



ST. EDWARD'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Reverend Dr. Richard C. Bauer, Rector

December 2024

Dear Friends,

As we embrace our celebration of Advent, and faithfully recommit ourselves to stewardship, we share in the abundance of God's creation and in the many blessings of our common life together, here in this thriving spiritual home. In this season of 'hope, peace, joy, and love' we not only rest in our appreciation for all that is, but we also look forward, trusting that each new day can meet us with an increasing light that brings us closer to what is to be – the Incarnation. Indeed, the Advent season invites a beatific opportunity: to reflect on the gifts that we receive in Christ and to consider the ways we're each called to contribute to our shared life in the stewardship of our spiritual home.

As I reflect on completing my fifth year as your pastor, rector, and spiritual leader, I've pondered how much we've accomplished together...and how much more that we can do as a community of faith to secure the future vitality and legacy of our spiritual home. And while I am keenly aware of how we are a congregation *on the move*, (with folks who are aging, taking in all that life has to offer through travel, and often relocating) I also know, as I look at our church family wall, that we have accomplished some extraordinary "planting" in this past year with the seeds gifted to us by each one of you. It's quite a thing to name the ways that we continue to expand our Faith in Action Ministries with new community events, such as Trunk or Treat, and seminars on *Balancing the Art of Aging Well*. It's a gift to reflect upon our continued commitment to Creation Care, evident through the revitalization of Swarr Run, offering a beautiful and meditative prayer space to all. It's because of our mutual investment in this place that we've addressed the access needs of our congregation with a new parking lot, more illuminating exterior lighting, and landscaping that captures rainfall runoff. Our interior spaces have been enhanced by new narthex flooring, new glass front entry doors, renovated bathrooms, and fresh paint, floor surface, and window treatments in the parish hall. We've protected our stained-glass investment with the proper exterior window tinting and added tinting to other sanctuary/sacristy windows to provide comfort and achieve greater energy efficiency. But, most importantly, we've continued to find pathways for building the bonds of community: through worship, spiritual formation, and fellowship. *We are a church on a mission*; and it is with your generosity of spirit that we've been able to rise to the challenge of advancing a Christ-soaked vision for a way of love in this world. It is no small thing!

And yet, as every good gardener knows, in order for the quality seed that has been planted to grow, fruitfully, it must be watered, generously. And now is the time that we are all called to water the seeds that we have planted together: to ensure that the mission, ministry, and vision of St. Edward's is well-nourished to thrive far into the future. Each of us will play an instrumental role, with God's help, in providing for the financial resources required to care for what we have planted together.

And so, as we built our "Family Wall" last year, for 2025 we will have a basket of wooden Trees of Life that we encourage you to take home, during our stewardship season, to beautify and bedazzle in a way that expresses the growth and vitality you see in St. Edward's. Please, add your name to our tree, to *your* tree! Bring them back on December 22nd when we have our ingathering and we will display them on a wall in our library...to remind us of the importance of this "third space" in our collective lives – a place where we each belong.

I trust that the Spirit has a wonderful plan for our parish, a plan for its thriving. So, may the Lord bless our efforts and continue to enliven our hearts through the abundance of our shared lives in Christ. Please complete the enclosed pledge form and return it via mail, or place it in the Sunday offering plate, by the Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 22nd.

With love and appreciation,

The Reverend Dr. Rick Bauer
Rector, St. Edward's Episcopal Church, Lancaster

**ST. EDWARD'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
2025 PLEDGE FORM**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

For the calendar year January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025

I/We commit to the Work of God's Church (please choose one):

\$ _____ Weekly \$ _____ Monthly

\$ _____ Quarterly \$ _____ Yearly

I have included St. Edward's in my Estate planning.

I would like to include St. Edward's in my Estate planning.

I would like information on Planned Giving/St. Edward's Legacy Fund

Please supply Giving Envelopes Yes _____ No _____

Signature(s) _____ Date _____

I/We would like to be contacted about joining a ministry or project.

I/We would like a parish mailbox and to be listed in the parish directory.

The contact information on this form is new.

STEWARDSHIP AT ST. EDWARD'S 2025



STEWARDSHIP
A Way of Life

We, who are here now, will play an instrumental role, with God's help, in providing for the financial resources required to care for what we have been building together. And I trust that the Spirit has a wonderful plan for our parish, a plan for its thriving. So, may the Lord bless our efforts and continue to enliven our hearts through the abundance of our shared lives in Christ.

- Father Rick