

## STEWARDSHIP 2020 & FUNDING THE FUTURE

Can you imagine for one moment that you just won the Powerball Jackpot last night? How would that feel? Would you be amazed by your good fortune, the sheer randomness of your good luck?

I've been thinking a lot about good fortune or luck, even God's blessings, as I turn my attention to the Fall and the beginning of the Ingathering season at St. Mary's.

As always, the Fall is the time we typically ask ourselves and one another about how to prayerfully discern what it is that we should give back or give away to others in our church community. More specifically, it is the time when each parishioner is asked to make a commitment, a financial pledge, for the year ahead.

Pledges, more than any other source of income, are critical to the lifeblood of a congregation.

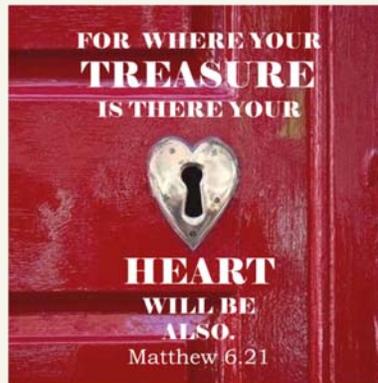
Whatever is collected represents the size of the operating budget and shows us what can be done in the year—funds, staff salaries and benefits, ongoing church maintenance—are just a few of the budget categories each pledge supports. Our pledges are obviously a big deal and you can clearly see the value of prayer as we begin to figure out our individual gift.

But, if you're like me and my family, this mental exercise is challenging on many fronts. Practical questions flood my mind, including trying to figure out, for example:

- ✦ How much did we actually give last year?
- ✦ How much can we afford to give now based on other expenses?
- ✦ Why are we constantly asked to give more?
- ✦ Who can possibly afford to tithe, and exactly where does our money go?

Immediately, we can start to feel a pull between what's ours and what we can safely and joyfully give away. Which brings me right back to that idea of God's blessings. Just what are these anyway?

I recently listened to a wonderful sermon by the Reverend Mary Davila, of Christ Church in Raleigh, NC. She quoted Rabbi Marc Gellman, who has written



eloquently on this topic.

A few of his observations have stuck with me. First, a blessing from God is a gift that we actually don't deserve but it is given just the same, through the love and generosity of the Lord. Second, one can ask, "Why me?" Why were we given this particular good fortune or blessing? How do we live our lives knowing all we have received has come not from a place of merit or right, but

simply from love and generosity? How can we square this notion with the practicality of life in 2019?

My suggestion is this: start now—today—thinking of all that has fortunately fallen into your lap.

Realize the Powerball jackpot you have just received and marvel at such a beautiful and transformative gift. Your family, your friends, your citizenship, your children, St. Mary's church—these are all amazing gifts that we were somehow lucky enough to receive. Realize that sharing these gifts with the world deepens your commitment to community, faith, and love—and ultimately furthers the Kingdom of God.

In the weeks ahead, you will learn not just about our annual pledging process but you will also have the opportunity to consider making an additional gift to St. Mary's through our Funding the Future campaign.

Let's celebrate this joyful time of abundance and reach farther to see how our individual gifts can collectively change the lives of others around us near and far.

Let's give thanks for the generosity shown to us and pass it on to the future of this Parish and our larger world.

Let the treasure be love, let us leap forward to discover where our hearts lie, and let us gladly and joyfully give generously.

With thanks, gratitude and love,

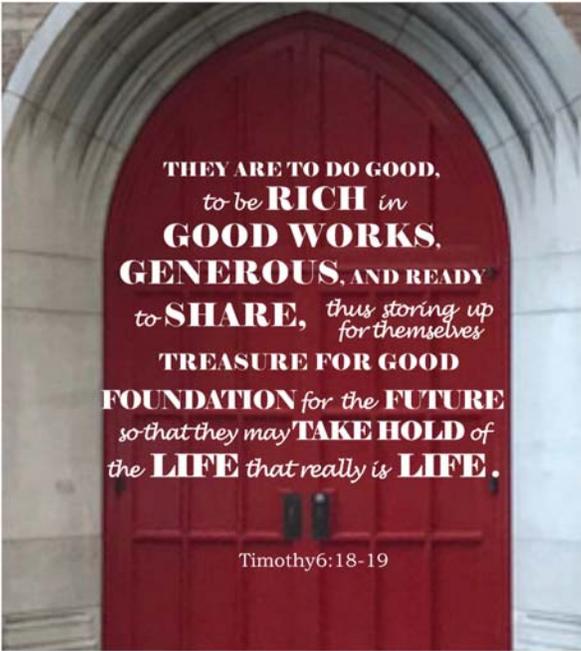
*Suzanne*

Suzanne Stroup  
Stewardship Chair

**Stewardship Committee Members**  
David Fletcher | Sarah Gregg  
Leslie Ann Gerardo  
Elizabeth Hale | Jane Jacobsen  
Jim Lazarus | Jay Liwanag  
Julia Anna Potts | Janet Tasker



CONTINUED—STEWARDSHIP 2020

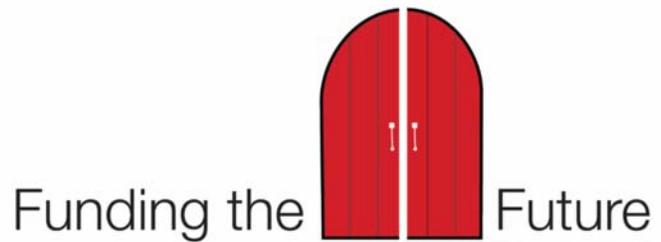


**FUNDING THE FUTURE IS THE THEME FOR OUR CAMPAIGN.**

This is an opportunity to grow in faith and generosity. All members and friends of St. Mary's Episcopal Church will be asked to prayerfully consider their annual pledge and a commitment to the capital portion of the campaign.

JOIN US FOR THESE ALL PARISH EVENTS

- ✠ **September 8<sup>th</sup>: Kick-off Sunday**  
Join us for the launch of our Funding the Future Campaign with Fr. Merrow, Mike Foster of MTF Architecture and the Core Team. Mike will describe the development process, which includes major improvements to our church building, a conceptualized new building at the corner of 26<sup>th</sup> Street and Old Dominion Drive, and a potential master plan for all 26<sup>th</sup> Street properties.
- ✠ **September 29<sup>th</sup>-October 26<sup>th</sup>: Learn & Discern**  
Learn more about the campaign goals and consider how you will participate and support St. Mary's with your giving.
- ✠ **October 6<sup>th</sup>: Invitation-to-Prayer Sunday**  
Receive your Prayer & Commitment Packet.
- ✠ **November 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>: Ingathering Weekend**  
Join us for an all-church party and bring your commitment to worship.



CAMPAIGN CORE TEAM & UPDATES

Funding the Future (FTF) Campaign Core Team includes the following parishioners, clergy and staff.



**FTF Chair,  
Church Hutton**



**Lynn Fuechsel**



**David Mayhood**



**Rosanna Esposito**



**David Palmer**



**Suzanne Stroup**



**Stuart Davis**



**Kate Muth**



**The Rev. Andrew Merrow**



**Janet Tasker**

St. Mary's vision has been a work in progress for many years. You can find links to past reports, an executive summary from our recent Funding the Future Feasibility Study, which included input from the parish, and more on our Website, [www.StMarysArlington.org/Funding-the-Future](http://www.StMarysArlington.org/Funding-the-Future). As resources become finalized, we will post information to this page, and

mail useful materials to parishioner's homes. Be sure to keep us updated should your address or contact information change. You may update your information online using your Realm account, or email Elizabeth Bruington at [Elizabeth.Bruington@StMarysArlington.org](mailto:Elizabeth.Bruington@StMarysArlington.org), or call the parish office at 703-527-6800. Thank you for all your love and support!