



ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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Dear St. Paul's,

November 2023

In recognition of all our many blessings, the 2024 **St. Paul's** stewardship theme is: **"Rooted in Abundance!"** Rooted in Abundance means we understand that we have been embraced with such an abundance, and we acknowledge our need to joyfully give back to God in thanksgiving for all God has given to us. The result of our giving back to God enables us as **St. Paul's** to do the ministry, work, and service of Christ in this community of faith, our neighborhood, and the world.

"Rooted in Abundance" describes how we can love and live in the days ahead. This theme appears time after time in Scripture. In the Gospel, the grace and truth of the Word of God became the blessing of life for the whole community of faith in John 1: 16,

"From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace."

In addition, these encouraging words of Jesus are in Luke 6:38,

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

Scripture is abundant with words to keep us rooted, such as those in Jeremiah 17: 7-8,

"Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit."

As we approach Advent and prepare to celebrate Christmas, these words in John 10:10 can help us to keep ourselves wholeheartedly focused on God's love for us,

"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

Whether you have worshipped with us for years or recently found us online, this congregation shows its love of Jesus through the ministries you make possible. Our ministry has had to adapt, improvise, and overcome. We continue to welcome many new members to our faith community. We have accomplished new efforts through the Wishing Well Program. Your faithful presence and prayers are what have sustained and strengthened our ministries along the way. Thank you for your generosity and the gifts you share with our community through your wealth, works, and wisdom.

In **2024** at **St. Paul's**, we are the voice of love for one another in a world so in need of love. We can live more deeply into being generous disciples through our faithful stewardship of our **Time & Talent & Treasure**. 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 presence and prayers.

Prayerfully yours,

The Rev. Sean K. Rousseau +
Rector

Time & Talent & Treasure at St. Paul's in 2024

This November, we encourage your commitment of **Time & Talent & Treasure** in 2024. During Sunday services, the Vestry and I will talk about stewardship and invite you to fill out the **Time & Talent & Treasure** commitment form. We will also mail and email all the information about our stewardship program, "**Rooted In Abundance.**"

Please fill out and return your commitment form by placing it in the collection plate at a Sunday service, or mailing/emailing it to the church office. 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**.

HOW MUCH TREASURE SHOULD I GIVE?

Many people have asked 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 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 **2024**, 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 suitable 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, December 3, 2023.

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.

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!**