

Faith Filled Generosity

Let's look at those words....

Faith. I speak for myself when I say my faith has been shaken over the last several months. As the news of unemployment, evictions, hunger, racism, wildfires and hurricanes bombarded us, I felt frustrated and in question about the strength of my faith. Over the last 22 years that the Hayes family has been members at St Boniface, we faced many personal ups and downs, but this church helped us stand strong with faith for the future. With the services available through live-streaming, the clergy so appropriately addressing the anxieties and frustrations of our life, the physical presence of the facilities, the continuation of music, and so many of our other ministries, St Boniface provided not just strength, but also faith when our own faith wavered.

Generosity. My problems during the pandemic have been minimal. Yet, there was a growing emptiness because I missed in-person volunteering and interaction. How could I reach out to those in need when I'm basically confined to my comfortable home? As an example, because of the early confusion with the virus, I couldn't understand why we cancelled Rise Against Hunger [meal packaging project for the hungry]. Wasn't that the essence of our mission? The reasons quickly became obvious. Thankfully, as the realities of the pandemic emerged, St Boniface made hunger and homelessness the focus of its outreach.

Notably,

- Through the Vestry's challenge, St Boniface gave nearly \$35,000 to All Faith's Food Bank.

- We released the funds set aside for the 2020 Rise Against Hunger meal packaging event so the organization could meet an emergency need across the world.
- Our involvement in S.U.R.E. [Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity] continues to grow.
- I am particularly happy to hear that Family Promise has reorganized, to help homeless families.
- We can rely on the Grants Committee to continue to award funds to needy organizations.

My point is that, we need St Boniface to nurture and sustain our faith. We need St. Boniface to go where we might still feel uncomfortable treading. We need St. Boniface to assist in distributing our resources to those in distress. We need St Boniface not only to keep our own faith strong during challenging times, but also to continue its outreach.

With faith filled generosity, please consider your pledge for 2021.