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THE REVEREND AMANDA R. KNOUSE

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Dear Family of God,

As Christians we are story tellers. We have an ancient narrative, handed down from one generation to another and that continues in each of us today.

Luke's Gospel is bookended by the animated story-telling of two women named Mary. Early in the Gospel, Mary the mother of Jesus, tells us of her encounter with the Divine who informs her that she will bear a child who will change the world. She proclaims her joy: "Tell out my soul! The Greatness of the Lord!" At the end of the Gospel, another Mary, Mary Magdalene, visits the tomb to discover it empty and receives instructions from the Risen Christ to go tell the others. She carries this Good News with joy and urgency to the disciples.

This fall, I've been thinking a lot about the Good News of Christ's love shared through our worship, ministries, and community at St. John's. My soul wants to tell every neighbor I meet that there is a place on W. Chestnut St. that loves them for who they are and wants to walk with them through life's ups and downs. My soul wants to share with the world that God is alive and present, and I know this because I see God at work every time a person is fed, the peace of Christ is extended in a handshake, hug, or text message, and every week children gather in their Sunday school rooms to hear about God's love for them. The Good News I want to proclaim is formed by our choir anthems, sharing the sacrament with each of you, and the relationships we've built.

What is your Good News; the idea, dream, challenge placed in your heart by God, that needs to be shared? What is the ministry to which you are called which will change the world, sharing your talents, gifts, and love with your neighbors?

Our Stewardship Campaign this year focuses on these stories – the ones inside you, the ones you are still writing, the ones we have inherited from those who have gone before us. As you pray about how you will share your gifts with us this year, think about how God is calling you to tell out your soul, to spread the Good News far and wide.

From one story teller to another,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Amanda' followed by a small plus sign.

P.S. Please check your mail over the next two weeks for sacred stories from Senior Warden, Drew Dorgan, and Stewardship Chair, Pam Loose.