



# Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church

## The 2024 Stewardship Campaign:

### St. Andrew's Episcopal Church: God's Community Moving Forward Together

Dear ones,

Our beautiful world today is broken and hurting. We find ourselves on opposite sides of a chasm, divided by religious beliefs, political ideology, economic status, and our understandings of human sexuality and bodily autonomy. These divisions are so deep that they have ruptured families, friendships, and our ability to trust one another. It feels like we are coming apart at the seams. How can we answer to God's call to welcome the stranger when we are all strangers? We are called to love our neighbor as ourselves, but how do we do that, and who is our neighbor? And yet, as tempting as it may be to believe that things have never been this bad, we don't have to look very far to see that this problem is not unique to us or to our time.

The Story of the good Samaritan (*Luke 10:25-37*) is a familiar one. A lawyer stands up to test Jesus, asking what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus helps to remind him that eternal life comes through our love of God, and our love of neighbor. That affirmation rocks the lawyer who seeks to deflect his failures by asking Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus doesn't answer that question. Instead, he tells the story of the Good Samaritan and then asks the lawyer who had acted as a neighbor to the wounded man. The lawyer affirms the Samaritan as the neighbor, and Jesus tells him to go and do likewise. "Who is my neighbor" isn't a question of geography but one of morality. Everyone is our neighbor. For Jesus the only real question is, are you being a neighbor to the people around you; in your family, in your community, in the world around you? Are you willing to stop by the side of the road, bind the wounds of the hurting and broken, and to restore them to the life which God created all of us?

In a world where we are divided by seemingly insurmountable differences, are you willing to build neighborhood and communities where the love of God and the love of neighbor are the defining features of all we say and do. Are we, the community gathered at St. Andrew's, ready and willing to take on this work and rebuild neighborhoods, communities, our nation, and the world? "The mission of the church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ" (BCP p. 855), and St. Andrew's needs our help if we are to do that work and advance that mission.

The 2024 budget lists 97% of our operating revenues as coming from parishioner's pledges and gifts to the life, work, and ministry of St. Andrew's. It is our financial support allows us to build a community where the love of God and neighbor are defining characteristics. It is our financial support that allows us

to build that community through our support of families at West High School, the Grace Food Pantry, and OWNIT's work to level the economic playing field, building intergenerational wealth through homeownership in the Black community. Through our financial support Saint Andrew's can address emergencies in housing, utilities, and medical needs through the Clergy Discretionary Fund.

Our pledges of financial support and our gifts help us to build a community at 1833 Regent Street centered on God's love: an open and affirming community, proclaiming God's overflowing and abundant love for all people, serving Christ in all people, and striving for justice, peace and respect for all people. St. Andrew's has stood as a beacon of light to the community for 110 years. Our continued financial support of the life, work, and ministry of St. Andrew's furthers the legacy handed down by those who have nurtured this place since our grandparents were children. Our support must carry this community into the future.

The budget that the Vestry adopted for 2024 projects a year-end shortfall of \$54,000. To date, we have managed to spend less than we had anticipated, and our income is slightly higher than we had projected, but a shortfall remains. Our current draft of the 2025 budget projects a shortfall of \$84,000. Ending next year that far in the red will reduce our reserves by over 40%. While we have the funds to cover that loss, this is not a sustainable model for the future.

We are growing. You can feel the Holy Spirit in this place. That same spirit calls us to move forward, to heal and reconcile this broken and hurting world. Included in this mailing is the 2025 pledge card. Please take some time to consider your response to all that God has given you; to the gifts you have received in this community; and to the work that we have done and will do, as the Body of Christ here at 1833 Regent Street. If you have never made a pledge to St. Andrew's, now is your chance! If you are currently a pledger, please consider increasing your pledge by three, five, or even ten percent. We need each of you to help ensure that we continue to grow and move forward together.

We will be collecting our pledges of financial support and will bless them on the Altar on All Saints Sunday, November 3. Please return your pledge card by placing it in the offering plate, by mailing it to the church, or by filling out the online pledge card on the Give page of our website so that it can be included in the blessing and celebration. Let us be God's Community Moving Forward Together to do God's work in the world.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andy", with a small cross at the end of the line.

Andy