

THANKFUL MEMORIAL EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2021-2022 STEWARDSHIP DISCERNMENT SEASON



I WILL FULFILL TO YOU MY
PROMISE AND BRING YOU
BACK TO THIS PLACE.
FOR SURELY I KNOW THE
PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU,
SAYS GOD, PLANS FOR
YOUR WELFARE AND NOT
FOR HARM, TO GIVE YOU
A FUTURE WITH HOPE.
+ JEREMIAH 29:10-11

September 27, 2021

Dear Thankful Ones:

If it's good to be together, it must be bad to be apart. And yet, the truth is that life has always been a rhythm of separation and togetherness, exile and return. We may prefer the "return," the "bring you back to this place," but that doesn't mean separation isn't part of the story. Experiences of separation are at least as ancient as the stories of the Garden of Eden, the Israelites' exile in Babylon, and the parable of the Prodigal Son. Even on our most "normal" days, our lives are a rhythm of gathering and dispersing, coming together and going apart.

It's also true, though, that the Covid-19 pandemic has been a season of separation like no other we've known. But, in the midst of such exile, Thankful stands as a community of return, a place to come home to, again and again, a congregation in which we can tangibly experience God's ancient promise to "bring you back to this place" and "give you a future with hope." Even when this pandemic is a distant memory, Thankful Ones will still be here for those looking for belonging and a place to call home; we'll still be inviting people into the hope we have in Christ Jesus.

With all of this in mind, we invite you into this year's stewardship discernment season, a time for us each to discern how we can best support Christ's mission of hope at Thankful. There are a number of ways you can participate, beginning October 3 and through November 7:

- **Come to church this Sunday, Oct. 3** as we kick off the season with our worship.
- Pray daily the "**Giving Prayer**" and use the "**Giving Chart**," both enclosed here, as you reflect on the ways you feel called to engage in the life and work of our parish family.
- Think about the main question we're asking at Thankful this season: "**What plans do YOU imagine GOD has for our Thankful family?**" There will be opportunities over the coming weeks to share your answer with others, through social media and a collaborative video that we'll share details about soon.
- Prayerfully fill out a **2022 Financial Commitment Card**. You can find one on the back-side of the "Giving Prayer" or use the digital version that Mtr. Leyla will send out shortly.
- Come to church with your completed commitment card on All Saints' Sunday, **Nov. 7, for our Commitment Sunday Celebration**. We'll offer special prayers of thanksgiving for the commitments we make to each other in faith and the commitment of abundant love and providence that God always and eternally makes to us. We'll baptize Penny & Sophie Ross. And we'll look forward to our "future with hope" together at Thankful.

Thank you for your continued support to Thankful, especially during this pandemic. We are excited to celebrate with you all that makes us Thankful this coming season.

Blessings,

John W. Grant, Jr., Stewardship Team Chair & Sr. Warden

The Rev. Leyla King, Rector