



October 2016

Dear Friends:

We have this in common: each of us through chance, invitation or years of quiet searching has come to find a home at St. Augustine's. We are nurtured, revived, supported by this community and we give back - each in our own way. When you hear the rhythm of this community, you will notice how we experience and express our commitment to each other.

We make room for individuals who sit next to us in the pews, sharing our bulletins, our stories, or often simply our peace. We hold each other's babies, cook meals for those who are sick or hungry and listen to those who are worried or joyful. We give back to the community through song and poetry, by teaching Catechesis, by balancing the books, or by leading prayer. We work together to care for the Chapel, launch a mission, or advocate for justice.

We also give back by making a pledge to St. Augustine's, a commitment to being the financial support of this church and its staff. Our community relies on this promise to make decisions on what we can and cannot do, and to support the people who do so much to support us. A pledge, no matter how large or small, is one way in which we express our belonging to this church. We thank you for your gifts, and for being a part of this covenant with us.

With peace and love,

DAVID PHILLIPPI & WENDY BUNTIN



Dear St. Augustine's Community,

Our Baptismal vow is called a covenant. The promise between God and Noah's people is called a covenant. Paul wrote in his Epistles of the covenant we make in Christ's name to one another. Artists, Musicians, and Poets describe the notion of covenant in rainbows, ties that bind, and circles that hold community like wedding bands. The gifts of love, life, and community are realized through our commitment to each other.

Therefore, Covenant is our stewardship theme this year that reflects one of the most treasured gifts we discover together. We promise to one another to help each other live out our faith and to fulfill our longing to belong. We will explore this idea in small groups, in worship, and in our education focus. The stewardship season at St. Augustine's is always a season to share our time, talent, and treasures in gratitude for all that we have been given. I'm grateful for this community that loves each other and strives to love the world.

Our common bond is our mission focus, simple worship, and lavish hopes for love. I am so grateful we get to spend our days in ministries that support each other in living out our promise to love God in all people and recognize the dignity of every human being (baptismal covenant, BCP p. 303). Covenants remind us that we are tied to one another through the love of God and we will help one another through thick and thin and never leave anyone behind. We stand together weekly at the altar, we weep at one another's gravesides, and hold up each other's babies and swear we will help them grow into their full statures. This makes us family and it makes us a living witness to the beautiful power of love when we join forces in that spiritual mystery called covenant. Our hope in making covenant our theme is to celebrate the gift of community, foster awareness among us, and to renew our desire to love one another more fully as community.

I believe it was the hope of covenant that drew me to the tiny A-frame so long ago and the beautiful gift of community that has kept me there for decades. Without that commitment, we would have never started Thistle Farms or gone on that first trip to Ecuador. We are not inspired to go to church every Sunday morning, but for me, seeing that beautiful loving community inspires me every time I go. It is a great oasis in the vast land of churches. Seeing how we love each other in big and small ways draws me to the table and to the people around the table. Over and over the advisory board reports that people come to the chapel, not for the preaching or the music, but because, "there is an open and loving feeling" when you come into worship. It is the community that calls us all again and again. From the wandering cynic to the hopeful pilgrim, we find each other, and cling to a community that longs for love like a deer for a water brook.

Thank God we are together. Simply together.

Peace and Love,

BECCA



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Didn't we just have a Stewardship Campaign? I thought I already pledged this year.

A: Yes, we held our 2016 Campaign in January after the calendar year had begun. If you pledged back in January/February, we hope you will pay that pledge by the end of December 2016. Now, we are thinking ahead to calendar year 2017 and asking you to make a promise for next year. Having our campaign now will allow us to make a more accurate budget for next year.

Q: So what is the time frame of the stewardship campaign? Will you ask again next year?

A: Our budget year is the calendar year. In the past, we've asked during the year for your pledge for that year. We're planning ahead now and asking you to tell us by the end of October 2016 (when this campaign closes) what you plan to give between January and December 2017. Some time toward the end of 2017, we will ask you to consider your promise for 2018.

Q: I already give to Thistle Farms and/or I sponsor a child in Ecuador and/or I just made a pledge for Larkspur. Why should I give to this campaign?

A: Thank you for your generosity to these wonderful programs. Thistle Farms/Magdalene, the Center for Contemplative Justice (CCJ), the Escuela Anne Stevens, and Larkspur Conservation are all organizations born out of this wonderful chapel community, and we wholeheartedly appreciate your supporting them, as well as the Holy Cross Hospice. However, each of these is its own non-profit organization, with its own budget, and dollars given to them directly support their work. Donations given to the chapel pay for our priests, staff, and musicians, for hospitality within our community, for Christian Education, and for the A-Frame chapel maintenance.

Q: Can you tell me more about the chapel budget?

A: 89% of our income is from offerings and pledges. We receive around 11% of our total income from the Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee directly in support of Canterbury CIRCLE (Vanderbilt Student group).

We spend 75% of our money for our personnel; 9% goes to Maintenance and Operations, 5% for Church Programs (Sunday School, Hospitality, etc.), 4% in Administrative Expenses (printing, postage, etc.), and 7% back to the Diocese of Tennessee in our "Fair Share." (Note that we receive more than we send back to the Diocese).

It is important to note that Thistle Farms/Magdalene, CCJ, Escuela Anne Stevens, Holy Cross Hospice and Larkspur exist in large part because of support from the chapel. While this does not show in the Chapel budget, St. A's donations of staff time, space and related expenses along with countless volunteer hours from our congregation sustain these programs and many others.

Q: Tell me more about the cards enclosed in my mailing.

A: You will find two different cards enclosed. One is a “Pledge” Card and asks for your promise of financial support during the calendar year of 2017. The second is a “Volunteer” Card and lists some of the many ways you can be involved in the life of this community. By completing the Volunteer Card, you’re simply asking to find out more about these opportunities.

Q: What are the ways I can pay my pledge?

A: Pledges may be paid weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annually, however is most convenient for you. You may put a check in the weekly offering bag, mail payments to the chapel, or give electronically via credit card on the St. Augustine’s website, www.staugustineschapel.org. Many of us set up automatic payments from our bank or online banking so that we never miss a payment.

Q: Will you set up an automatic bank draft for me?

A: We have researched doing this, but it’s simply not cost effective for an organization of our size. We recommend that you call your bank or use your online banking service to set up a recurring payment instead.

Q: I’ve already set up a monthly payment from my bank and plan to continue it through next year. Do I need to send you a pledge card anyway?

A: Yes, please do send the pledge card. We budget based on the totals from the cards, so we need to know your promise for 2017.

Q: Will St. Augustine’s keep a record of my pledge and send me reminders?

A: No. Pledge amounts will be tallied and the total used for budgeting purposes. Then the cards will be burned at the conclusion of the Stewardship Drive. Your promise is between you and God.

Q: What about my taxes? Will St. Augustine’s keep a record of my payments and send me a tax letter?

A: While we do not keep a record of individual promises made, we do keep records of payments made by check or credit card so that we can send you a letter for your tax preparation. Those letters, specifying the total given in the previous calendar year, are mailed in January.

Q: I have more questions. Whom do I contact?

A: For questions about this campaign, contact campaign chairs Wendy Buntin (wendybuntin@gmail.com) or David Phillippi (phillippi1406@gmail.com). For budget questions, you may contact St. Augustine’s board chair, Connally Penley (Connally.penley@gmail.com) or treasurer, Don Welch (donwelch9@gmail.com). For questions about volunteer opportunities, contact Jes Williams (jes@staugustineschapel.org).

Q: Where do I send my pledge?

A: You can return your card in the enclosed envelope or just email your promise to Peggy McMurray (peggy.mcmurray@comcast.net).