

## A Season of Stewardship

The recent rains remind us that we have reached the season known as the fall harvest. Soon after midnight on October 4<sup>th</sup>, the “Harvest Moon” will reach its full potential in the night sky, and the traditional season of thanksgiving for God’s bounty will commence. So take a moment to stop, give thanks for your abundant joys, and enjoy all that is good and great in your world!

St. Paul’s is blessed to have scores of people for whom stewardship is a year-round commitment. One has but to observe the many on-going weekly parish ministries, the current building project, the daily energy exuding from the students, teachers, and administrators at St. Paul’s Day School, the efficiency and resilience of the church office staff, the fellowship of Wednesday evenings, the Men’s breakfasts, Canterbury House, or the incredible meals prepared in the Parish Hall kitchen to know that you and your brothers and sisters in Christ are stepping up to return God’s grace by volunteering your time and talents where they are needed. You model the Christian call to a life of service and sharing.

In order to maintain all of the good things that are happening in this place, we are about to enter a season of stewardship not merely to pay the bills nor to make sure that on Sunday mornings you are warm in the winter and cool in the summer, **but to fulfill our commitment to the mission of this parish “to be a loving community of worship, education, and outreach bearing witness to Christ’s redeeming grace.”**

During the month of October, we are all encouraged to **recommit ourselves by giving of our time, talents, and treasure** to ensure a successful annual pledge campaign and a vibrant, living community of faith. For all of us, this is a decision that requires our prayerful consideration. Your stewardship team asks that we begin our individual considerations now and make every effort to get our pledge cards in by the end of October, at which time we will celebrate with an ingathering dinner in the Parish Hall. This time frame is designed to be rapid—yet as thoughtful and intentional as necessary—in order to give the budgeting committee of our Vestry sufficient time to secure a realistic sense of the resources available for this parish to do **God’s work**.

As we turn our minds and hearts to the task at hand, we might do well to invoke an old seafaring analogy that all of us have seen portrayed on the pages of novels or the silver screen. When a ship and its crew face a challenge, the captain calls out, “All hands on deck!” In our **season of stewardship**, we are anxious to have all hands on deck to guide St. Paul’s Episcopal Church along the path toward fulfilling its mission—with God’s help. As you devote yourself to prayerful consideration, please reflect on the words of Paul to the Corinthians (II Corinthians 9:7-15):

*Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work. As it is written, “He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures for ever.”*

*He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your resources and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for great generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God; for the rendering of this service not only supplies the wants of the saints but also overflows in many thanksgivings to God. Under the test of this service, you will glorify God by your obedience in acknowledging the gospel of Christ, and by the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others; while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God in you. Thanks Be to God for his inexpressible gift!*

The Stewardship Team