



St. Andrew's Lutheran Church
Committed to Christ and Community

October 1, 2021

Dear Members of St. Andrews,

Thanks be to God for your partnership in ministry, sharing the Good News of God's love in Jesus with the world! We have been partnering for what is now *seven months*:

Learning ~ Growing ~ Regathering ~ Masking ~ Unmasking ~ Re-masking ~ Ren-Faire-ing ~ and, Stewarding the gifts God has given us, individually, and as a congregation.

As followers of the Jesus' way, we remember all of life is a gift from God ... ourselves, our time, our talent, our resources. If you are like me, you need frequent reminders. As we steward these gifts, we are called to consider how what we have been given is needed for the sake of the world. Freed in Christ, we are not bound to a mindset of scarcity that suggests God's gifts are limited. ***Instead, we are called to a mindset of lavish generosity, that like God's love, the gifts we are called to steward are not limited but abundant.***

And there is abundance all around us. In these first seven months, I have had the joy of watching abundant gifts shared, freely, for the sake of God's work through St. Andrew's. As new seasons of life as the church and individuals begin, it is not what is started, changes, or fades away that defines abundance, but rather that ***understanding that God can do much more with our time, talents, and financial support than we can imagine in human planning. The efforts we invest, God multiplies.***

The last year has demanded much. And you have responded. As we begin to plan for 2022, I invite you to look for the abundance in your life and this congregation and consider:

- What are you specifically ***called to steward*** that you are willing to say "yes" to in the coming year?
- What ***opportunities*** are there for you to ***connect in new ways*** with the people of St. Andrew's?
- What ***new limitations*** do you have this year that are different from years past that limit what you are able to do? ***What new thing*** might God be inviting you to do in this season of your life?
- What ***resources*** do you have that might be shared in and through St. Andrew's?

This year's Stewardship Campaign theme mirrors the Synod theme: ***Baptized and set free***. Free from fear of scarcity, we generously respond, living out our baptismal promises to...

1. **Hear** the Good News in *Worship and Learning*
2. **Proclaim** the Good News through *Word and Deed*
3. **Extend** the Good News through *Care for Others and the World*
4. **Engage** in the Good News *Working for Justice*

During this year's Stewardship Campaign, we will have the chance to reflect on a baptismal promise each Sunday during worship. A video will be posted each Wednesday to the St. Andrew's website (and replayed each Sunday in the Narthex) highlighting how St. Andrew's works to live out these promises and areas of opportunity to further this work. We look forward to discovering anew what we have done, continue to do, and might be invited to begin in faithful response to God's promise to us in baptism.

The gifts of time, talent, and financial resources enable St. Andrew's to follow through on the commitments we as a congregation each time a person is baptized to support them and help them grow in extending the love of God in Jesus to the world. Each week, I invite you to ***remember your baptism - remember you are a child of God, you were sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ, forever - by dipping your finger in water and the sign of the cross on your forehead.***

Enclosed you will find a Time and Talent sheet and Pledge Card. ***You are invited to prayerfully consider which area(s) you will give your time and talent in the coming year on the Time and Talent sheet and how you feel called to start, continue, or grow in financial giving on the Pledge Card.*** Once your Time and Talent sheets are received, you will be contacted to talk about the work of that committee/ministry and how you would like to be involved. As we grow the ministries of St. Andrew's, I invite you to consider if you feel led to grow in your regular, sustained financial giving to share the Good News of God's love in Jesus with the world.

We give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 1:2-3.

Grace & Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Sonja Gerstenberger". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pastor Sonja Gerstenberger