

October 2023

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say: Rejoice!

Philippians 4:4

Dear friends,

The other night, Sara and I were talking on Zoom with some old friends from college. Two of them had just been married, and the other two were sharing the exploits of their eight-month-old daughter. All the next day, I carried a sense of joy. The reminder of people I love who are out in the world doing good things sparked something of the divine. It reminded me of the feeling around St. David's just after Easter or the Harvest Fair; when the sense of all the people who are working so hard for this community is nearly overwhelming: a sense of God's own joy.

God's joy is evident here at St. David's when we love one another in real, tangible ways. God's joy is kindled when we commit, again and again, to loving and serving our neighbors. When our Outreach committee brings hundreds of dollars of school supplies to Maine schools serving Native children, God's joy is sparked. When our Earth keepers call us into new and creative ways of caring for Creation, God's joy is sparked. When the volunteers at the Budget Box welcome the clothes and the grief of a person who's lost a loved one, God's joy is sparked. When we get together and share stories and food in the Great Hall for any occasion, God's joy is sparked!

It is joy that characterizes and defines us! That's why we are proud to support the work and ministry of this church through our giving. We find joy here, and so we commit to making our community possible through our financial support. As the enclosed sheet shows, the cost of keeping our community going – from buildings to staff to activities in the church and the world – depends on all of our support.

This year, we are setting a goal of \$300,000 (TBD) for pledged income. This will allow us not only to maintain our ministries in light of rising costs, but also to grow in the joy that we experience with each other through greater programming and staffing. If you have pledged in the past, I urge you to consider whether you might be able to increase your giving to St. David's. If you've never pledged before, I urge you to consider giving as a proportion of your income, as a way of understanding your own joy as coming from what God has given you.

In the coming weeks, a member of the Stewardship committee will be reaching out to you in order to talk about the joy you know at St. David's. I urge you to accept their invitation, whether or not you've already made a pledge. In particular, I hope you'll join us on October 25 for our stewardship dinner, where we'll have a chance to share the things that give us joy.

As ever, I am so grateful to be a part of this joy-filled community, and I am

Yours in Christ,

Andrew

