

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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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. - Jeremiah 17:8

Dear St. Paul's,

One of the greatest gifts and joys I have in my work is the ability to watch the ministry you engage in on a daily basis. How you care for our neighbors through the Blessing Box, school supplies to Riddle Elementary, turkey dinners for families, and personal care products for the food bank - you and I will never know the impact you have on this community but I suspect it is much greater than our imaginations.

Week after week we gather for prayers of praise and need; we express our gratitude with song; we gather at God's table to be fed with the food that sustains our faith; and we gather at potlucks and coffee hour to share our lives, our hopes, fears and joys. That is what a community does. We are linked through our faith and our daily lives. We are community.

I see how you care for each other as you give of your time setting up book sales; or setting up the altar for funerals - how you tend to the needs of others by offering to share prayer, a meal or a few moments of your precious time. You lend each other strength as we gather at the table to have our strength renewed so that we may go back out into the world doing God's ministry.

In some ways, we are much like trees in a massive forest. Our roots tangled with each other in love and support; our branches stretched upward seeking light as they intertwine with those next to us while our shade protects the younger trees new in their life of faith. There is just something about a forest that gives a sense of God's strength and care as you spend time in it. Perhaps that is what we offer each other. A sense of God's strength and care - rooted in the abundance of God's love and blessings.

The theme of our annual pledge campaign this year is Rooted in Abundance - not only the abundance of God's love - but rooted in the abundance of our care for each other. And that care is visible in the gifts each of you share whether it be your generosity of time; the sharing of your treasure, or the giving of your talents be it repairman or chorister.

I am in awe and gratitude of how each of you gives to St. Paul's. Thank you. And now I encourage you to keep giving. Please prayerfully consider your gift for 2024 to meet St. Paul's operating budget. We are all dealing with inflationary issues in our homes, business and in our church. My hope is you will pledge an increased amount over 2023, if possible. Thank you.

Blessings to you and yours,
Karen+