



SOUTH BRITAIN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

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February 10, 2021

Dear Fellow Members and Friends:

As our pledge drive approaches, some of us may become a bit uncomfortable, knowing the Stewardship Committee is going to ask us to fill out a pledge card and commit to another year of giving from our hard-earned and limited treasure.

Luckily, the shift in the timing of our annual campaign stirred us to change our mindset about pledging. We reflected on the promises of Advent and the Joy that was realized at Christmas. Our church family has spent the past several weeks reflecting about the Joys in our lives, and especially in our church. Just to think about all that we have done for one another and for the community over the past year, even as the pandemic separated us, is surely a source of great Joy!

While we have since entered into the solemn and reflective period of Lent, we hope that the **promise of renewed Joy** will inspire us through our annual pledge campaign. At the conclusion of this time, we will have much to be glad about! With this belief, we are gratefully extending to you a warm invitation to share in the special kind of Joy that giving brings to us.

As Paul wrote in his second letter to the Corinthians about generosity,

*“Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for **God loves a joyful giver.**” 2 Corinthians 9:7.*

Pastor Malcolm will be guiding us as we explore the meaning of this passage in the coming weeks. But it is clear that God does not want us to give simply out of a feeling of obligation; rather, he wants our giving to bring us Joy. He wants us to give what makes us happy in our hearts.

Over the next several weeks we will be witnessing examples of Joy that giving has brought to members and friends of our church. We know that each of us, in turn, will be inspired to give generously and Joyously.

Enclosed is your pledge card, which you may use to offer your pledge commitment for the coming fiscal year from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. Cards may be mailed to the church or dropped in the collection envelope located just before the outer door to the Church Office.

Easier still, pledges may be made online via the One Church member portal. If you are not yet connected to the portal, or would like some help using the portal, you may contact: Carl Dunn (203-464-4457, or Carletondunn@gmail.com) or Laurie Hornbecker (203-509-4027, or Lhornbecker@aol.com) for assistance. As always, pledges remain strictly confidential and may be changed at any time by contacting the financial secretary.

To symbolize the Joy that will come from our giving, we have enclosed a package of sunflower seeds. In North America, sunflowers have long symbolized Joy, as the flower looks up to and follows the sun as it moves across the sky. When the spring planting season arrives in a few short months, please plant one or more seeds as a symbol of the gifts we have given. Our sunflowers will constantly remind us of the Joy with which we have been blessed after giving generously from our heart, and not merely our sense of obligation.

As the sunflowers grow, let us recall Paul's words: "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously." 2 Corinthians 9:7. We hope you will share photos of your sunflowers as they grow over the summer to inspire our continued Joy.

With Joyful blessings,

Your Stewardship Committee