
LORD, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO THROUGH ME?

Dear St. John's,

Psalm 24:1 reads, *"The earth is the Lord's and all it contains. The world, and those who dwell in it."* Our sacred story reminds us that God is the creator and author of all good things. Out of love for his creation, God grants us, you and me, the responsibility and privilege of being God's caretaker of this world. A steward isn't an owner but is instead a manager of what the owner has left in the steward's care. We are God's caretakers of this sacred space we call our church home, stewards of each other, the earth, our children, and this community. We are caretakers of the gifts and talents shared with us, the financial resources in our care, and the time allotted to us.

For 169 years, St. John's has thrived because of the generosity of caretakers. With a new program year beginning, we get to ask God once again, *"Lord, what do you want to do through me?"* As our Annual Giving Campaign kicks off, we invite you to join us as we care for God's beloved creation through the ministries and mission of St. John's. Together, we will continue to feed the hungry through our food pantry and community breakfasts, nurture students inside and outside of the classroom through the Eagle's Nest after school program, raise up disciples through Sunday School and Youth Group, welcome the stranger through our Refugee Ministries, and build relationships with our neighbors through partnerships that support returning citizens. God has given into our care an abundance of opportunities and resources. Now, we get to decide how to use them!

As our ministries continue to grow, so does our annual budget. Preliminary budgeting for 2023 suggests we may have a shortfall approaching \$75,000 due to a variety of increases, including:

- Assistant Rector, Jen Trenary, must be paid increased salary and benefits under Diocesan compensation rules in view of her ordination
- Cost-of-Living adjustments that our clergy and staff are expected to receive (estimated at 5%) to fairly compensate them and keep pace with recent inflationary pressures
- Increased utility and other costs over which we have no meaningful control in our Budget

To accomplish this, we need an increase in current pledges and additional pledgers. As faithful stewards of God's gifts, we know this is possible because God has already put us in charge of God's resources. You can positively affect this pledge goal and help our Vestry project next year's ministry budget. Your financial pledge is important in making our ministries come alive – for our parish and our community. And all pledges – whether \$10 or \$1,000 per month – are valuable. We invite you to join us by becoming a member of St. John's pledging family as we practice, to the best of our ability, being faithful caretakers of God's abundance.

God's peace,



The Rev. Amanda R. Knouse, *Rector*



Pam Loose, *Stewardship Chair*

P.S. Please bring your completed pledge card on November 6, Commitment Sunday, or mail it in the enclosed envelope. Thank you!

*"THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S AND ALL IT CONTAINS.
THE WORLD, AND THOSE WHO DWELL IN IT."*
