

transforming generosity

Dear Friends,

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry often describes us as “The Episcopal branch of the Jesus movement.” As we begin to talk about stewardship of our parish and wider community, I want to pose these questions: What does that mean for us? What is God calling us to do as followers of Jesus?

As Episcopalians, we love our worship. Our liturgies inspire us. The Eucharist is at the center of our lives. We believe the bible is the word of God and we are people of the Word. As part of the Jesus movement, we follow the One who loves us so much that he gave his life so that we might understand God’s never-ending love for all of creation.

And here’s the hard part: As followers of Jesus, we are called to give all of ourselves to God’s work in the world. In the sixth chapter of Matthew, Jesus, after teaching us to pray, talks to us about money, our needs and our hope. He tells us not to worry about food, clothing, and material things and offers unequivocal advice about our priorities: “... seek first God’s kingdom and God’s righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

On Sunday, September 23rd, Saint Mark’s embarked on our annual giving campaign with the theme, *Transforming Generosity*—a message that reminds us how generosity can empower our ministries and transform our lives by changing the way we think about generosity.

To that end, this year we have had the opportunity to hear from fellow parishioners during our Sunday worship services about how the work of Saint Mark’s various ministries, and their participation in them, carries them further along in their own spiritual development and how our own parish’s ministries are part of the embodiment of the broader Christian church’s mission in the world.

None of these good works would be possible without the generosity of the members of our parish. That generosity is a demonstration of thanks to God for his blessings, as well as a gift to one another—a gift that makes possible the church and the opportunities for spiritual growth from which we all benefit.

I challenge you to consider how Saint Mark’s would be transformed if each of us acted on Jesus’ call to set new priorities: to give all of ourselves to God’s righteousness, and to trust that God will care for our material needs.

As we work to meet this challenge together, we are reminded of the many blessings we share—those “outward and visible signs” of “inward and spiritual grace” that our Prayer Book defines sacrament to be: A new Noah’s Ark playground and garden begun, a new Wednesday evening program for all ages, the return of Adult Forum, and our new mission statement urging us to grow as the beloved community of God.

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Enclosed you will find a 2019 pledge commitment card. Over the next several days, I invite you to prayerfully consider Jesus' advice about priorities, and then, on October 28, make a pledge that will empower Saint Mark's ministries and help us realize our vision to be a beacon of Christ's presence in the world.

I'm personally grateful for the support you all give me every day in my own spiritual journey and I look forward to continuing that walk with you in the coming year.

Blessings and Peace,



Paul St. Germain (The Rev. Dr.)
Rector