

JOURNEY TO GENEROSITY



“Put simply, life is a God-given opportunity to become who we are, to affirm our own true spiritual nature, claim our truth, appropriate and integrate the reality of our being, but most of all, to say ‘Yes’ to the One who calls us the Beloved.” Henri J.M. Nouwen

Dear Friends,

Spiritually-speaking, life is a journey of learning to say “yes” to God. While some consider the Christian life to be about saying “no” to anything fun – we know that the call to follow where Christ leads us requires us to say “yes” quite often. We learn to say “yes” to the ways we are invited to manifest our love for God and others in ways that Jesus taught us. We learn to say “yes” to living more and more generously, as Jesus generously lived among us.

There is no lid atop God’s generous giving to us. God invites us to say “yes” again and again, and all the while generously sustains and loves us, saying “yes” to us! God gave from God’s own unfathomable depths to live among us in Jesus Christ, and continues to draw us into a peace and joy that nothing else in this world can provide. We travel a very holy journey toward becoming one with God and one another, and I am grateful for you as a companion along this path.

On the Sunday of Labor Day weekend, I left church service in Maine, packed up the car, and drove the 525 miles home. I was the only driver on that trip and grateful for the good company of my 11-year old daughter, Piper, and our two dogs. Rest stops in Connecticut were busy, and the lines for the facilities were so long that Piper and I decided to walk the dogs quickly and keep going to a better place. We ended up at a Dunkin’ Donuts in New Canaan. That Dunkin’ Donuts was a slice of heaven along our way: the bathrooms were spotless, the employee, Jeremy, was kind, conversational, and made us laugh. The coffee was just what I needed, and even more, we left feeling refreshed by our stop.

I believe St. Andrew’s is a lot like that Dunkin’ Donuts stop. We have lovely, well-cared for facilities, kind people to be in conversation with, and coffee! And we offer to one another the fuel that really strengthens us for the ongoing demands of our life journeys - a prayerful, lively, caring community that seeks to worship God faithfully, grow in spirit, and reach out in love to others. Wherever you are in your journey, I am glad we can refresh ourselves along the way each week at St. Andrew’s together.

I invite you to grow in your practice of generous giving, knowing that every dollar you contribute represents your hard work and reflects your deepening commitment to mission and ministry in Christ’s name. Please consider committing to a standard of giving that reflects your standard of living. For many, that means giving 10% of their income. Others work toward pledging 10% by increasing their giving percentage each year.

Whatever you decide to pledge, know that I am honored to be on this journey to generosity with you.

Faithfully,

Dina

The Rev. Dina van Klaveren, Rector