



Dear Friends,

October 2021

Life has always included a rhythm of separation and togetherness, exile and return. We may prefer the return, but it's the leaving that makes the reuniting so special.

Experiences of separation are at least as old as the ancient stories of the Garden of Eden, the Israelites' exile in Babylon, and the parable of the Prodigal Son. Jesus and his followers were separated by betrayal and death, and then reunited by forgiveness and newness of life. Even on our most "normal" days, our lives are a rhythm of gathering and dispersing, coming together and going apart, calls to worship and benedictions.

At our heart, St. John's is a community of reunion and homecoming. **Now more than ever, in a world filled with exile, our congregation stands as a beacon of hope and generosity.** That hope has been experienced by so many through our shared ministries this past year. Our Food Pantry responded to our neighbors even though we had a six-fold increase in families served. Our youth programs were able to continue due to our increased online presence. We were even able to assist our neighbors by providing a safe space for students who did not have the internet access at home to attend remote classes. The list goes on and on. St. John's continues to provide hope, regardless of circumstances or situations.

With this in mind, we invite you to join us as we look forward to 2022 with hope and a renewed sense of ministry and purpose.

- With **hope** we will pray that our world will be a safe, fair, and healthy place for all God's children.
- With **hope** we will work to fulfill the needs of our church family and our community.
- With **hope** we will sacrifice our resources in order to make our prayers and work come to life.

Let's live into the **hope** of our future — a future of returning with an abundance of resources: spiritual, theological, physical, and financial. We invite you to support our indispensable work with pledges collectively totaling \$375,000 — a 12% increase over last year's pledges. Will you help us live into a future with hope? Be it a first-time pledge or a pledge increase, your contribution matters to our community, this city, and the lives we are invited to serve.

Blessings,

Rector

Stewardship Chair

PS: Please bring your completed pledge card on Oct 31st, Giving Sunday, or mail it in the enclosed envelope. Together we will help the Vestry plan for 2022 — a year filled with **hope**.

*"I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. For surely I know the plans I have for you, says God, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope."
Jeremiah 29:10-11*