in their maturity –*

We all have our ups and downs, our struggles, in life, but beneath it all, in good times and bad, our attitude is one of thanksgiving for God's love and mercy.

I say this as we begin our Annual Call to Membership, our pledge drive. I honestly believe that if we don't start with thanksgiving, none of it makes sense.

We are a community at the Cathedral, and we give thanks for that. Each year we ask each other to make a pledge for the support of the Cathedral. There are two important reasons:

The Cathedral needs – MUST have – your support and mine. No one else (including the government) supports us. Our on-going life – everything we have and do here – depends on us.

MORE important – much more important – is the spiritual reason: we need to give. We need to be generous people. In following Christ we need to imitate the One who has loved us into being and showers us with all good things.

Make a pledge. Make it for practical reasons: it is very much needed. Even more, make it out of a response to God's love and in a spirit of Thanksgiving.

Yours in Christ,

**Lucinda+**



A Note from the Treasurer

**Mark Adams, Treasurer**

If you're like me, the American Cathedral is an important part of your life here in Paris. Every Sunday, there is no better and more beautiful place in town for inspiring liturgy, beautiful music, and great sermons (in English!). More than just a place to worship, the Cathedral is a real community. For the many of us that are far from home, the Cathedral helps us make Paris our home. There are so many ways to get involved and to do good: Love in a Box, Friday Mission Lunch, Sunday School, the Youth program, the Sunday Forum, singing in the choir, Les Arts George V, the Junior Guild, the Flower Guild, the Garden Guild, the Ushers, the Acolytes, the Lectors, the Vestry, the Committees, the list goes on. The Cathedral is a place of worship, a place of fellowship, and a haven in the midst of a challenging world.

**Your pledge makes it all possible.** Pledges are the Cathedral's main source of funds. Without your generosity, we can't pay our clergy or staff, maintain our building, support our music, fund our mission & outreach efforts, or offer our many programs. While we've worked really hard to grow non-pledge revenue and streamline costs, none of that is enough to make ends meet without your pledge.

**Your generosity is vital.** The Cathedral manages to do a lot with what it has been given, but behind the scenes, it's increasingly

difficult. To improve our financial stability, we've had to cut many program budgets to a shoestring, and we're often forced to defer maintenance to our building for lack of funds. Our endowment offers an essential cushion, but we can't draw too heavily on it without putting it at risk. We're getting by, but we too often lack the resources we need to grow and invest in the future. If we want the Cathedral to thrive, we need to increase our pledges to a level that better supports our staff and programs.



**Here's how you can help:**

- **Consider increasing your pledge.** Many of us pledge the same thing year-in and year-out, even as our incomes have grown, our circumstances have changed for the better or we've been blessed with good fortune. Others increase their pledge, but do so by only a small amount. When you make your pledge this year, please consider whether you can do more.
- **Remember the French tax benefits.** While the French government does not give the Cathedral direct support, it does offer significant tax benefits to pledging members who pay French taxes. As a general rule, two-thirds of whatever you contribute to the Cathedral is returned to you in the form of a reduction in your French

income taxes. For example, if you increase your pledge by €1,500, you'll be getting €1,000 of that back at tax time, meaning the real cost to you is just €500. (Consult your tax advisor to confirm how these rules apply to your situation.)



bountifully. Many of us increased our pledges last year – if you're one of them, ask yourself – did that increase break the bank, or did you end up doing ok? If you did ok, why not consider taking it up another notch this year? As the scripture reminds us, "the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully" and "God is able to make all grace abound ... so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed."

- **Make a leap of faith.** Each of us has different circumstances, and we must all decide ourselves what to pledge. But I'd encourage you to make a leap of faith and give

**A Snapshot of the Cathedral's 2017 Standalone Budget**

Income	Euros	Expenses	Euros
Pledge income	506,700	Clergy and staff costs	480,449
Plate and donation boxes	53,000	Buildings and grounds	218,862
Special liturgies & festivals	74,700	Music program	127,270
Development income & Friends	55,000	Mission and outreach	60,632
Other donations & designated gifts	57,800	Other programs	18,090
Space usage income	205,000		
Grants & Legacies	3,000	Administration	144,567
Other income	2,600	Convocation assessment	93,021
Draw from the Foundation	183,000	Other expenses	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,140,800</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,142,891</b>

**Capital projects budgeted: (\*)**

Special Endowment draw	107,000
Fire escape replacement expense	-107,000
<b>Net Cost</b>	<b>0</b>

**Net Budgeted Result for the year** **-2,091**

**Other Financial Details**

Budgeted daily cost of running the Cathedral	€3,131
Total pledges received for 2017 (as of 30 Sept)	€520,000
Target pledge total for 2018	At least €550,000
Foundation loan to Cathedral outstanding (as of 30 Sept)	c. €67,000

(\*) Construction on the fire escape is now expected to begin in 2018, so the actual amount drawn from the endowment for this project and spent in 2017 is expected to be limited to the fees incurred in connection with the permit application.

**How do the Cathedral’s finances look so far for 2017?**

**We’re doing much better than at the same point a year ago.**

So far in 2017 (based on figures through the end of July), revenues are tracking higher and expenses are lower than at the same point in 2016. A big part of that is due to higher pledges received in 2017, and for that we are very thankful. That said, it’s too soon to tell where we will end the year, as much depends on how space rental does this fall, and higher than budgeted expenses suggest we may end the year with a larger than budgeted shortfall.

**Challenges await us in 2018.**

The Euro has appreciated significantly against the dollar in recent months. This will reduce the value of pledges made in U.S. dollars, which historically account for around half our pledge base. And this year, as happens every year, some of our parishioners will leave Paris, and we’ll have to keep encouraging new parishioners to become pledging members. We also expect our convocation assessment to increase in 2018. Your generous pledge is a vital piece of the puzzle as we respond to these challenges.

*Some Earthly Benefits*

**The tax advantages to pledging members**

French taxes are high, but they offer a very generous relief to your Cathedral pledge: a tax credit of 66% of your pledge payments can be applied to reduce your French income taxes, subject to an overall limit of 20% of your net taxable income. This means **your pledge only costs you 34% of its face value benefit to the Cathedral.** If you are a US tax payer, contributions to the Cathedral also are tax deductible for US tax purposes. Please consult your tax advisor to confirm how these rules apply to your situation.

**Below you can see some examples in euros.**

Pledge paid	French tax credit	Net cost of pledge	Per week after French tax credit
2,000	1,320	680	13
4,000	2,640	1,360	26
6,000	3,960	2,040	39
8,000	5,280	2,720	52
10,000	6,600	3,400	65
15,000	9,900	5,100	98
20,000	13,200	6,800	131
30,000	19,800	10,200	196



*The Call to Membership*

**Rob Davis, Senior Warden**

The *rentrée* in Paris is a time of new beginnings and new commitments. We see this every fall as the children start new classes, we get back into old routines and start new routines, and we reconnect to places and activities that have lain dormant over the summer. I have always found the *rentrée* to be an energizing experience reconnecting and deepening my relationships with Paris after the summer. I am always thankful for the opportunities the autumn brings through these relationships and the richness they bring to my life and that of my family

As we return to the Cathedral this fall, I encourage you to deepen your relationship and commitment here as well. The Cathedral offers many opportunities to develop your own spiritual experience, to take part in our warm and diverse community, and to serve others through our outreach programs. Whether it be making your relationship with God more profound through our adult education programs, youth group, and beautiful liturgy and music or feeling the force of our vibrant community through our numerous fellowship programs we believe there is a lot to be thankful for here. We also believe in our core mission

to channel that thanksgiving through service to others through our mission and outreach program. The Cathedral is all about these relationships: your personal relationship with God, your relationship to our community, and your relationship to our service and mission.

With deepening relationships comes commitment. The Cathedral is supported by member pledges and all the good work that is done here comes from the thanksgiving and generosity of our members. Pledging results in you being personally involved in the stewardship of this place and of its mission and deepens your relationship in all three pillars of our life here. If you have not pledged before, I encourage you to deepen your relationship with the Cathedral in thanksgiving and fill out a pledge card during this Annual Call to Membership. If you are already a pledging member, I ask you to prayerfully consider whether you can further deepen your relationship and increase your pledge. I am honored to be part of this generous and spiritual community and to be part of this deepening relationship we are all experiencing to God, each other, and our service to others.

## How to Make Your Pledge

### • Online

Making your annual pledge online is easy and saves a stamp. You can also request a direct debit form directly from our website and set up a monthly debit scheme.

[www.amcathparis.com/  
membership-pledge-form](http://www.amcathparis.com/membership-pledge-form)

### • By Mail

Use the enclosed pledge form and return your pledge to:

American Cathedral in Paris - ACTM  
23 avenue George V  
75008 Paris

### • Offertory Plate

Drop your completed pledge form into the collection plate on Sunday.

## How to Pay your Pledge

You can make payments on your pledge to the Cathedral a number of different ways:

- By check payable to the American Cathedral in Paris.
- By credit card (CB, Visa, MasterCard), using 'HelloAsso'. Contact the Cathedral office for information.
- By bank transfer, using the Cathedral's RIB, or by setting up a 'GoCardless' payment plan. Contact the Cathedral office for information.

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### Annual Call to Membership Committee

Mark Adams, Sophie Belouet, Barbara Diggs, Bill Holmberg, Lawrence Giesen, John Martel de Créquy, Anne Pouret, Luis Roth, Alicia Saba, Bill Tompson.

Please contact us at [amcathparisactm@gmail.com](mailto:amcathparisactm@gmail.com)

