

Emmanuel Episcopal Church
1020 E. Mitchell St.
Petoskey, MI 49770

September 29, 2019

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the *Season of Stewardship*. Instead of having a pledge campaign that focuses only on our financial pledge to Emmanuel, we ask you to join us in a time of personal reflection and spiritual growth. Stewardship is grounded in our awareness of what God has done and is doing in our lives. Out of that self-knowledge, and in response to God's generosity, we make choices about how we use (steward) our money, time, faith, gifts, experiences, and personal relationships. Stewardship reaches beyond our involvement here at Emmanuel to our work life, personal commitments, hobbies – everything about our life, 24/7.

Therefore, the purpose of this season is to become more self-aware of how God has gifted us, and then be intentional in setting goals that will help us grow in our faith. We ask ourselves questions like:

--What do I want my life to look like in a year?

--How am I going to live out my Christian faith?

--How is the Holy Spirit challenging me to grow in new ways so that I can become more of the person God created me to be?

It may mean increasing the money we donate for God's work in the world, becoming involved and volunteering our time, sharing our gifts and experiences, developing a new spiritual discipline, or telling others about our experience of God. Perhaps it involves a ministry in the parish, or maybe it involves an initiative out in the community that is doing God's work even if it is not overtly religious.

This *Season of Stewardship* is our October focus. During this month we invite you to go through a simple four step process:

1. Reflect and think about the gifts and blessings God has given you
2. With the pledge form as a guide, consider the different ways you currently connect to God and how you are involved in the work of God at Emmanuel and in the community.
3. List on the form, your pledges, your goals for the next year. Particularly think about, out of all of the questions, what are the 1 or 2 particular ways that God is inviting you to stretch and grow?

4. You can send your pledge in to the office, but if possible, we ask you to bring your pledge form with you to church on Commitment Sunday, Oct. 27. During the liturgy we will each place our pledge form on the altar as a sign that this is our commitment that we are offering to God in thanksgiving and response to what God is doing in our lives.

To assist you in discerning what pledges you might make we have also included in this mailing: a list of potential pledges, a ministry diagram that lists all of the ministries of the church, and a brief description of those ministries. (Children's pledge forms will be distributed to the children in Sunday School.)

While there is a direct and important linkage between what we financially pledge and what Emmanuel is able to do, stewardship is about much more than just that. It represents the way we grow closer to God and live out our faith in our daily lives. This *Season of Stewardship* is an opportunity for us to stop, pray, and set intentional goals for the new year. It is our prayer that through this season we might all grow in faith and awareness of God's love and presence in our lives.

Faithfully yours,

The Stewardship Ministry Team

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