

Dear St. Andrew's Community:

October, 2017

As we enter into another budget year, we are working to build a budget to reflect our values—your values—that are the cornerstones of our St. Andrew's community of caring, compassion and friendship. The budget cares for your pastor and staff, for the buildings which create a hospitable place for our worship and life together, and for many other groups. Through it, we invest with ministry partners to make a difference in outreach, extending kindness in our community and in the world. Your gifts make it all come together.

I am always grateful for who we are and what we represent, especially now as our national conversation seems to create division and acrimony. Here, we celebrate our decency, compassion and diversity. They are strength, not weakness, and are solutions, not reasons, for a host of social ills. Pope Francis said that any action that creates divisions between people cannot be considered Christian; St. Andrew's works to build bonds across those divisions.

How do we stem the tide of negativity and hatred? A cup of cold water.

Jesus said that, "Anyone who welcomes you, welcomes me; and those who welcome me welcome the one who sent me....If anyone give so much as a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple, then I tell you solemnly, he will most certainly not lose his reward."

While this statement originally spoke of the welcoming of Jesus' disciples, today, it speaks to us, people of faith, to shape our treatment towards one another. Hospitality and generosity are the cornerstones of our faith identity.

It's easy to become discouraged as our daily news seems filled with behavior of those who have motivations that are not congruent to the teachings of Christ. But we can offer that cup of water, that compassion, that helping hand. We can be ourselves. This is the important work of the church and I am so very grateful to share this mission of sharing the Gospel with a darkened world with you!

The work we do is vitally important. Together, our community can make an impact in the lives of those who we touch in friendship and sharing. Partnering with others of a similar mind makes our impact even greater. We have done this and we continue that work, today, tomorrow and the next. It matters. What we do, who we are as a community matters and makes a difference. We are literally a light on the hill in this era.

Please prayerfully consider your gift to St. Andrews for 2018. Your generosity determines our work for the next year and our capacity to do that work. It is such a pleasure and honor to be your partner in ministry. I feel blessed to be your pastor. Let us continue our work to bless the world in the name of Christ in our life and ministry together.

See you in Church!