



Trinity Episcopal Church

Daniel Z. Gerhart, Senior Warden

December 1, 2020

Dear Members and Friends of Trinity – brothers and sisters in Christ:

Last year we sent out a nicely designed Stewardship Brochure. The basic theme was about all of us being The Church and our ministry of service. We could revise it for this year and use it again, but this year is different. Very different. To put it nicely, it has been an extremely difficult year.

Some of us are those who made the difficult and heart-breaking decision to close their lifelong church home, Grace, Waverly. And while Trinity welcomed them with open arms, the ache still lingers. On the heels of that pain came the virus that changed all of our lives and closed Trinity's doors following the March 8 service, just two weeks into Lent, a closure that lasted until July 5. We missed Holy Week and Easter, Pentecost and Trinity Sunday; we missed our corporate worship and we missed each other.

When we came together again, we still had to remain apart – six feet apart. We had music, but we could not sing. We had Holy Eucharist, but we could not partake. We had smiles behind masks, but we could not touch or share that other very important sacrament – coffee hour.

And now, once again, Trinity's doors are closed as the virus runs rampant everywhere, even here in our Valley.

But we have still managed to be The Church. We've called and written to each other, we've watched worship online, we've mailed in our pledges and donations, we picked up our Palms on Palm Sunday, and we prayed for each other. Fr. Ben wrote excellent ruminations for us and those, along with the newsletter, were sent to our inboxes or mailboxes.

During the time we were open, we brought donations of food for the student food bank, dropped pennies in the jar for the Church Periodical Club, offered our blue boxes on United Thank Offering Sunday, and gave rides to those who no longer drive. The vestry continued their ministry of stewardship of our physical plant: replacing the church boiler, rebuilding the rectory chimney, making sure the lawns and gardens were well cared for, and generally managing our corporate life together.

We've been pretty amazing, overall.

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It takes not only all of us to share our gifts and talents to be The Church, it also takes financial planning. And that is why we pledge at this time of year.

Trinity's budget is basically a shoestring. We are required to pay our assessment and acceptance to the diocese, rent for the parish hall, utilities, insurance, sexton, parish administrator, organist, and priest. If you're not familiar with our annual budget, you can find last year's on our web site. The 2021 budget will likely not vary much from that one, but the vestry needs to plan for it.

And you are a big part of that planning. When you make your pledge for 2021, you're helping the vestry to plan and balance the coming year's budget.

Stewardship is not just about money. It's about each of our individual ministries – the gifts and talents that we share to make our life together rich in ways that transcend monthly bills. That is why the enclosed form asks if you will share your time also. Please prayerfully consider both those questions and your financial pledge and mail the form back by December 13.

This will be a difficult winter, but there is light ahead: two of the many trial vaccines for Covid-19 are looking extremely promising. Sometime in the coming year we will be able to return to what we once thought of as normal life. Hopefully, none of us will take that for granted anymore, but will cherish each day, each person we meet, each moment we worship, and give thanks.

In Christ,

The Vestry