

# INTRODUCTION OF OUR ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

## WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT THIS FALL

The work within and beyond our church can happen because of the generous financial and volunteer support of our church community. Because of you, our church shares God's love. While there are many ways to support the congregation, our annual campaign provides a chance to think in a particular and prayerful way about the choices we make with our money in support of the church.

During this month of October, we kick off our annual Stewardship Campaign by asking our members to share their thoughts and experiences about what makes them feel beloved in our church. Look for these in the weekly emails, our church social media channels, and in-person and video testimonials in worship.

At the end of this month, each family will receive a mailing explaining our church needs, financial goals, and the many ways to pledge. Beginning November 7, we will once again begin our Three Week Challenge for everyone to return their pledge forms, culminating in a Sunday service on November 20 that celebrates our in-person commitment to Stewardship. We invite everyone to present their pledge envelopes during the service. Our campaign wraps up on December 11 so that our teams can prepare our 2023 budget. We look forward to sharing the thoughts and prayers of several families during this time, and celebrating the generosity of our congregation. Please reach out to a member of the Stewardship Team with any questions, or if you would like to join the team!



## YOUR STEWARDSHIP HELPS TO MAKE GOD'S LOVE REAL

This year's stewardship theme is based on *1 John 4:7*, "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God." The heart of John's whole letter is: having witnessed and experienced God's love in Jesus, one cannot truly believe in Jesus Christ without truly and selflessly loving one's brothers and sisters. It is a positive, self-reinforcing cycle: we experience God's love through our church and its ministry and respond by loving our neighbors and sharing our gifts to support the work of the church. The church, strengthened by our gifts, helps us experience God's love, and we respond by loving our neighbors. And round and round it goes, filling the world with God's love and improving the lives of all that encounter this message.

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## HELP TO MAKE GOD'S LOVE REAL continued...

To proclaim "God is love" is a bold confession that calls for a bold faith and bold faithful action. For how will people believe what we say unless they see it in the way we live our lives? How will folks be convinced that beneath the heartbreak of everyday life, divine love continues to flow—unless we share the love we have? How will anyone know unless we make God's love real for them in our lives? Your financial giving to the church provides the resources our congregation needs to answer God's call to love.

We are already demonstrating God's love in action in so many ways that make a world of difference. And it's not the big, flashy things, it's often the small things in life that make all the difference. We hope you will respond with generosity.

Your Stewardship Team

Jodi Cowen, Chair, Bev Mueller, Craig Modahl, and Pastor Scott McLeod



## UPDATES FROM OUR FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATOR

As of August 31, 2022, our income and expense ratios continue to be more positive than anticipated. However, there are a few expenses that were to be paid the end of September that require a transfer of funds from our reserves. I am still optimistic that we will finish 2022 in a better financial position than was projected at the beginning of the year. We will still end with a deficit but not as big as we expected.

There are a couple opportunities to participate in the church finances. The Finance Team is led by our church treasurer, Kathy Bretl. It's a small group that meets periodically to review the budget and finance information in order to provide feed back and perspective. This team is very helpful to the Financial Administrator. If anyone is interested, please contact me, Kathy, or the church office.

The second opportunity is becoming a Sunday counter. We have teams of two that count the offering every Sunday and after holiday services. The goal is to have four teams in place so that each team will count about once a month. It takes 10-15 minutes after the 10:00 a.m. service. Again, anyone interested can contact me, Kathy, or the church office. Thank you!

Phil Stepanski, Financial Administrator (phil@portucc.org)



There are **three invitations** to get involved in the finances and financial health of the church. Becoming a member of the Stewardship Team, joining the Finance Team, or signing up to be a Sunday Morning Counter. Please consider it!