



And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. And all ate and were filled. What was left over was gathered up, twelve baskets of broken pieces. Luke 9:16-17, NRSV

September 19, 2022

Leading the annual campaign is never easy, but it has its own rewards. One of those is to witness the power of how your gifts fund the mission and ministry of our church in the community. Because of you, we can share our message of love with many, and this is the greatest gift!

We are focusing on *Works, Wisdom, and Wealth* as we enter our annual campaign this year, and it falls on me to talk about **Wealth**. Each household has had a different financial experience of the pandemic, and this year's turbulent market and inflation have been rough on all of us. We are increasing our projected 2023 revenue by 15%. This decision is directly related to an increase in our expenses. Even so, I am inspired by the ways you made and continued to make your financial gifts to sustain our ministry.

Our campaign theme is More Than Enough, and it comes from the end of Luke's version of the feeding of the five thousand. Responding to Jesus' call, the gathered crowd turns their pockets inside out, shakes out their blankets, rummages through their parcels to find enough to take care of the needs of the community. And what do they realize? That by the miracle of faith and the action of Love, there was more than enough, an abundance of leftovers!

Our stewardship campaign is like that ancient story: each of us contributing what we can provides enough – enough to fund our operations and an abundance more to take care of our neighbors and plan for the future. Every gift is a miracle, a chance to change the world. And every gift is Love, the kind of love that protects, trusts, hopes, and perseveres, as St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians.

Thank you. Thank you for all that you do for the Church and for the world. Today I am asking you to consider what you will pledge to our community in the coming year to sustain our ministry and to serve our neighbors. Every gift of wealth, works, and wisdom goes toward our ministry and mission, and yours is essential to us. I ask that you pray with us as we launch our annual gathering of gifts and gratitude and consider how you will contribute your gift of wealth.

In the spirit of love,

John Odell
Stewardship Committee Chair