



# ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL EPISCOPAL

*Love Christ • Serve Others • Welcome All*

September 25, 2023

Dear St. Paul's family and friends,

I hope your summer went well and that fall brings good things for you and yours. As we look to funding our mission priorities for 2024, I invite you to participate in our mission through a financial commitment to St. Paul's Cathedral.

This year's giving campaign theme is "Strengthening faith through discipleship", and our goal is \$1.05 million. We are all disciples, called to practice our faith in our worship and live out our gratitude to God, sacrificially supporting the work of the church<sup>1</sup> and helping those in need<sup>2</sup>. Sometimes it's enough of a sacrifice simply making it to church—we all know the feeling! And the fear of uncertainty that is endemic in our culture can be overwhelming. But there is so much more for us when we come together to offer a portion of our hard-earned funds in support of ministry we can't do alone.

Be it through door hangers, new signage for our facilities, ads on social media, the work of our staff, or public events like Ashes-to-Go or Light Up the Cathedral for Pride, your generosity enables us to share God's love with our community. We welcomed twenty-six newcomers at our last brunch in late August: your gifts provided hospitality for new life, new disciples!

How does practicing discipleship through giving strengthen our faith?

- Disciples support and encourage each other in Christian community, sharing our resources and caring for one another<sup>3</sup>.
- Disciples do the work of Jesus, showing God's love to all, making new disciples.
- Disciples evangelize in word and deed, spreading the good news of God's liberating and life-giving love through our gifts.

When we prioritize giving to God, God's people, and God's mission it is transformative. Peace replaces anxiety as we learn to trust God with our needs and to share God's love with others rather than focusing narrowly on personal success<sup>4</sup>. As we practice discipleship we will experience the joy of seeing God work in our church and our community.

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<sup>1</sup> Romans 12 and 1 Timothy 5:17-18

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 25:34-40 and James 2:14-18

<sup>3</sup> Acts 2:42-47

<sup>4</sup> Luke 12:22-34, 1 Timothy 6

This year I invite you to explore *proportional giving*, a form of discipleship that deepens our faith. Proportional giving is a commitment to giving a percentage—be it 2%, 5% or 10%—of your annual budget to God. It is a financial expression of discipleship, sharing a percentage of income as a grateful response to God’s blessings, helping to build a more just, inclusive, and loving world. The amount of the gift is tied to your income, providing long term support to the cathedral as incomes grow and inflation progresses. (And remember, you can reduce your giving any time you need to; just let us know). Many parishioners are already increasing their giving estimates, and I am deeply grateful.

How might God be calling us to strengthen our faith through discipleship? What are the ways we can show up for God’s call in our lives as we seek to grow the body of Christ? We invite you to explore these questions with us as we look to Ingathering Sunday, on November 19<sup>th</sup>, when you will present your giving estimate at the altar, and the year of discipleship ahead. **Thank you** for the generosity you have shown in the past and for your commitment as we move forward together.

Your sister in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Penny", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

The Very Rev. Penny Bridges