



September 30, 2013

Dear friends,

This year at Church of the Nativity has truly been an extraordinary one with God's abundant blessings everywhere! For these blessings, and your dedication to our ministries and your generous spirit, I am extremely grateful.

Over the next six weeks, we will have an opportunity to deepen our faith and commitment to the ministries of Nativity. Each Sunday, a stewardship bulletin insert will include a reflection on the weekly Gospel lesson and the theme "Flourish in Faith." I invite you to join me in reading these reflections, spending some time considering the questions and examining what it truly means to "Flourish in Faith."

This is a time for reflection on all of life as a gift from God. By returning to God a portion of this abundance, we become more like the generous God in whose image we have been created. How we earn, save, spend and give makes a significant difference in the lives of others and impact our own spiritual well-being and our ability to flourish in faith.

This year, the Stewardship Team has set a goal of receiving financial commitments from 100% of our membership. These commitments will enable Nativity to grow in ministry, serving as the hands and feet of Christ in the world. I invite you to consider the many blessings in your life and how your giving reflects the image of a generous and loving God. If you are currently contributing 2% or 3% of your income to Nativity, consider increasing your commitment to 4% or 5%. If you've never given before, consider where you might begin.

A long-time member of Nativity once shared with me:

"You know, when I was raising my kids, I would wonder, "Where am I going to find money to give to Nativity?" But I always did. When life would bring new circumstances, I would question, "What can I give to the church?" And somehow, the money would always be there. I found it, because I wanted to give back to a community that had already given me so much in friendship, prayer, and worship."

With a significant and faithful commitment to God's work through Nativity, we intend to hire a full-time youth minister to nurture and support the youth, their parents, their youth leaders and their teachers. Our Youth program has 63 young people from grades 5 through 12 - the need for spiritual support for our young people and their parents will continue to grow!

We also plan to expand our outreach efforts in combating hunger and poverty by adding a homeless ministry component to our efforts, hosting another STOP HUNGER NOW event and supporting the Nativity Garden. We will continue to support local and international efforts to end hunger and poverty through our programs in Honduras and Uganda.

We hope the "Flourish in Faith" series will be a blessing to you and your family. We encourage you to take time to pray and listen to God during this pledge season. Remember the Holy Spirit is at work quietly among us. Trust God to enable you to "Flourish in Faith."

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephanie".

Stephanie Allen
Rector