



October 2023

Dear Friend,

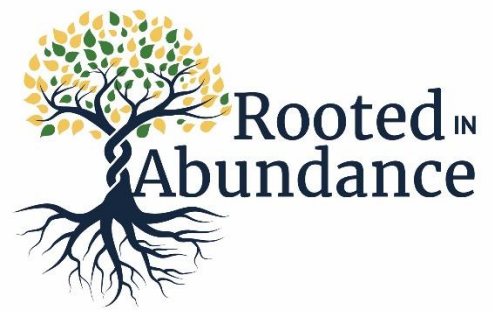
*"What in God's name are we doing in Centreville, Virginia?"*

Many years ago, this statement was on a sign in St. John's parish hall. These words are as relevant today as they were then – how are we sharing God's love and abundance to others? Throughout the Bible we are reminded that God is a giver of all good things. God gives us life and "this fragile earth, our island home," as we say in our prayers. In turn, we share these good things with others.

St. John's has long been a vital part of the local community. We share our amazing, historic facility with many Ministry Partners and community groups and provide generous offerings to those in need. We contribute to Western Fairfax Christian Ministries, including food grown in our own St. John's creation care garden. We support the Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter, donate school supplies to London Towne Elementary School, and make and serve dinners for Tree of Life at Sterling Community Center, and more. Beyond our Sunday services, which are offered in person and online, St. John's provides opportunities to expand our understanding of Scripture through the weekly Adult Lectionary Forum, evening programs like Summer with the Psalms, and our Education for Ministry (EfM) group.

This year, we welcomed as priest-in-charge The Rev. Kevin Laskowski, along with his wife Allison and their three sons. Father Kevin has embraced St. John's mission of Healing, Hope, and Hospitality as priorities for the year to come:

- Healing: worship God and proclaim the Good News of God in prayer, sermon, and song
- Hope: form disciples of Jesus Christ, of all ages, in word and deed
- Hospitality: steward our historic building and grounds for our parishioners, ministry partners, and beyond



Now is the time that we need to prayerfully consider how to support St John's next year in terms of time, talent, and treasure. Each of you have God-given gifts and St. John's could not be doing all our good work without you. Parishioners have been exceptionally generous in their support, being a "small in size but large in heart" congregation.

Enclosed with this letter is a pledge card with this year's theme "Rooted in Abundance." With your generous pledge, we can do even more. We hope you will prayerfully consider increasing your pledge, even by 1%. We want to continue the ministries that we have richly inherited from those who have gone before us. We have been given a beautiful place to worship God. God has given us all we need. It is our great joy to give back. We are delighted that you have found a spiritual home here at St. John's. We are blessed to share God's awesome abundance with you.

The ingathering of pledge cards will be on Sunday, November 19. We hope to receive your commitment by then.

In gratitude,

John Tucker and Susan Pike, Stewardship Co-Chairs



October 2023

Dear Friend,

Thank you for your many gifts to St. John's Episcopal Church. I write along with our stewardship co-chairs to invite you to a season "Rooted in Abundance" and to pledge your contribution for 2024.

For the next five weeks, beginning October 22 and ending November 19, we will give thanks and celebrate the abundance of God at St. John's, how wonderful it is to be so "Rooted in Abundance."

- Each of the Eucharists will be annotated, or "instructed," Eucharists. We'll pause from time to time to consider what we're doing and why. It'll be part history, part theology, and, hopefully, all joy.
- I'll also be holding an online evening series on the Book of Common Prayer, its rich tradition and wisdom, and how it organizes time, worship, the body, and the soul. (Registration required.)
- We'll celebrate Halloween with a Trunk-or-Treat in our parking lot!
- We'll mark All Saints Sunday, honoring the saints of the past and blessing the ministers of today.
- We'll hear the testimony of generous parishioners both in worship and in our e-newsletter.
- Finally, we will close this season with our Ingathering—and several baptisms!—on November 19.

I hope you'll join us in person and online for these events and send us your pledge by season's end.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus encouraged his disciples, telling them they would see and do even greater things than they'd experienced with him (John 1:50, 14:12). On my first Sunday at St. John's, as the parish was contemplating its next steps, I remember thinking, "This is amazing. Sure, I hope they choose me, but, whatever happens, I really hope they get someone special." It was a wonderful moment, but I heard another voice: "Do you believe because of one Sunday service? You'll see greater things than these." I arrived in March, and I have indeed seen greater things. I look forward to telling you more about them, to our continued ministry together, and, thanks to your generous pledges, to being part of the ever-greater work of God here at St. John's Episcopal Church.

Grace and peace,

The Rev. Kevin R. Laskowski, Priest-in-Charge