November 11, 2019

Dear Members of St. Luke’s,

Over the past three weekends we have heard wonderful Temple Talks highlighting the Fall Stewardship campaign, “Completing This Undertaking Amongst Us!” We thank Joe Pomilia, Sue Weber and Tom Anderson for their powerful messages!

- On the first weekend, Joe Pomilia shared the courageous story of how St. Luke’s has always had a sense of vision and faith as a congregation, even in uncertain times, citing early in St. Luke’s history when the congregation decided to build our beautiful original worship center and classroom building in the midst of the Great Depression of 1929, and then fast-forwarding to that same vision and faith to build our current facility in the midst of the Great Recession of 2008. Our new building is well suited to meet all the needs of a growing congregation in 2020 and beyond. It is a completely accessible beautiful building to all who enter our doors, thanks to the vision and courage of our members!

- On the second weekend, Sue Weber shared a wonderful “treat” with the congregation, letting them know that their generosity has been amazing—not only retiring over $1,000,000 of debt the past three years—but also continuing to be a leader in giving through our community, synod and churchwide giving as well. It has been the incredible generosity of the people of St. Luke’s that enables our congregation to be “home” to so many who find comfort, support and empowerment through this family of faith!

- This past weekend, Tom Anderson offered a challenge to the congregation to “give a bit more” in 2020! He elaborated that we should take more time for friendship and fellowship within the congregation, to commit to giving a bit more time to the work we do at church, to offer a bit more of those talents that God has given us and finally, to consider giving a bit more of the money we offer our congregation.

(Next page)
For the first time in 2019, we added $99,000 (our principal and interest payments on our mortgage) to our General Fund Budget. This is the first time that we have attempted to pay the mortgage from the General Fund since the new building was completed in 2010. For the previous nine years, the construction loan and/or mortgage was funded outside of the General Fund budget – either by mortgage reduction campaigns or by generous bequests given to St. Luke’s by members who had died.

At the end of October, 2019, our budget deficit for the year is $75,000. If history repeats itself, we may be able to come close to reducing or eradicating this deficit by the end of 2019 which would mean that we successfully supported our mortgage within the General Fund for 2019. That would be wonderful! But we will not know that until year’s end.

With the “Completing This Undertaking Amongst Us!” Stewardship Drive, we are challenging each of us to consider what giving a bit more to General Fund giving will mean to the strength and vitality of this congregation!

Simply put, would you consider raising your financial offering to St. Luke’s in 2020 to put us in a position of strength going forward into 2020? Each of us has different circumstances as we consider this challenge. We are also emphasizing completing a financial commitment card or a “Pledge” for those who are able in 2020, to give our leadership a better understanding of funding for next year.

Thank you for what you have done, you are amazing, and thank you for what you may consider as we move into 2020.

Please indicate your intentions for next year’s giving by clicking on this link by Commitment Sunday weekend, November 16-17. Or you may email Annette Johnson, St. Luke’s recording secretary, directly (ajohnson@stlukespr.org). If you prefer to fill out a paper Pledge Card, you will find them in the Atrium on Commitment Sunday or in the church office.

We also ask you to take our Interest Survey online by the end of November. Click here and you will be directed to the survey. The interest survey is an important planning tool for the leaders of our various programs. We welcome your voice and participation in this process! This is an annual survey—your availability and interests may have changed since last time you took the survey.

Thank you so much for your love for this congregation! St. Luke’s is a place of great faith and great generosity as we have witnessed over the past several weeks in our Temple Talks. Now it is time to “Complete This Undertaking Amongst Us!”

Sincerely,

Pastor Richard Johnson