



First Presbyterian Church

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Rev. Eliza C. Jaremko

October 2020

Dear Members of First Presbyterian Church,

This has been quite a year - one that we will not soon forget. In fact, one might say that the Lord has been testing us. Nothing like what God did to Job, but certainly a time that has made us all wonder what's next? There are many important lessons to be learned from this chapter of the Old Testament with the understanding that while the Lord never reveals why God did all those things to Job, the story ends with God restoring his prosperity. The primary lesson from Job is that only God has the wisdom and power to understand the meaning of the world. So, let's look to the future and believe that things will get better with the patience, trust and faithfulness of Job.

You may recall that our theme for this current year was the recognition that we are a *Church of Extraordinary Ordinary Heroes*. And we needed all of our heroes' powers to offset the kind of year it has been. Fortunately for us, the year of our Lord 2020 has illustrated the super powers of our own Wonder Woman – Pastor Eliza. Likewise, we have all been lifted up by our extraordinary staff of Karen, Mike and Mary. In this church, we believe in each other, we help each other, we miss not being with each other, we reach out to each other, and when things get really bad, we are there for each other. This church is a family, and a family always sticks together – no matter what.

It's that time again for you to think about what this church family means to you. The 2021 operating budget for First Presbyterian is \$232,426. This is only a 2.00 percent increase over last year's plan. But here's the rub. Because we haven't been together passing the collection plates, our loose offerings are down significantly, and we cannot anticipate it will recover next year. Additionally, we will not be receiving any income from the Village Playbox next year for obvious reasons. All of which means that we will need to rely more heavily on an increase in our pledges. In order to make up the loss of the other income, we will need to increase the pledge portion of the budget by 3.6 percent. Now, I know we can do it if we just put our minds to it.

So, what's our Stewardship theme to be for 2021? Well, by the grace of God, we come together in fellowship and we worship together – even if it's online. And by the grace of God, we'll all be worshipping together soon. What more do we need? It's the power of God's amazing grace – so let's make that our theme for 2021. I hope that you will agree with me that First Presbyterian is the Church of Amazing Grace.

Yours in Christ,
Bill Reeves, Stewardship Chair
Justin Colantonio, Treasurer
Judy Wilson
Larissa Whitman
Candace Vrooman
Sylvia Hearne

Enclosures: 2021 Pledge Card & 2021 Budget

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