

# Stewardship Committee - November 10, 2022

## 2022/23 Pledge Campaign Status

The 2022-2023 pledge campaign continues, and the stewardship committee continues to hold regular meetings. The timeline for this year's campaign was similar to that of previous seasons. The campaign was introduced in a letter from Father Don which was sent on August 26th of 2022. Pledge packets were mailed on September 16th, including pledge cards and a special addition of the epistle, which included a number of articles related to stewardship and how we share our gifts in community. On Sunday September 18th, 2022, the campaign was officially kicked off during Sunday worship services, inviting parishioners to watch for the pledge packet in their mail. Although we did not use the weekly bulletin inserts from TENS, our Sunday, Prayers of the People throughout the 10-week campaign, included additional petitions for the various committees and ministries, recognizing and giving thanks the gifts and contributions of each group.

As of Friday November 11, 2022, the finance director reports that only 15 pledge cards have been returned with the total dollar amount of approximately \$52,000. The return rate appears to be significantly lower than that of the prior pledge seasons, and well short of our campaign goals for the upcoming year. Although some of the shortfall can be explained by changes in the congregation, those changes do not come close to accounting for the significant shortfall, as the current numbers represent approximately a 66% reduction from number of returned cards and pledged dollars from the previous two years.

Our initial campaign schedule called for the campaign to officially end on the first Sunday of advent, November 27, 2022. However, given the low response rate and significant shortfall in pledges compared to previous years, we will consider extending the season until after the first of the year. Our hope would be to use the additional time to engage parishioners, provide updates and information, and encourage everyone to return their pledge cards promptly. (Additional Pledge Cards are available at the welcome center.)

## Recommendations:

1. Delay the formal close of the campaign until after the first of the year. (As we did two years ago.)
2. Targeted contact/communication with individuals/families who have typically returned their cards but have not yet done so for the current campaign.
3. Targeted contact/communication to individuals/families who may have reduced their dollars pledged from prior years.
4. Broad communication (email, snail mail, Epistle, Sunday announcements, and website) to share the current status of the campaign, including year-over-year comparisons of returned pledges and pledged dollars.
5. Broad communication (email, snail mail, Epistle, Sunday announcements, and website) to share the hope of a 100% return rate, regardless of the dollar amount pledged.
6. General invitation for those who may have already pledged, to consider their ability to increase their gift to approach a tithe.
7. Ensure that Pledge Cards are visible and easily available.

## Looking Forward - 2023

The committee intends to use the first quarter of 2023 to focus on education and resources about Planned Giving. We intend to rely on materials published by the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF), and informational sessions with representatives from the Community Foundation of Greater Flint (GFGF) and/or ECF.