

October 7, 2022

Dear Beloved,

"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7

My father drove a pick-up truck for most of my life. When we were really young, he drove one of those wood-paneled minivans, but once he switched to a truck, there was no going back. He dearly loved each of the three trucks he drove during my lifetime, in fact, I now drive his last truck.

One thing you learn when you own a truck is that everyone loves having a friend with a truck they can borrow. Whether to move, pick up new furniture, or take an old appliance to the dump, everyone can use a truck from time to time. When anyone asked my dad if they could borrow his truck, his answer was always unequivocally yes. Often the truck would be returned a little worse for wear with a new ding or scratch, yet each time someone asked to borrow it, the answer always remained, "yes," without fail. Generosity was part of my father's very being. He showed it cheerfully both to the world around him and to the Church. Be it time, talent, treasure, or his beloved Truck, he was always willing and eager to share what he had. After all, his faith led him to generosity.

Since I arrived in May of 2021, it has been clear that The Church of the Good Shepherd is the same way. Your faith and generosity are what will propel us into the future as a thriving congregation focused on spreading the Good News of Christ to the world.

As we prepare for next year, we are truly *Thriving in Faith and Generosity*. We are able to worship together in a more "normal" way (while still welcoming many as they worship online), we continue to learn together and grow together in ways that Covid made difficult, and we continue to reach outside of our walls with the many outreach ministries of Good Shepherd. These are the many and varied ways in which we are faithful and generous to one another, and to our wider community. They are the ways in which we offer our God given gifts back to God.

To continue this work though, we need each of you. As we move into a busy Fall, I invite you to pray and discern how God is calling you to give back to God with your time, talent, and treasure.

Our Annual Stewardship Campaign and Pledge Drive this year will begin October 16th with a Stewardship kick-off celebration and Ministry Fair after both Sunday Services. We will conclude our campaign on November 6th with a wonderful All Saints celebration and blessing of the pledges. Throughout this season we will also hear from a guest preacher and members of our congregation.

The Church of the Good Shepherd is an incredible place with many gifts to share. As a community, and with your help, I know we will move into next year *Thriving in Faith and Generosity*.

Blessings,

Whitney Burton

The Rev Whitney Burton, Rector
Church of the Good Shepherd

