

## *2016 Stewardship Letter*

*God placed the human being in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. (Genesis 2:15)*

Dear Old Pine Family,

We write to you with gratitude for the life that is flourishing inside our church walls. In the past year, our congregation has continued to grow in both membership and activity. The signs of this new life are everywhere: a nursery bustling with children; frequent baptisms, weddings, and new member classes; the faithful work of so many officers and volunteers, including our new Green Team and 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary committees; the new sculpture of George Duffield that is garnering interest around the city; a new confirmation class of four young adults; our new seminary intern Claire Berry; new photography and video projects; and a new website to be launched in early 2016.



At the same time, our congregation continues to do vital mission work outside of the church walls. Our deacons care for members who are sick and homebound. Our Saturday for Seniors ministry serves a hot weekly meal and provides an opportunity for fellowship to low-income seniors. Our graveyard garden, cared for by church members, provides nutritious produce for these weekly meals. Our mission committee partners with the Community Center and other local ministries that serve children, the poor and the homeless. We've expanded our partnership with Ready, Willing, and Able (RWA), an organization that helps formerly incarcerated, addicted, and homeless men attain employment and self-sufficiency. RWA holds its graduation in our sanctuary each spring and on Nov. 20 Old Pine will host an inaugural fundraiser to support its efforts.

*Inside and outside the church walls, our congregation is changing lives.*



This year's Stewardship theme is Sustainability — both for the earth and for our congregation. With the help of the Green Team, the entire congregation will be exploring ways in which we can respond to God's call to be better stewards of the environment. But we also want to be better stewards of our congregation's future. *This means growing member pledges.*

In order to simply break even in our projected budget for 2016, member giving needs to increase by 6%. To be truly sustainable, however, we need to go further by investing in the ministries that define us as a congregation: our children's programming, mission outreach, inspiring worship services, and historical preservation, to name just a few of our many efforts.

**To help us achieve sustainability, we are asking you to consider two requests:**

- 1. If you have never pledged, please send in your pledge card indicating your intended giving for 2016. Your pledge will allow us to accurately determine how much of our vision we can achieve in the coming year.**
- 2. If you are already pledging, please consider increasing your annual giving to Old Pine. Even a small increase will help us to become a more faithful and generous congregation.**

You will find a pledge card and a return envelope included in this letter. **Please complete the pledge card and return it to the church on or before Sunday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015.** It can be sent to the church office to the attention of Beth Biermann, our church administrator, or it can be placed in the offering plate any Sunday morning during worship.

Online pledging is also available! Go to [oldpine.org](http://oldpine.org) and click on the link for “Make a Pledge.” You can set up a recurring payment through your bank account or credit card. If you choose this option, make sure to email Beth ([beth@oldpine.org](mailto:beth@oldpine.org)) to tell her the amount of your annual pledge so that she can give you credit for this tax deductible gift.

Finally, please plan to join us on Nov. 22 for a special “Green” themed, Pledge Dedication Coffee Hour, at which we will celebrate the conclusion of our campaign. This will be an opportunity to thank you for your generous gifts to the church and talk about all the various ways you can get involved in the year to come.

As people of faith, the primary reason we pledge is to thank God for all that he has given to us. Old Pine has provided so much to our lives and the lives of our neighbors. We invite you to join us in supporting our congregation in this exciting time of growth. Please prayerfully consider your financial pledge to Old Pine for 2016.

Sincerely,

The Stewardship Committee:

Mark McClurg (chair), Megan Steelman, Lee Mayer, Bill Hoffman, and Jennifer Hall