EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE
ANNUNCIATION
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Dear Annunciation Family,

Last year, our stewardship campaign invited us to reflect on our shared journey of faith and generosity. We considered the gifts God has entrusted to us and how we are called to use those gifts to serve God and one another. Through your faithfulness, generosity, and love, we made wonderful progress toward the goals we set together. I am deeply grateful for the many ways you have offered yourselves and your resources to strengthen our life together and help our ministries grow. There is much to celebrate as we continue this journey.

This year, I invite us to reflect more deeply on what it means to live as disciples of Jesus Christ. Discipleship is a lifelong journey of growing in our relationship with God, learning to trust him more fully, and allowing his love to shape the way we live.

Jesus tells his disciples, “I am the vine, you are the branches” (John 15:5). Just as branches draw their life from the vine, we draw our life from Christ. Through prayer, worship, Scripture, and our life together in the Church, we are nourished and strengthened in faith. Everything begins with God's grace and the love he has already given us. As we grow in our relationship with Christ, that love bears fruit in our lives and in the lives of those around us.

In our Baptismal Covenant, we promise, with God's help, to continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to proclaim the Good News by word and example, and to seek and serve Christ in all persons. These promises shape our life together at Annunciation, where our mission is *to be a home where love of God and neighbor grows*. We gather to worship, are nourished by Word and Sacrament, and grow together as members of Christ's Body. Then we are sent into the world to share the love we have received.

Peter reminds us, “Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received” (1 Peter 4:10). Stewardship is one expression of our discipleship. When we offer our presence, share our talents, and give generously of our financial resources, we make choices that reflect our faith and the things we hold dear. Our gifts sustain the life of our parish and make possible the ministries through which we care for one another, welcome others, and serve our neighbors.

As we look toward the coming year, I invite you to prayerfully consider your next step on this journey of faith. Where is God inviting you to grow closer to him? What gifts might you share? How might your use of time, talents, and financial resources more fully reflect your life as a disciple of Christ?

Thank you for the love and commitment you bring to Annunciation. I look forward with hope to where God will lead us next. May we continue growing in faith, deepening our love for God and one another, and sharing that love generously with the world around us.

In Christ,

The Rev. Carolyn Bartkus
Rector