

I don't know about you, but at Forest Park, we are beginning our annual stewardship season. We are certainly aware of anxieties about budgets, both personal and congregational, and we are absolutely aware of anxiety about congregations' futures. We celebrate our new relationship with those Greenfield Avenue members who are joining our congregation, even as we understand the sense of loss that accompanies their transition.

One of the questions we have been asking is how do we turn the conversation back to giving out of a sense of joy and gratitude rather than a sense of obligation and desperation? Into that question, we already have had one joy-filled and delightful answer! The moderator of our mission committee made the announcement a few weeks ago that we had an anonymous offer of a giving match for the World Communion Offering of up to \$5000. The match was made, and then some, by the community of faith, and we will be sending a check for over \$10,000 for that offering. And yes, we clapped and cheered and celebrated in joy.

We are planning to follow up to find out where some of the grants that are awarded this year out of the World Communion Offering funds so that the congregation can hear about some of the projects their funds are helping to support. As a small congregation, we know we can do so much more when we join in our connection with others than we can do alone. And I am grateful for that anonymous member who knew that given the challenge, the congregation would rise to the joy and opportunity of giving in grace and gratitude!

Grace and Peace,
Rev. Kim Trimboli
Teaching Elder, Forest Park Presbyterian Church