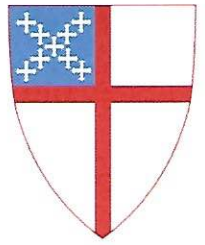




THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST
PO BOX 441 307 FEDERAL STREET
MILTON, DELAWARE 19968
302-684-8431



November 19, 2020

Dear Member or Friend of the St. John the Baptist Family,

At Mass every Sunday, after the offering is received, we sing the Doxology: "Praise God from whom all blessings flow!" And we are reminded anew that every blessing, every good gift comes to us from God. As I sing these words, I think of you, praise God for you, and thank God for you! I am filled with gratitude that through your offerings you are returning to God a portion of the blessings that have flowed from God into your life. I remember vividly as a boy of five or six standing on a pew next to my Mom and Dad at Sunday worship. And I remember as the offering plate was passed to us, placing my offering in it. Of course, it wasn't my money that I gave. Rather, only moments before, my Dad had handed me the coins that I offered. This is what happens each time we make our offering to the church, we are giving to God a percentage of the gifts God, our Father, has placed in our hands. I am reminded of the opening verse of the stewardship hymn: "We give thee but thine own, what e'er the gift may be; all that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee."

Our Senior Warden, Jill Malloy, and I write you to request that in faith, with prayer, and by the appreciation of the blessings which flow into your life from God, you make a pledge of what your offering will be for the coming year. Despite the challenges of this Covid crisis, the Episcopal Church of St. John the Baptist exists, expands, flourishes, and grows thanks to you, and only you, our members and friends, who have pledged their commitment and support. We pray, if you are able, that you consider increasing your giving for 2021 by five percent. And if your financial situation changes and you are unable to give at the level pledged, simply notify the treasurer. After filling out the enclosed pledge form, please mail it to the church. Pledge Sunday will be December 6. All pledges received by the day before will be placed in the offering plate and blessed at our worship on the 6th.

As I write this letter it is one week before the great Day of Thanksgiving. How fitting, for every gift we offer to God is an expression of our thanksgiving to God. We praise and thank God in the faith, the assurance, that all our blessings flow to us from the Lord. As a young priest serving my first parish, there was a member whose name was Jacob. One summer day, after one of the church's fried chicken dinners, open to the public, I was asked to help count the proceeds. I came upon the check Jacob had written for his dinner and those of his family. At the top of the check, above his name and address, these words were imprinted: "Thank God for Every Blessing." Knowing of Jacob's deep faith and generous heart, I was touched and inspired that with every check Jacob wrote, whether to pay his mortgage or electric bill, or for a birthday gift for a grandchild or his offering to the church, Jacob wanted to be reminded to thank God that he was able to write that check because of the blessings he knew God had poured into his life. It is in this faith that our stewardship response begins.

Warm wishes to you and yours for a Thanksgiving celebration that is blessed and happy beyond measure! We thank God for you, through whom God's blessings flow!

In Christ's Service,

Father Tom White, Rector

Ms. Jill Malloy, Senior Warden