

November 16, 2020

To our Church family,

Pastor Cara's recent letter to you reflected the verse from 1 Corinthians 12:27 which says "*You are the body of Christ and parts of each other.*" While we are still learning and growing as we adapt to the new challenges we face, we can stand firm in the belief that our connection is a gift from God. It is through a combination of our time, talents and financial gifts that we are able to provide ministries that make this connection feel real.

### *Understand how we spend our money*

**As we approach Stewardship Sunday on November 22, we would like to share with you how the money that you contribute is used to achieve our mission.** Despite the challenges we have experienced this year, our three largest administrative expenses continue to be personnel, finances, and property.

Our faith community is a tangible entity that requires pastoral and non-pastoral staff to run it. Each staff member in their own way keeps our congregation running smoothly in the areas of building use, communication, congregational life, and worship music. While many of our ministries moved online this year due to the pandemic, it still required paid staff to organize, communicate, and orchestrate each opportunity. This year we paid our staff from March to October, whether or not they worked. While this was extremely generous, we chose to stop paying employees in November who were not working any hours. We felt this step was necessary given our uncertainty about how long the pandemic will continue and our desire to be good stewards of our funds.



*Zoom Communion*

Even while the pandemic has changed many things, we continue to join together with other United Methodist churches across the globe to support ministries like United Methodist colleges and universities, providing care and support for children with AIDS, and financial support for missionaries, teachers and pastors across the globe. This missional giving is called "apportionments" and is our second largest expense. Because of our many charitable donors, we were able to continue to meet this obligation.



*Repaired and cleaned stain glass*

The many ministries of the church we support would not be possible without our building. This year, our building expenses were significantly less because we were unable to do ministry within our facility for most of 2020. We hope that this will change some time in 2021.

While our ministry and program expenses decreased in early 2020, they began to rise as we bought equipment, software, curriculum, and supplies that would help us stay connected and provide meaningful ministries digitally. Examples of this spending include a teleprompter, Zoom licenses, subscription services for video editing, and digital worship and education curriculum from The

Work of the People. As we continue to adapt to the digital world, we expect that we will spend more in this area.

## *Make your pledge for 2021*

Each year we create a budget that covers all of the above areas. That budget is based on the pledges we receive from the congregation, which is why pledges are so important to the life of the church. The pledge you make now not only allows us to plan but gives you a target to strive for in the coming year. In good years as individuals, we can give more than our pledge. In bad years, we do the best we can. The pledges themselves are a necessary beginning step we take to plan our mission for the coming year.



*Drive thru birthday celebration for Tom Slate*

**Each family or individual decides the pledge that is right for them.** These pledges are kept confidential. There is a wide range of giving represented in our church family. Some give hundreds of dollars a week, and some are unable to give anything at all.

As a congregation, we are the ones responsible for deciding how we will care for and stay connected to each other as well as where we will use our gift of connection to impact the lives of our neighbors.

## *Follow through*

With our budget and goals in mind, making it a reality is about following through. And there are many ways to do that. You can **submit a check** via mail or **give online** which allows you to directly deduct your contribution from your checking/savings account or charge your credit card (Visa or MasterCard). Furthermore, our online form gives you the flexibility of setting up a recurring contribution.



*Food donated for Puyallup Food Bank*

In addition to your contributions, there are a couple of other ways that you can support our ministries. Many companies have a **matching funds program** for 501 (c) 3 organizations. This act will double your contributions by simply filling out a form.

Another way to support our faith community is through **every-day purchases**. For example, you can sign up with Amazon Smile, Fred Meyer, Thrivent, and designate a percentage of your purchase to go to our congregation.

Stewardship Sunday is just a few days away. As you continue to reflect on how Puyallup UMC is one interdependent body in Christ, we hope that you will prayerfully consider how you can support our ministries through your time, talents, and financial gifts. When you have decided how you will support our congregation in 2021, please return your pledge card either by mail or submitting it online at <https://www.puyallupumc.org/estimate-of-giving> by Sunday, November 22.

Yours in Christ,

The Finance Committee