



CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST MARK

The Cathedral of the Episcopal Church in Utah, Founded 1870

29 October 2024

Dear Friends,

Grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

The Cathedral Church of St. Mark exists as an open place to welcome each of us into the Good News that in Jesus the kingdom of God has come very near. The Episcopal way of generous, open, and affirming Christianity that honors all people as made in the image of God meets a genuine spiritual longing, here in Salt Lake City and everywhere. It very literally saves lives to hear the Gospel message clear, freed from hateful accusation or our constant human temptation to set up dividing lines between insiders and outsiders. The radical, all-inclusive love of God cuts across every boundary human beings try to place in its way. That's a message our hurting world always needs.

As we launch our 2025 stewardship campaign, I want you to know the important role you play in supporting our collective gospel witness and ensuring its availability for our neighbors. Our theme this fall is *"All things come of thee, O Lord, and of thine own have we given thee"*—one of the old *Book of Common Prayer* offertory sentences, said by the priest just before the deacon sets the altar with the gifts of bread and wine. Pledging isn't simply a fee for service or a form of membership dues. Pledging is a spiritual discipline that teaches us to trust God the giver of all good gifts and to spend our money in ways that reflect our values and our hopes for the world we want to live in. *"All things come of thee, O Lord"*—everything we have is borrowed, given to us out of God's infinite generosity. As St. Therese says, "Love can only be repaid by love." In our small way, we give back, learning to love God and love our neighbor as we have first been loved. *"Of thine own have we given thee."*

As we put together next year's budget, we ask you to make a pledge toward the mission and ministry of our parish. Together we can prayerfully and responsibly tend to the gifts we have been given in this place. Your pledge shepherds the vibrancy of community, underwrites the excellent formation programs that nourish us with the Word and instruct us in spiritual practices, cares for the beautiful cathedral itself that calls us to worship the Beautiful One, and funds the outreach ministries that feed and clothe and house those most vulnerable among us who have a special place in the heart of Jesus.

All our ministries require monetary support to continue. The beautiful music that we enjoy in worship together takes money. Keeping a roof on our lovely and historic building takes a lot of money—ask our Junior Warden. It takes money to run our ministry at Hildegard's Food Pantry, where as one of the only food pantries in a city where food insecurity is on the rise we often serve more than 4000 people each

month. Our urgent ministry of hospitality and care to the residents at The Point takes money. Being able to open our parish hall to the homeless on the coldest nights as overflow shelter space takes money. If you value these ministries, then I'm asking you to live out your values by pledging what you'll give next year to support them financially.

St. Mark's is funded by the gifts and contributions of parishioners each year. We don't receive money from The Episcopal Church or from the Diocese of Utah; in fact we give money to support both of these bodies. The Cathedral Church of St. Mark depends on your donations to keep our missions and ministries going each year. In a very real way, your pledges determine who we will be. This is your parish. There's no one else who is going to fund this church. St. Mark's depends on the generosity of each person here who is a part of this community, just as we all depend on the overflowing generosity of God to us.

Our pledge goal this year is \$500,000. This is a modest stretch from last year, and I am confident that with your generosity we can meet this goal. It represents an important step toward more fully supporting the ministries of this church through pledge income. We are blessed to have savings from what has been donated to this church in the past, and we use a responsible portion from that investment account each year to close the gap between pledges and operating costs. The vestry's vision is to get to the point where we can fund our parish entirely on pledges so that we can then give away money from our investments to people doing justice work for the needy and most vulnerable in our city. *"All things come of thee, O Lord."* Our parish exists to serve those outside our community, and it's only right for us to give back in this way.

I hope you can hear that your pledge is important, and that it does far more than keep the lights on. We support our parish so that St. Mark's can be here as a place of refuge, a place of unconditional welcome, a place where the gospel message is proclaimed and the sacraments are celebrated, where the weary find a resting place, where God is credible, where the people of God are nourished and refreshed and sent back out into the world in loving service and faithful witness to the mercy of God on offer for each one of us.

To all who call St. Mark's home, I'm asking you to please make a pledge. If you can't pledge much, pledge something. As a community, we need to come up with sufficient funds to support our mission, which with your generosity is very doable. And as individuals, pledging is not about the amount on the pledge card but making the commitment to live generously out of gratitude for all we have been given.

"All things come of thee, O Lord, and of thine own have we given thee."

In Christ,

The Reverend Holly Huff, Associate Priest