

Glenelg UMC Stewardship Campaign 2021

November 9, 2020

Dear Friends:

I sincerely hope and pray that this letter finds you safe and well, and doing the best possible during these challenging, unprecedented, perhaps frightening times. As Christians, we are never alone. We have each other and we are blessed with the knowledge that God knows us and loves us and answers our personal requests. Although these times may seem chaotic and upsetting, God is in control.

Thanks to the church leadership and many dedicated volunteers, GUMC provided on-line worship opportunities during the cooler months of March and April (remember Pastor Alice's "Car-ioke"?), and after Pastor Alice moved home to Michigan and warmer weather arrived, there were a number of outdoor services led by Pastor Ken Fell and GUMC's new pastor Rev. David Deans, with the worship streamed to those at home.

Since October 18, worship at GUMC is permanently back inside, with precautions taken for social distancing, the wearing of masks, over-flow seating in Eyre Hall, and continued live streaming for those at home. Along with the wonderful music program presented by Doug Burian and Amanda Dusman, the youth fellowship led by Denise Martin, and the thoughtful interactive sermons shared by Pastor David, the good work of GUMC has continued during the pandemic and in some cases, especially with respect to food outreach, has accelerated!

The Food Pantry led by Missy LePage continues to provide nutritional sustenance for local families as a monthly food distribution program. The Outreach Committee and GUMC friends have strongly supported Lisa Dolce's food and school supply collections and monetary donations for the Lake Elkhorn Middle School (LEMS) community during their "Drive and Drop" Mondays. Students and families depend on the food donated to LEMS as the economic hardship brought by the pandemic has increased food insecurity for many (400+). Julie Carignan and Peggy Koele shepherd the Grass Roots Shelter Meals the first Saturday of each month, providing delicious repasts for homeless families in Howard County. We are still in hurricane season and GUMC continues to collect items for the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) cleaning kits. These kits contain critical supplies to help those impacted by storms begin the cleanup process. Our congregation provided gift cards to help a family decimated by the Coronavirus, collected blue jeans for homeless men, and coats, scarves, gloves, and hats for children in our own Howard County public schools who were in need. With our Fill the Van event, we collected items for UMCOR partner charities providing medical supplies, home items, clothes, and rehabbed computers and phones, among other outreach projects. Last but certainly not least, Wendy Feaga has championed a particularly compassionate outreach for seniors isolated at Encore at Turf Valley that includes the preparation of greeting cards filled with uplifting messages from our congregation and artwork created by the students at our own GUMC Preschool.

Over the years I have witnessed the generosity and compassion of this church. I have seen GUMC friends support many families experiencing loss and hardships. In 2001, my own in-laws lived through a terrible house fire and this congregation showed them Christian love and generosity that I will always remember. I am absolutely convinced that our church is an important and active part of God's healing and loving spirit. We routinely reach beyond our church campus casting out a net of hope for the greater community.

As chair of the Stewardship Campaign, it is again time for me to ask for you to prayerfully consider sharing your time, talents, and monetary donations to support GUMC's ministries. We understand that many may be experiencing financial challenges due to the economic downturn associated with the pandemic and offer prayers and assistance (please contact Pastor David). For those not financially impacted by these times, we ask you to consider an increase in your pledge, if possible. Please fill out the enclosed pledge card and return it to us. We are planning for a Pledge Sunday On Sunday November 22 (the Sunday before Thanksgiving) and there will be an opportunity to safely submit your pledge cards as part of that time of worship. See below for others ways to submit your card.

The Finance Committee is continuing to evaluate GUMC's financial status monthly and will recommend continuing all of the church's ministries unless a significant reduction in revenues warrants adjustment.

Finally, enclosed is the year-to-date giving summary for you to review. If it is different from your records, please contact Gale Stanford (admin@glenlegumc.org) or me (Bennerjbem@comcast.net). Thanks for your generosity and giving spirit of your time, talents, and monetary donations.

Health, Peace, and Blessings,

Bruce A. Benner, Jr.

Stewardship Chair

MAKE AN INVESTMENT IN THE MINISTRY AND MISSION OF OUR CHURCH

Please submit your pledge card by Sunday, November 22 in one of the following ways:

- 1.** Bring your completed pledge card with you to worship on Sunday November 22 and place it in the black offering box in the back of the sanctuary as part of our Pledge Sunday commitment and consecration.
- 2.** Mail your completed pledge card to us at:
Glenelg UMC
13900 Burntwoods Rd.
Glenelg, MD 21737
- 3.** Drop off your completed pledge card in the church mailbox out front by our traffic circle.
- 4.** Email your completed pledge card to our Financial Secretary at admin@glenlegumc.org. The email may consist of a photo or scanned copy of your completed card or you may just type in the body of your email the contents of what you wrote on your pledge card.