



November 5, 2019

Dear Friends of St. Paul's,

One of the hallmarks of following Jesus is sharing his love with others. I tell the 9:30 a.m. Family Eucharist community that there is no other place that we can gather, be loved, be accepted and find fulfilling ministry than in our St. Paul's faith community. What is it about St. Paul's that draws you here?

The theme for our 2020 Stewardship Program is from a familiar hymn and verse of Scripture, John 13:35. "We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord...They'll know we are Christian by our love, by our love...." Jesus, at the Last Supper with his disciples before he was crucified said, "If you have love for one another, then everyone will know you are my disciples."

At St. Paul's love is demonstrated in our mission to you and to our neighbors with a diverse offering of worship and music, talented musicians, competent and well-trained clergy who preach inspiringly, a committed and gifted staff, a well-maintained and functioning building that is not only for your use, but every single day is used for programs in the Brunswick community: (at least eight 12-Step programs, Foster Families, the WIC program for new mothers, Mid Coast Senior Chorus, Oratorio Chorale, Maine Council of Churches, the Diocese of Maine). Our ministries include outreach to those in need, earth care programs for composting, uncommonly attentive pastoral care and a unique joy in our welcome of all God's people and their gifts.

Last year we made a bold, long hoped-for commitment to hire a full-time assistant priest to build up the community and spiritual life of families with small children and youth. The vitality of this growing community is now visible at St. Paul's. The commitment is a large financial challenge to our congregation. Our goal is to grow into this funding challenge in order to keep a full-time assistant priest position because we are strong and want to grow. The great news is that our current assistant rector for children and youth, the Rev. Peggy Schnack, is recovering from her illness and is making a gradual and delighted return to her duties with us.

Recently, our Wardens wrote us about our strength and funding the mission that we love. We are facing financial challenges because we are stretching our mission for the future. They asked us to imagine how we might participate in funding our mission. I invite you to consider making a pledge in response. Pledging any amount, large or small not only helps us know how to plan for 2020. It is also a spiritual practice that, over time, deepens our relationship with God.

You might have noticed the range of pledges in the chart from the Wardens letter and included in this letter. The average pledge in 2019 was \$2,200 with a very broad range of pledges. I invite you to make a pledge in response to the many ways God demonstrates life, love and joy in your life. What financial commitment do you wish to make to the glory of God and in thanksgiving for the love of Christ and this vibrant community of faith?

Pray about how you will respond to this invitation and please mark the enclosed pledge card. No amount is too small. No amount is too large. Please know your pledge will be accepted with joy. And if your circumstances change

over the year and you are not able to fulfill your pledge as this can happen, please let us know. We understand the challenges of life!

Save two dates: **Sunday, November 10** join us after each service for a Town Hall when we will have the opportunity to ask questions and make comments. **Sunday, December 1** is In-gathering Sunday when we offer our pledges in worship. Join us that day for First Sundays, Life Together at 9:30 a.m. as we begin the Season of Advent. Enjoy a brunch offered by Family and Hospitality Ministries and stay to make your family Advent Wreath.

Now is an exciting time at St. Paul's as our community demonstrates our love for one another. We are expanding this love to all who arrive at our doors looking for love and a meaningful faith community. This is true of St. Paul's, "They'll know we are Christian by our love." Thank you.

With love and gratitude,

The Rev. Carolyn H. Eklund
Rector

2019 Pledging at St. Paul's.

This shows how many parishioners pledge in various ranges of giving, what the median pledge is in each range, and how much was pledged by that group in total.

2019 PLEDGE

Amount Given	Number of Pledges	Median Pledge	Total Given by Group
5,000+	11	\$6,552	\$91,272
2,500-4,999	32	\$3,135	\$106,378
1,000-2,499	56	\$1,580	\$89,878
500-999	24	\$665	\$16,973
1-499	15	\$316	\$4,351

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

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