



Greetings in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

*“What does love require of us?”* This is the question we’ve asked ourselves this year at St Philip’s as we’ve faced the challenges of worship in the era of a pandemic. While our physical buildings closed, the clergy and parishioners at St Philip’s stepped forward to ensure that the vital work of ministry continued.

As we sought answers to this question, we repaired hurricane damage both at home and on our church campus. We learned to “Zoom” instead of interact in person. We learned how we can attend church online. We have been reminded that the future and the timing of change is always unknown. But we have continued to be a vibrant, driven, and transformational place. And so, we remain, by the grace of God, St Philip’s ... steadfast in our service to one another and the local community. This is our blessing.

In light of the question *“What does love require of us?”* let’s talk about stewardship and fundraising. Stewardship is about freedom. Freedom from fear because stewardship takes our eyes off of our own sense of self-sufficiency and rightly puts our focus on God as the source of all needs and blessings. Our family, our income, our health, our next breath, our very life is a gift to us. They are all blessings from our Lord. And active stewardship, stewardship in action, is living our lives in such a way that we are free to invest and share the many blessings God has poured into our lives.

Fundraising on the other hand, is about raising enough capital to meet a predetermined need or goal. There is nothing wrong with fundraising. Fundraising is necessary and useful in many ways by many organizations. But fundraising is NOT stewardship.

*This letter is about what love requires of us.* Stewardship of our time is lived out by how we invest the hours and minutes of each day. Stewardship of talent is how we invest the activities we are gifted with for others. And stewardship of treasure is how we invest our finances to declare the Lordship of Jesus.

Stewardship involves every area of our lives. And our finances represent our life. The money we accumulate comes as a recompense for the time and talent we invest during our life. And so, a tithe, a pledge, a giving of the money we have earned becomes a declaration and acknowledgement that God is the very source of our being, and everything in life that we have is truly a blessing from God.

Enclosed, you will find a pledge card for the 2021 year. As an intentional act of stewardship we invite you to complete the pledge card indicating your financial commitment and place it in the collection on Sunday, Nov 1st, or simply mail it to the church office.

Much continues to take place at St Philip’s. Pastoral Care, Worship, Communications, and Prayer. In addition to all of this, we are actively searching for a new Assistant Priest with hopes to welcome them to St Philip’s shortly after the New Year. And we are actively progressing towards building new Offices and Parish Hall. Ministry and Mission abound at St Philip’s! Through our faithful stewardship, St Philip’s can and will do mighty things!

Be blessed, and be a blessing,

*Fr. Eric + Aidan Bill C.*