



THE FIRST CHURCH IN OBERLIN
United Church of Christ

Rev. David T. Hill, Pastor

Jennifer Bertoni, Director of Faith Formation



October 26, 2020

Dear Faithful First Church Members and Friends,

2020 has been quite a year! We pray you and your loved ones are faring well. Thank you for your faithful giving throughout this pandemic which has prevented us from physically gathering with our beloved First Church community. Not only have you been faithful in your support of the ministry and mission of First Church, you have been faithful to your capital campaign commitments, and even responded generously to an additional capital campaign appeal to meet the unexpected needs that have emerged as the work progressed. In doing so you have demonstrated over and over again that you understand the importance and benefits of being good stewards of the resources God has entrusted into your care. Thank you!

Last year, 2019, was our official sabbatical year, but 2020 has been full of unexpected interruptions in the life and ministry of our congregation. One of the aspects that we have missed the most is the ability to be together in this cherished community. It is said, "absence makes the heart grow fonder;" we imagine all of us have a renewed appreciation for this beloved community that so enriches our lives by providing us with meaningful opportunities to connect with God and each other, and to reach out in service to the broader community, both here in Oberlin and around the world.

In light of this forced "time out," the Stewardship Committee believes that as we gradually move forward into post-COVID life, we will each have an opportunity to renew our commitments to the priorities that we have discovered mean the most to us and that are the most valuable for our community. We see this year's stewardship awareness campaign as a one-of-a-kind opportunity to recommit ourselves to the ways we invest God's sacred gifts of time, talent, and treasure. As life opens up before you, once again, what are the most important ways you want to invest your *time*? How do you plan to use your special God-given *talents* as you move forward? With so many needs crying for our attention, how will you invest the *treasure* entrusted to you to help make God's love and grace real in our congregation, our Oberlin community, and our global community?

These questions have led us to this year's stewardship theme: BELOVED, LOVE... Love our church community... our Oberlin community... and our global community.

Please consider the ways you want to invest in love during 2021. Enclosed you will find several ways you can make a commitment to support the important ministry and mission of First Church during the coming year.

- You can make a **traditional pledge of support** using the enclosed card, and honor your pledge by making regular contributions throughout 2021
- You can use the enclosed form to establish and authorize **regular automatic withdrawals from your checking account and/or your credit card** as a recurring gift directly to First Church

Your commitment to support First Church in one of these ways is also important because 20% of these commitments will be included in the 2021 budget for outreach and mission.

Our Commitment Sunday, November 15, 2020, will be quite different this year. First of all, it will be a virtual experience. So, we ask you to fill out the card or form indicating your preferred way of supporting the congregation for the coming year and then have it with you as you participate in the virtual service on the 15th. There will be a special opportunity during the service when our commitments will be consecrated. Then, on Monday, November 16, please mail back your commitment card or form in the enclosed, postage-paid envelope included with this letter.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration of your support for the First Church in Oberlin.

Gratefully,

The First Church Stewardship Committee

*Rollin Conway, John Gates, Kristin Peterson, Dale Preston, Tom Taylor, and Jill Wettersten;
with Ralph Thompson, Executive Council liaison*