



GIVING: A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE
SUPPORT LIFE AT GRACE-ST. LUKE'S

September 10, 2020 – *Resilience and Connection by Giving*

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the mountains be toppled into the depths of the sea; Though its waters rage and foam, and though the mountains tremble at its tumult. The LORD of hosts is with us; the GOD of Jacob is our stronghold. – Psalm 46

Dear Members, Newcomers, and Friends of Grace-St. Luke's Church,

What a year it has been! Looking back a year ago, our plans for 2020 couldn't have been more different in so many respects from the reality in which we find ourselves today. All people are facing challenges of some sort and navigating constant change. Despite the challenges and changes, Grace-St. Luke's vision remains steadfast: *to be a thriving community of hope, belonging, and healing through worship, parish life, and service, who rejoices in the love of Jesus to transform the world.*

While our parish vision is the same, today's reality demands creativity in how we might fulfill that vision. Our thriving community of faith has shown resilience in responding to our respective challenges by creating new avenues to connect, worship, and care for one another. While GSL has been mostly unable to take refuge in our buildings, we've found refuge and strength in God and each other. We've built and maintained community in new ways like online platforms while re-emphasizing good "old-fashioned" connections through phone calls and letters. Your financial support, prayers, and genuine care for one another have been essential to navigating these uncharted waters.

Life at GSL is moving forward in great ministry initiatives. We're staying connected through Sunday and weekday worship, Christian formation for all ages, and music through upgraded internet and streaming capabilities, and we are providing some in-person options. We continue to serve some of the community's most vulnerable through More Than A Meal and by sharing Food Pantry provisions with area ministry partners. Deepening parish community relationships and growing our presence in Memphis through service partnerships are among the benefits of having welcomed the Rev. Laura F. Gettys in July as associate rector for congregational development and community engagement.

For information about some of the exceptional offerings for the coming months, please check out the online August-September edition of *The Messenger* that includes a *Life at GSL – Fall 2020 Guide*: www.gracestlukes.org/the-messenger.

On Sunday, September 13, we kick off our 2021 stewardship campaign, seeking to receive pledges by Sunday, November 1, and a full Fall 2020 program of worship, formation and connection-making offerings. Resilience and Connection are the focus of the campaign and program. Perhaps this year, more than any other, we recognize the countless invaluable gifts that come from the priceless connections made with one another through prayer, conversation, worship, formation, pastoral care, outreach, social justice, fellowship, music, recreation, wellness, and year-round stewardship.

We hope you'll participate in the 2020-2021 Stewardship Campaign by engaging in all the church has to offer, both this Fall and beyond, and in supporting parish life by making a pledge. To thrive and sustain, we need you as continued good stewards and givers of the resources available to you and all of us from God. For some, finances may have changed drastically. For others, financial resources are stable or better. Some may have more time and talent to share. For others, time and talent may feel harder to share. Whatever your circumstance, we ask you to share as generously as you can by faith and to let us know of your commitment by Pledge Sunday, November 1. On this day, we will have a grand celebration to consecrate all pledges received and to share more about all that makes GSL great and our future in God's service, all made possible by our giving.

Additionally, we ask you to consider participating in our new planned giving ministry, The Cornerstone Society, to maintain and increase Grace-St. Luke's Endowment. Our parish has historically been blessed by members and non-members who've made planned gifts of all sizes. Those who planned and have provided gifts had a vision for Grace-St. Luke's that we enjoy today and carry forward through the care of our sacred space and ministry in Midtown Memphis. To learn more about this ministry and how you can add to the GSL legacy, please contact Stewardship Associate Chapman Morrow at 901.252.6328, or visit www.gracestlukes.org/plannedgiving.

Please prayerfully consider the instrumental ways in which you might invest in life at Grace-St. Luke's and pledge either online at www.gracestlukes.org/onlinegiving or by returning the enclosed Pledge Form to the church office by November 1.

Thank you for your continued support of each other, our clergy, staff and operations, and the vibrancy of our parish. The giving of your time, talent and treasure to support life at GSL are integral blessings to the fulfillment of our vision. Our resilience and connection to this faith community is bound to open God's kingdom here and now.

With great hope for times to come,



Allison King
Stewardship Chair



Steven King
Stewardship Chair

Stewardship Committee: Paula & Steven Boggs, Ryan Gibbs, Sandra Ireland, Ed Hord & Hal Wright, and Lizzy Holt Yatsula; 2020 Vestry: Simon Wadsworth (Sr. Warden), Charlie Pazar (Jr. Warden), Bev Trojan (Treasurer), Wight Boggs (Clerk), Grant Adams, Jimpie Ayres, Patrick Burnett, Nina Callan, Ben Cowan, Mike Davis, Jim Greer, Sandra Ireland, Jonathan Large, Stinson Liles, Anna Robbins, Tom Stephenson; and the Rev. Ollie V. Rencher, Rector.

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