



September 25, 2023

Dear St. Aidan's Parishioners,

Greetings, grace, and peace! As we celebrate our 60th Anniversary, and introduce our Giving Campaign for 2024, *Together for Joy*, I am reflecting on the people and mission of St. Aidan's.

For six decades, St. Aidan's has been a special place of worship for people just like you. And although our buildings and grounds have changed over the years, the core of who we are, our heartbeat, if you will, has not changed.

We are still a community grounded in love of God and neighbor, open to a variety of faith stories and experiences, and welcoming of a diversity of beliefs. And our spirit of joy and wonder in all God's works, evident in our fellowship gatherings, care of creation, and support of one another, is very much alive.

But, for too long, we have been operating under very tight budgets that affect our ability to share God's love more fully. We want to use our 60th Anniversary to dream bigger.

St. Aidan's parishioners are a faithful, creative group, that are generous with our time, talents and treasure. It is in that spirit that I write to you.

Our goal for our 60th anniversary is two-fold:

- **Raise the funds necessary to meet our regular budget expenses in 2024 through our regular, annual giving campaign, *Together for Joy*.**
 - Maintain or increase our annual giving.
 - Move from a congregation where 68% give regularly, to a congregation where 100% participate by giving what they can.
- **Retire our Mortgage debt once and for all by raising \$120,000 between now and the end of 2024. Retiring the mortgage frees up \$3,600 a month for St. Aidan's to plan for bigger reach and activities.**

We seek a future that is about Mission, not Mortgage.

- Over the past two years, we have paid down \$130,000 against our mortgage using Capital Campaign funds.
- Without making any additional payments above our normal monthly principal and interest payments, we will still owe \$109,000 at the end of our mortgage term in September 2026.
- If we meet our goal to raise \$120,000, we can completely retire the mortgage prior to September 2026.

I am confident and excited to reach this goal; if each and every one of us steps up, St. Aidan's will step forward into our next chapter.

Celebration Sunday is November 5, 2023. On that day, we will seek to meet the goals before us by gathering up our giving pledges, and blessing and celebrating them.

Before then, I hope you will take the enclosed pledge cards for the *2024 Together for Joy* campaign and the *Retire the Mortgage* campaign, ask God to help you prayerfully discern your pledges, and return them to the church before or on Celebration Sunday.

Over the next several Sundays, we will have opportunities for those who are interested in setting up online giving to receive help to do so. In addition, you can always contact the Church Office for assistance setting up online payments.

For all that we are, and all that we will be, thanks be to God and thank you.

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laura Cochran" with a small cross symbol at the end of the line.

The Rev. Laura D. Cochran