



October 2020

Dear South Church Friend,

2020 has not been the year we expected it to be.

We've faced a global pandemic that has claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands, including some beloved children of God in our own congregation, a crippling economic downturn, and a national reckoning with racial injustice. And that doesn't include what we've faced individually and as families.

Despite the novel challenges we've faced this year, we can't help but feel as though we've been prepared to face it all, together.

For generations, you've helped one another in the face of the unexpected, networking after a job loss, making home-cooked meals and prayer shawls when we grieve, visiting and praying for each other when we're in the hospital, and so much more.

We've realized we were prepared for this moment, and will be for future moments, because South Church knows how to love one another and our neighbors.

Over these last months:

- You have generously and faithfully supported South Church this past year, and we thank you.
- You transitioned to online worship with grace and welcomed new members and friends from around the country, thanks to our expanded digital reach.
- You immediately made lists of our more potentially isolated members and made phone calls to check in.
- You hosted a food drive for Neighbors in Need and gave generously to our monthly mission partners.
- You led a 21-day racial justice challenge and stood up as local leaders to face racism in our communities.
- You gave generously to the Samaritan Fund, to make sure we could financially support our fellow church members, hurt by the lock-downs.

Last year we outlined significant program, staffing and fundraising goals for 2020. Among them were:

- Build on the amazing work of Cathy our music minister to expand our music program;
- Support our vibrant youth and family ministry programs;
- Fully develop and present to the congregation a dynamic new governance model; and
- "Strengthen our capacity to be nimble and responsive to unexpected challenges and new opportunities." Yes, those were the exact words! Little did we know.

As we look forward to 2021, we humbly ask you to consider the impact South Church has had on your life over the past year and beyond. We know these are uncertain economic times, and your financial situation may have changed in this year. For that reason, we are asking that you join us in sustaining our current programs and ministries by **continuing your 2020 pledge through 2021**.

We know that God is “doing a new thing” [Isaiah 43:19] in the midst of this moment and that even when the pandemic has passed and the economy recovered, nothing will ever be the same. Your staff has been in discernment during this time about what new opportunities God might be presenting to us in the coming year. If you are able to **increase** your pledge, know that your increase will help nurture the seeds of an emerging vision that blends what we love of our traditions with what we’re learning in this moment.

If you have never pledged before, the **FAQ** which accompanies this letter may help answer some questions you might have. The **FAQ** also provides a succinct summary of all our giving sources and how they are used.

Of course, if you are in need, financially or otherwise, please do not hesitate to reach out to the church office. We may not have all the answers for this moment we’re in, but Jesus reminds us that when we love God and one another, with everything we have, we are on the right track. If you are in need of support, we want to help.

Please be prayerful about how you can financially support South Church in 2021. Whether your gift feels large or small to you, please know that every gift matters. It all adds up to make a big difference. Thanks for all you do.

With deep thanks for your ongoing support,

Linda Zimmerman, Dave Floreen, Dave VanArsdale and Chris Price

The Giving Team