



## ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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Dear St. Paul's,

November 2021

My hopes and prayers are for your ongoing well-being as we move through 2021 and into 2022. The past two years have been a distinctive time. Due to unimaginable circumstances, our ministry has had to adapt, improvise, and overcome. We have been "**Broken Open**" at **St. Paul's** in this transformational time. Your faithful financial support has sustained and strengthened our ministries. Thank you for your generosity. We have seen significant changes to our daily lives which have impacted our church community too, from regathering guidelines to returning to indoor services that are livestreamed. We have been catching up on postponed events: baptisms, weddings, funerals, etc. We have accomplished new efforts through the Wishing Well Program: installing new exterior wrought iron doors for the church, painting the interior of the church office, and other projects. Through prudent endurance, we have made practical decisions and safely moved forward with confidence.

Our new Stewardship theme "**Broken Open**," describes how we can love and live in the days ahead. "**Broken Open**" is centered on these words of Jesus:

*"While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it*

*he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." (MT 16: 26)*

Just as Jesus blessed and broke the bread at the Last Supper, transforming simple bread into an extraordinary spiritual food, Jesus continues to call us to live his way of love. These are words of relationship that call us into action to continue our journey of becoming one - one in Christ, one with all people, and one with God's earth. This call moves us more deeply into being generous stewards of our **Time & Talent & Treasure**.

At **St. Paul's**, there is a sense of renewal. Even during a pandemic, we welcomed many new members to our church community. Some activities have been restarted, some have paused, and all will thrive again! We have desired worship and all our other activities together. It is uplifting to hear the ways our church members have remained connected with each other, their family, and friends. We live "**Broken Open**" through our faith, hope and love which unite us even when we are not actually together. We are the one body, the feet and the hands of Jesus, the Church. As the Church, we actively follow God's call as the Body of Christ. We do this in new ways, and in our return to more familiar ways. I invite you, as you are comfortable, to return to ministry in **2022**.

Join me in being "**Broken Open**" at **St. Paul's** through your faithful commitments of **Time & Talent & Treasure** in **2022**. Your generosity is essential to our faith community. God gives us all we need. It is our joy to give back. Thank you for the prayerful reflection you give this matter and the commitments you will make. Your commitments always make a difference. Thank you for your prayers.

Prayerfully yours,

The Rev. Sean K. Rousseau +  
Rector

## *Time & Talent & Treasure at St. Paul's in 2022*

This November, I will encourage your commitment of **Time & Talent & Treasure** in **2022**. During Sunday services, I will talk about stewardship, and I will invite you to fill out the **Time & Talent & Treasure** commitment form. Since not everyone can be in person yet, I will send through mail and email all the information about our stewardship program, "**Broken Open.**" Please fill out and return your commitment form by placing it in the collection plate at a Sunday service, mailing it to the church office, or emailing it to me. **In anticipation that we will continue to gradually return to our ministries in 2022**, please complete the **Time & Talent** portion of the commitment form, by checking the box, "**Yes! I pledge my Time & Talent to support St. Paul's**", and check the ministry or ministries in which you desire to serve. Please make your commitments, each person on the **Time & Talent** portion of the commitment form, and one person from your household on the **Treasure** portion of the commitment form. There is information below regarding **Treasure**, and another page lists the ministries for **Time & Talent**. Please carefully consider God's generosity to you and contribute generously to help the work of **St. Paul's** as we live "**Broken Open.**"

### *HOW MUCH TREASURE SHOULD I GIVE?*

Many people ask if there is a guideline for giving: "**In order to be spiritually healthy, how much of what has been given to me do I need to give in return?**" Everyone must arrive at that conclusion independently. Good stewardship is a constant theme in Sacred Scripture. **St. Paul** provides direction with these inspiring and timeless words:

*"The one who sows sparingly will reap sparingly,  
and the one who sows bountifully will reap bountifully.  
Everyone must give according to what they have inwardly decided;  
not sadly, not grudgingly, for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9: 6-7)*

Stewardship is a way of life that expresses our love through our "**need to give.**" **Christian discipleship that gives through good stewardship is spiritual, generous, and proportionate.** Consider God's generosity to you, and the amount you return in gratitude. Reflect on your spending on technology, entertainment, and food. Think about the ratio of expenditures to your support of **St. Paul's** and other charitable efforts. Ask yourself if the portion of your income you give is enough, too much, or not enough.

Once you decide the amount you will give for **2022**, please complete the **Treasure** portion of the commitment form by checking the box, "**Yes! I pledge my Treasure to support St. Paul's**", and write the amount of your pledge on the line provided. Pledges often begin in January. However, a good time to make a new commitment of generosity in gratitude to God for our many blessings is the First Sunday of Advent, the beginning of our liturgical year, November 28, 2021.

By receiving your commitment, we can better predict annual income. Through sound planning, we can ensure financial stability and budget wisely. The economy, a pandemic, or other events can make it difficult to plan for a household or a church congregation. Without sufficient financing, little else can happen. This is as true for our congregation as it is for a household. Our congregation must meet our operating costs and assure our future ministries. In this way, **St. Paul's** will be ready to provide service. Please review the information provided and respond generously and "**Broken Open.**"

Thank you for your prayerful consideration as **St. Paul's** grows into the faith community God wants us to be through the good stewardship of our **Time & Talent & Treasure!**