



October 22, 2021

## *Letting Our Light Shine*

As we once again begin to reflect on the resource challenges facing our Church in 2022, the re-imagining that the COVID pandemic brought into our lives continues. If this letter had been written just a few short months ago the road ahead might have looked lighter. The Gospel of John reminds us that: “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.” Fortunately, our church family has embraced uncertainty by trusting in hope and optimism.

The accomplishments of the past year are nothing short of remarkable.

- Our worship services are now live streamed thanks to the amazing work and unrelenting efforts of Steve Brooks and Don Raw Jr. This new technology has allowed our members to still feel connected during a period of great anxiety. Even as the pandemic passes, more people will be reached because time and distance will no longer be factors in attending services.
- Deacons developed creative ways to make our sanctuary a safe haven for all.
- A group of our congregation met bi-weekly to look at the manifestation of racism in our culture, historically and today, with new groups formed to follow in their footsteps.
- Heidi Schwarz gathered a Zoom group to explore ways of becoming more mindful of our inner selves thus allowing the light within each of us to shine more fully.
- Many in our congregation studied and discussed the New Testament with Rev. Dawn and the Prodigal Son with Mickey Ely.
- Caring callers reached out to fellow congregants through “check-in” notes and calls to help deepen connections and relationships. This was especially important in a year where many felt isolated.
- During the season of Lent many in our congregation shared a meditation or story meaningful to them in our Lenten Devotional.
- We were able to continue supporting our outreach ministries including Gleaners, Light Hill, Family Promise and the What If Foundation in Haiti.

These are strange times and none of us know what is ahead, but we do know that we must remain strong and connected to each other. As we enter the 2022 pledge season, we face the harsh reality that financial supports such as the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) will not be available to provide a degree of financial security. For some members of the congregation the pandemic has created significant financial hardship while others have felt the impact less. Obviously all of these factors make budget planning much more difficult. Enclosed is a 2022 pledge card. Please spend time in prayer and ask God to help you discern the resources you can share to help keep our church and its ministries a bright shining beacon of hope for our entire community. We look forward to “Letting Our Light Shine” in 2022.

*Resource Committee: Chair Laurie Stoutz, Steve Brooks, Curt Bailey, Daisy Case, Carla DeMeco, Mickey Ely, Dawn Garrett-Larsen, Tom Harradine, Elaine and Jim Hilton, Mara Huberlie, Tarry Shipley*