



*Just as the rain and the snow come down from the sky and don't return there without watering the earth, making it conceive and yield plants and providing seed to the sower and food to the eater, so is my word that comes from my mouth; it does not return to me empty. Instead, it does what I want, and accomplishes what I intend.*

- Isaiah 55:10-11

At the beginning of Pentecost, we mentioned how summer was a time of relaxation and quiet; a time of reflection and preparation for the coming seasons. As Pentecost draws to a close and we venture into Advent, we consider what we have been given, and what we are able to give. This year's stewardship theme, *Rooted in Abundance*, reminds us that we are inspired to give because so much has been given to us.

After surviving a pandemic, our community is now pressed with record inflation and housing costs that have made it difficult for families to put food on the table. Yet despite the adversity we face, St. John's continues to be a fountain of blessing to those around us. We are reminded of how St. Paul spoke of the Macedonians in 2 Corinthians 8:1-15; that despite their "extreme poverty," they provided a "surplus of rich generosity." The work of the church is most important in times of need.

We have ramped up our partnership with Good Neighbors to provide food for those in need. Our ministries to Belcher Elementary bless children and their families. Our participation with the FAST justice ministry continues. The thrift store provides affordable goods and invites interaction with our local community. We provide rich worship and music and welcome all to the table, to be nourished each week for the work of ministry.

This year we are providing intention cards that help us to reflect on the work St. John's does, how it has impacted us personally, and how we can take part in it. In Ephesians 2:10, St. Paul states that we are "created in Christ Jesus to do good things," and that "God planned for these good things to be the way that we live our lives." This stewardship season, we remind ourselves that we are *Rooted in Abundance*, and through reflection on the Holy Scriptures and prayerful consideration, we answer the proclamation of God through the prophet Isaiah: how do we take part in what God has called us to accomplish?

The last Sunday of our campaign is November 26. Please place the intention cards in the offering plate or mail them to us by that date so that we may gather them together and bless them.