



April 24, 2017

As a member or friend of St. John Episcopal Church, you know that every year during the Easter Season you are asked to step up and support the financial needs of our church by making an annual pledge that begins on July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. Your financial support is crucial to enhancing St. John's vitality (the state of being strong, active, and energetic) as a caring Christian community and that is why the theme for this year's campaign is:

Stepping Up Stewardship to Enhance Our Christian Vitality

To sustain its Christian vitality and meet its financial obligations St. John needs \$600,000 for its 2018 fiscal year operating budget. A significant percentage of this amount, approximately \$400,000, needs to come from pledges. Recently you have also been asked to contribute to the Count Us In Campaign to cover the costs incurred to improve our facilities for the future – to make them more welcoming, accessible, and secure. The Vestry is well aware of the potential financial stress placed on our members by this additional request. Only by fully funding our operational budget can we realize the full potential of these improvements. We ask for your understanding and trust you will be able to support both needs.

St. John will have a more predictable and sustainable source of income, and perhaps the opportunity to expand our outreach, if we are able to increase the number of pledges and the average pledge amount. In 2010 the number of pledges was 157. This number has been slowly declining every year since. Last year 103 pledges were received from individuals and families. If St. John receives approximately the same number of pledges this year as it did last year, the average pledge would need to be \$75 per week to meet our pledge goal of \$400,000.

Our goal this year is to increase the number of pledges by at least 25%. One way to accomplish this goal is to reach out to friends, family, neighbors, and acquaintances who might be seeking a place of worship and invite them to consider St. John, and to enthusiastically welcome any newcomers to our services and events.

If St. John is important to you or your family's faith journey and you are able to provide financial support and have not pledged in the past, please consider "stepping up" and making a pledge this year. A good way to start is to pledge an amount you know you can sustain, understanding that you can always increase this amount with additional unpledged contributions when you are able.

If you have pledged in the past, please consider "stepping up" your pledge this year. In addition to compensating for inflation's effect on the church's operating budget, "stepping up" your pledge each year is an effective and disciplined way to gradually and eventually reach a desired goal.

I urge you to read the enclosed pamphlet highlighting the spiritual basis of giving and all of the important activities and outreach projects our operating budget supports. Then give prayerful consideration to your financial support of the 2018 fiscal year operating budget. Finally, commit to this support by filling out the pledge card and either mailing it in or placing it in the offering plate on Pledge Sunday. If each and every member will do this, I am confident we can meet our goals for this year and enhance St. John's vitality as a welcoming and caring Christian community.

Yours in Christ,

Kendall Menzer
Senior Warden

Tom Hinton
Stewardship Chair