

Message from Robin+

*See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure. 1 John 3:1-3*

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. We are also saints of God, as we will be reminded on All Saints' Day, and this week we begin our Stewardship campaign. This year's theme is Faith-Filled Generosity, and what a good time it is to remember that we are here because those saints who came before us were faithful and they were generous.

Stewardship is the care of that which has been entrusted to us. We want to care for what we have been given because it sustains us and because we are thankful. Because we are children of God, we are also people of faith; we are grateful for God's generosity and love that continually strengthen our faith. This way of approaching life with gratefulness inspires us to generosity and it can change everything about our relationship with God and with our neighbors.

Faith and generosity look like all the faithful and generous things you do to make this building a church, a place where God's presence is experienced. Each week it is the work of the people, which creates liturgy for worship as we gather and offer our gifts of service. We hear hymns played on instruments or sung by a soloist, read the scripture, meditate on God's word, and pray. Beginning this week, we will again offer Holy Eucharist, joining in with the Communion of Saints around the holy table on this principle feast day in the Church.

It takes a number of volunteers for each worship service we offer; the altar guild, flower guild, audio visual support, ushers, and lay readers. Behind the scenes our staff members and volunteers plan each service, rehearse, create bulletins and weekly news emails, prayer lists, and complete dozens of administrative tasks. The Vestry oversees the various ministries that happen all year both inside the parish and out in the community, and they care for the property and manage expenses.

All of us are a part of this in some way or in many ways and any offering we give is gratefully received and used wisely. All of this, however, is only the mechanics of stewardship; this is the "who, what, when, how, and where" of the support of our ministries.

The real question is the "why" of all that we do here. Why do we attend Christ and Grace? Why do we support this parish? And why is our pledge important?

We have been entrusted with the Gospel. "Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is." Our faith is valuable to us, it is more precious than anything else in life. Our pledges to Christ and Grace are important because they create a place where we can

gather to be in the presence of God, where our faith can grow, and where we can be equipped to share generously with others what has been entrusted to us.

Take some time this week to think about why you attend Christ and Grace. What are the ministries here that have been of value to you? How can you help these ministries to continue into the future so that they might draw others into the presence of God? As the world continues to change, new and different ministries will be needed. As children of God our commitment is more important than ever. May we practice faith-filled generosity so that we can be part of God's plans for the future.