



*<sup>32</sup>Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. <sup>33</sup>With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. – Acts 4:32-33*

Dear siblings in Christ,

We are so grateful that you are a part of our community. Sometimes we forget to take a step back and recognize the way in which each individual contributes to the community we have created together. We are stronger for your presence.

As we think about the way in which we tend to all of the gifts in our lives, we are pausing to reflect together on the way in which each of us contributes to and impacts others in our community. Our gifts are shared. Our joys are shared. Our burdens are shared. Like the disciples of the early church, like generations of faith communities before and since, like all communities of people, we rely on one another to create a shared experience together. God has called us together in this time and place to be church together.

We invite you in this time to reflect with us on that common life that is shared. While we may not literally renounce all our possessions as some in the early church did, we do recognize that God has given each of us resources that are meant to be shared for the common good. We live in a time where our shared public life is often divided and there is great competition for resources. Our Christian witness is to another way in which we recognize that despite our differences, we exist in a web of community.

We invite you to reflect in the coming weeks on what gifts you have to share with this community. You will have an opportunity to sign up for one-on-one conversations with other congregation members as a way of deepening our ties to one another. *[Included here is a Bible study you can do on your own or with others on our theme passage from Acts.]* We invite you to think about the ways you offer your time and talents for the sake of our congregation and community. And we invite you in this moment to consider your financial commitment to our ministry for the coming year. Included here is an estimate of giving form that allows you to consider your own commitment as well as assists the community in making plans for our future ministry. Please return estimate of giving cards to the offering plate on or before *[Sunday date]* or mail/e-mail them to the church office *[contact information]*.

We are excited about our common life together. *[Highlight here some specific ministries that are thriving, growing, or that you anticipate starting in the upcoming year.]*

Again, thank you for being a part of our common life together. We are grateful for you.

In Christ,

Stewardship Chair

Pastor/Deacon/LLM