



HEADWATERS™

FOUNDATION *for* JUSTICE

What is a Meaningful Gift?

In Headwaters' Giving Project, we ask each participant to make a meaningful financial gift. There is no suggested amount or range. We honor and focus on the process of how that gift is determined, not the total number alone.

Before each participant makes the decision, we send them a guide to help in the process of deciding what their meaningful gift will be.

Meaningful could be:

- the biggest give I've ever made
- matching the amount I tithe to my church
- one month's rent spread out throughout the year
- the amount I would pay for comparable professional development
- the amount that makes me feel a little uncomfortable
- the amount that makes me feel truly invested in this project, so when we give out those grants you feel a piece of you is going into those organizations.

One idea is to think about the biggest gift you've ever made. Why that amount? Would you want to give more or less than that to the GP?

Think about your monthly budget. If you have 12 months to give, what amount do you think you could fit into your budget between now and then?

Is there someone else you need to discuss this decision with (partner, etc)?

If you have stocks, bonds or investments, what about donating the interest earned for a year? Or transferring stock?

Does your employer have a matching program, and how might you leverage that to increase your meaningful gift amount?

Think about a number - hold it in your mind. How will you feel at the end knowing you contributed that much? How does it make you feel? Excited? A little nervous?

Remember that this number doesn't define you - it's just a moment, part of a practice, one of the many things you're bringing to the GP.

Here are some examples of how other Giving Project participants have come to their gift amount:

- A Giving Project member decided that one month of income would be their personally meaningful gift.
- A GP participant made their tax refund check their meaningful gift.
- A Giving Project member's mother who was socially active passed and left them some jewelry. The GP member said they would never wear it, so they had it appraised. The value of the jewelry became their personally meaningful gift, because they thought it would make their mother proud.
- There has also been Giving Project members who have decided to give all of their savings, knowing they can live off of their monthly income.
- A Giving Project member thought about where they might be able to save to make a personally meaningful gift. They realized that they do about 3 dinners a week and purchase a number of bottles of wine each week. They committed to cutting their wine budget in half and eliminating one dinner a week. We did the numbers together and that became their personally meaningful gift.
- A participant, David, was recruited through another GP member. When his friend initially fundraised him a few years ago, she talked about how she'd always thought of giving just enough so that she didn't feel the impact on the rest of her life. The GP challenged her to consider giving in a way that she *does* feel the impact. That framing was so powerful that it's impacted David's meaningful gift and has been a big and important part of how he framed his fundraising conversations with others.