

## FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR JEANINE

*"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."*-John 10:10b  
**Abundant life.**

What does abundant life mean for you? What does abundant life mean for United in Faith? We are entering into stewardship season. This is the time where we consider how we shepherd and manage the gifts and resources of our life together. So that we can plan for the coming year and set priorities that focus our ministry.

Stewardship: "the careful and responsible management for something entrusted into one's care." I want to be honest with you. I brace my whole self for conversations that I dread. Typically, those conversations begin and end with money. The currency that is required to pay for food, shelter, mobility, and occasional moments of frivolity and joy. The currency that pays the light bill and the heat. And all too often we limit stewardship thinking to money and how scarce it is.

I understand how that happens. I really do. However, I am utterly convinced that an abundant life cannot be measured by money. It must be measured in the currencies of relationships, in community, in compassion, in justice, in health and wellness, in gracious leadership and in truth. The currencies that flow in our congregation that fill us up, that overflow and fill others up are much more life-giving to consider.

So, I ask you: how are your relationships? Are you affording them a bit of your time? Are you reaching out to check on your neighbor? Could you afford to do that a bit more? At the same time are you able to receive your neighbor as they reach out to you? How are you actively part of this community?

So, I ask you: how is your health? Physically and mentally? Are you paying attention to the signs and symptoms that indicate the wellness of your person? Are you paying attention to the signs and symptoms that indicate the wellness of our congregation? Are there things that you need? Are there ways you can offer to help us all become healthier?

So, I ask you: are you expressing God's love in the world with compassion? Are you seeking justice? Are you loving kindness? How might you share

your compassion and encourage your neighbor to join you in God's ministry in the world?

So, I ask you: are you open to learning new truths about our world, our congregation, our relationships, and each other? How might you increase your openness to hear God's voice, so you can more fully be God's hands and feet in the world.

And because this church also has light bulbs and other bills. I ask you: are you supporting our building and our staff with your money? As you consider where your finite financial resources are spent, are you including our shared ministry in your personal priorities? Are there specific ministries that you would like to increase through your intentional support?

How you answer any of these questions matter. On November 19<sup>th</sup>, we will offer our giving pledges for the coming year. Our contributions alone are small, but together we are mighty!

*Pastor Jeanine*