



SECOND CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF NEWCASTLE, UCC

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Dear Second Church Members and Friends:

October 29, 2021

Enclosed is a 2022 Pledge card for each household as well as a Time and Talent Survey, one for each family member. We ask you to prayerfully consider your 2022 pledge and, if you haven't pledged in the past, to give thought to how a pledge helps us plan for and meet our 2022 commitments. It is hoped that by Sunday, November 14, 2021 everyone will participate in completing and returning the enclosed items. During worship at 10AM that Sunday, we will then dedicate the pledges received to date and give thanks to God for all those who have the means to financially support our worship, local and far-reaching service ministries, the work of our staff and our historic, sacred and community-based building.

It is with deep gratitude that I invite your pledge consideration for 2022. I'm aware that we stand at the threshold of a new chapter in our lives, indeed in how the world lives. Everyone is looking for multiple, authentic and creative connections that make a difference in their lives. Second Church is that connection!

Spirit and Connection: It is by God's grace that we can worship together in so many ways! We have proven through our hybrid worship, meetings and events (simultaneous gathering in-person while streaming on-line through various platforms) that all these ways of connecting are not only possible, but rich, inviting, healing and meaningful. Devoted to leaving nobody behind, we continue to mail weekly bulletins to those who are homebound and/or without technology resources. This multi-faceted approach allows us to offer worship and connection 24/7 to anyone seeking community and worship through our church. Our small but tenacious volunteer Technology Team, the Deacons, The Spirit Team, Jane and I are committed to continuously improving how we connect and worship together. This year, the Spirit Team started a Prayer Shawl Ministry. To date we have received and blessed 26 prayer shawls, given to those who need comfort and prayer. We are so thankful to all those who keep knitting, crocheting and quilting for this meaningful ministry.

Service and Stewardship: Second Church has worked hard in 2021 and we will continue to work as devotedly in 2022 as we prepare for a new mission field of worship, service and community. We are prayerfully discerning what the post-pandemic world will look for from our church. With a deep and abiding commitment to love our neighbor during a time when we can't always do so safely in-person, the Service Team has supported over 20 community partners this year, gifting \$20,000 through its approved 2021 budget by the end of the year. Additionally, The John Andrews Fund has provided grants for flooring in 2021 to Inn Along the Way (\$5,000) and Lincoln Eldercare (\$10,000), while also celebrating the completion of Stepping Stones' second floor apartment (and for which the Andrews Fund dedicated \$20,000 in FY2020). Additionally, the Service team has raised funds and made inquiries for supporting Afghan refugees arriving in Maine and matched funds for this important ministry. Additionally, as the Stewardship Team prepares to re-open our building to full capacity, multiple needs are being addressed, including deep cleaning the building and preparing for the long-awaited Verizon cell radios to be installed in the bell tower.

Your Faithful Impact: *As your pastor, I believe that all along, God has been sowing the seed for this new field and I know we are ready to work the soil. We have a once in a generation opportunity to cultivate the ground around us. It is our desire for the Spirit's transforming ways to grow in our community and indeed, beyond. Every seed of inspiration, every financial pledge, every prayer and every moment of time given to this faithful endeavor makes a difference: to our church, to our community and to God's world.*

How Pledging Helps: Each year, our church's operations and community support are mostly funded through pledges and other incomes. Pledging allows us to prepare a projected budget for the new year. Planning is key so that we can be ready to meet the needs and serve one another and our community faithfully. All of this planning requires your financial support as well as your commitment to sharing other resources and personal talents. For more information about how pledging at Second Church benefits our work together, as well as long-term giving, please visit this link <https://vimeo.com/639520389/917b116126>. It's an informative video prepared by Treasurer, Phil Helgerson and Investments Committee Chair, Shirley Tawney.

How We Can Help Each Other: We hope your circumstances will enable you to give with gratitude and joy. If your circumstances have changed, please know we understand, as does the church leadership. Please reach out to me or to the Deacons if you need support spiritually or financially. We are here to walk the journey with you. The Deacons also have an Emergency Fund to help church members with small grants for rough times. Conversely, if you find you can make an additional pledge gift, that would be wonderful! Please know that your pledge, no matter its size, is deeply appreciated and empowers us to carry out our church's ability to make a difference in ways that abound. Together, we can answer God's call to love one another, love our neighbor and share what we bring to this world together.

With deep gratitude,

Rev. Charlene C. Corbett

P.S. I hope you enjoy some of the pictures below! 😊

