

First Congregational Church

Rooted in *Love*

They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season.

Psalm 1:3a

2021 Stewardship Campaign

Greetings! It's time for our church's annual Stewardship Campaign. Members and friends are asked to make a formal pledge to support the church financially in the year to come. Receiving pledges is the only way the Church Council can plan and execute a balanced budget.

As we all know, this year has been anything but traditional. It's been over a year of uncertainty for our church and many months navigating a pandemic. Last year we began offering virtual services and church meetings shifted to Zoom. The good news is that, despite social distancing and masks, we are transitioning back to normal. In September, our program year began in earnest and our choirs, Church School, Confirmation program, and Fellowship Hours are all in full swing. To continue these activities and maintain a spiritually and financially strong church community, we rely on your annual pledges and contributions.

We welcome you to read and reflect on the information in this packet to assist with your giving decision. Even though we practice tight expense management, our revenue has declined in recent years. This year's Stewardship Campaign is crucial to our financial future.

With appreciation,

The Stewardship Team

Jason Jacque – Chair, Jodi Cowen, Craig Modahl, and Bev Mueller



While on our Stewardship journey, we celebrate the deep roots of our church, 123 years of strength and love.

[Click here to read a written testimonial by Bev Mueller.](#)

WE ARE "ROOTED IN LOVE"

How do you see the love of our church changing lives?

We are a church of "extravagant welcome", changing lives by encouraging transformation and growth. We continue to love our neighbors with our gifts to the six local service organizations we support on an ongoing basis: Advocates, Balance, Family Promise, Habitat for Humanity, Ozaukee Family Services, and The Food Pantry. [Click here to view a video testimonial from the Olson Family](#)

What "roots" you in our congregation?

"Why do I keep coming here? It is a place where I am allowed to be who I am."

- Ken Matthews, life-long member [Click here to view Ken's video testimonial](#)

How has the love of our church changed your life?

"I never would have attempted any of my education [Lay Academy, college, seminary] without the support of the faithful folks here at this church."

- Bonnie Jacque-Gorecki, long-time member [Click here to view Bonnie's video testimonial](#)

The fellowship of our church and its wonderful variety of ministry is that stream of water which nourishes our souls. It roots us. Generosity in all its forms comes as an expression of gratitude for this community. We hope you will consider making a financial pledge. The work of our church can only happen because of you, our members and friends. Because of you, our congregation shares God's love.



Our Confirmation Class is a great testament to our vitality. This year we are blessed to have fourteen 8th graders in our program! Some are pictured here on a recent Mission Experience to help Daycholah camp on October 16.

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR SCOTT

Dear Friends,

I am very excited about the ministry of our church. The return of our Chancel Choir, Handbell Choir, and Children's Choir has lifted our spirits during worship. Communion, baptism, and weddings have been celebrated in the loving community of our church. Our Confirmation Class has been learning and serving together in the church and community. Church School has been creatively teaching our children about being stewards of God's creation and loving God and neighbor. "Sacred Conversations to End Racism" has engaged members and friends in a challenging discussion of justice. The ministry of our church is alive, and the discipleship of our members carries on!

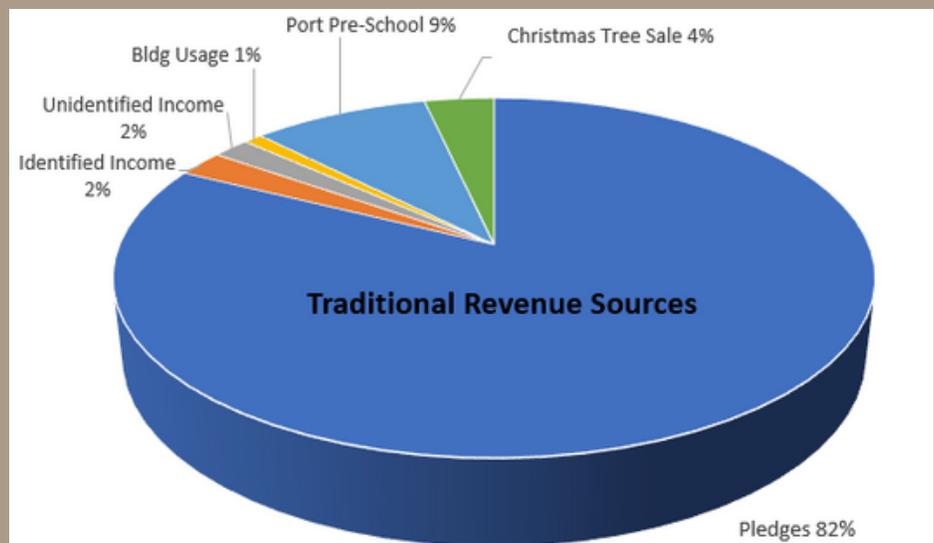
This fall, we have reflected on the words of the Psalmist: "They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season". Over the last several weeks, we have had the privilege of hearing moving testimonials by members. It is such an affirming way to remember how important our church is in the life of our members – we are deeply rooted in love.

There is so much to celebrate in our past and present ministry, even as we must take a careful look at our financial future. It is because of the strong tradition of faithful giving in this congregation that our ministry has been so successful. We are facing difficult financial times as we look to 2022. Thank God that the seeds of faith have grown and taken deep root in our congregation. Through your generous gifts we can be like those trees planted by streams of water, continuing to yield fruit even in these uncertain times.

Courage and Peace,
Pastor Scott

OUR FINANCIAL STATUS

The pandemic continues to leave our church in a vulnerable financial position. While the Church Council has worked hard to keep our expenses in check, revenue has become an area of concern. In 2021, our total pledge amount was down approximately 25%. Through the hard work of our Financial Administrator, we received \$34,447 of federal assistance through the Payroll Protection Act which offset our reduced pledges. 2022 will bring us new challenges. In addition to the liturgy costs associated with in-person worship, which were not incurred in 2021, we will incur a full year of loan repayments for our window repairs, adding an additional \$13,200 to our 2022 budget.



To learn more about our financial circumstances, and the proposed 2022 budget, join us at our Fall Congregational Meeting on Sunday morning, November 21, following the 10:00 service.

Where are you on your monthly giving?



Increase Giving Each Year

Moving from 0 to 60 might work for a car, but when it comes to increasing our giving, most of us need to make incremental changes each year. We can all help move towards fully funding our church's ministry by stepping up. With our faith deeply rooted in God's love we will grow in generosity.

WAYS TO PAY YOUR PLEDGE



Pay by *Cash* and/or *Check*. You can drop in the offering plate, or mail in checks. Offering envelopes are available by request on the Pledge Form.



Pay by *Electronic Funds Transfer* (EFT) on the 1st and/or 15th days of each month. If you'd like to utilize EFT, please fill out the EFT Authorization Form.



Pay by *PayPal*, our online giving tool.



We are extremely thankful to all who have been able to continue their financial support of our church. It has allowed the church to continue its ministry and to provide support to our greater community. For our church to continue to be rooted and to grow, we ask you to prayerfully consider **increasing your pledge amount by \$25 - \$50 a month**. We understand this may not be possible for everyone. Even if you are not able to pledge, we ask that you return your Pledge Form marked as 'unable to give at this time' so that the Church Council can budget accordingly. Pledge amounts are kept strictly confidential by our Financial Administrator.

The Stewardship Team is once again challenging everyone to complete and **return your pledge** within the next three weeks. Members and friends are encouraged to attend church on **Sunday, November 21**, to help celebrate Thanksgiving Sunday, as well as a Family Service, Fall Congregational Meeting, and Fellowship Hour. It is also a great time to turn in your pledge. Come, join together, as we give thanks for this place and for one another. After the month of November, friendly follow-up phone calls will be made by Stewardship Team members to those who have not responded.

WAYS TO TURN IN YOUR PLEDGE

Send In Mail

Completed **Pledge Forms** can be mailed to the church.

Bring to Church

We invite you to bring your pledge to worship, and place in the offering plate.

Submit Online

You may submit an **Online Pledge Form**.

THANK YOU for your ongoing love and financial support of our church!