

First Congregational Christian Church, as we approach the Lenten season, many of us are planning to sacrifice and 'give up' something for the next 40 days starting with Ash Wednesday that we love and enjoy just as Jesus sacrificed His life on the cross for our sins.

As followers of Jesus, are we practicing sacrificial giving of our money, time, and talents? Our spending on comforts, luxuries, amusements, etc. come first and we are probably giving way too little to God. If we are honest with ourselves, most of us give God what's left rather than our best. If our support of the church and charities does not at all pinch or hamper us, I would say those donations are too small.

There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot do because our charitable giving excludes them. As Jesus' apprentices, we are called to a lifestyle of sacrifice and self-denial. Daily we are compelled to "do good and share what we have" with others, for this kind of sacrificial generosity is pleasing to God (see Hebrews 13:16).

As you go about your day, look for opportunities to step into small sacrifices that will cultivate a heart in which generosity naturally flows. A heart overflowing with generosity is willing to regularly ask the question, "Does my charitable giving pinch or hamper my natural cravings for comfort, luxury, and amusement?"

This Lenten season let's follow Jesus' example and practice Sacrificial Generosity – increase your tithes and offerings with the money you save by giving up that cup of gourmet coffee, dinner at your favorite restaurant, a round of golf, that new outfit, or whatever God leads you to sacrifice!

The Stewardship Committee