

*Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. —Hebrews 10:23-24*

The theme of this year's pledge season is "Promises." You may have noticed that over the past year we've had the privilege of celebrating lots of baptisms. But you may not have paid attention to one of the most important aspects of this sacrament: the promises we make. Each time we baptize a child, every member of the congregation stands and pledges to do certain things in the life of that child: to "support and encourage" them, to "tell them the good news of the gospel," to "show them the reality of God's love in our words and actions," and to "pray that they will grow to know and love the teachings of Jesus Christ."



There is nothing more important than keeping the promises that we make to our children. Through our youth programs and our ongoing support for families, we live these promises every day.

Yet there are other promises that are equally important: for example, the promises our church founders made in 1768, when the colonies were preparing for war and no one knew whether a new church could survive it. Or the promises made by the generations after them, when most churches fled Society Hill but Old Pine chose to remain as an outpost of gospel hope. These are the promises we are celebrating in our exciting series of 250th Anniversary concerts and lectures.



There are also the promises we make as Christians to serve the world in Christ's name. This was the motivation for the promise made when the Community Center was founded 40 years ago: to be a place of welcome for every member of our neighborhood. Among the many programs thriving at the Center today is our Saturday for Seniors ministry, which provides fellowship and a home-cooked meal to vulnerable seniors.



Of course, underneath our human promises are the amazing promises of God, whose Spirit has been the guiding force throughout our long history. When we give to the church, it's really a way of giving back to God, who finds us and loves us into loving others in his name.

**Will you join us in making a new pledge promise to Old Pine? We are asking every church member to consider two requests:**

- 1. If you have never pledged, please send in your pledge card indicating your intended giving for 2018. 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 may be asking yourself, "Exactly how much money should I pledge to give?" Annual pledges from our members range from a few hundred dollars to over \$30,000. The

average is about \$3500. We ask that you give in a way that reflects the importance of faith in your life. What we've discovered is that in giving, we are the ones who truly benefit. Our Savior Jesus said, "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." —Luke 6:37-38

During worship services this fall, you'll hear from Old Pine members who have discovered the joy that comes from giving to the church. We will also be sharing our exciting vision for 2018, which includes hiring a new staff member who will help build and strengthen our community and our mission programs.

Please take the opportunity to reflect on how important the church is to your faith and then *make a pledge!*

You will find a pledge card and a return envelope included in this letter. **We ask that you return your pledge card to the church on or before Sunday, November 5th, 2017.** 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 and encouraged. Many members find that giving online is the most convenient way to fulfill their pledge on a weekly basis. Go to [oldpine.org](http://oldpine.org) and click on the link for "Give." 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 Sunday, Nov. 12th for a special 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.

Sincerely,

The Stewardship Committee:

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