



St. Benedict's Giving 2023

"Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" Isaiah 43:19

Our theme for this year's financial giving campaign comes from the prophet Isaiah, writing to God's people in exile in Babylon. After generations of disorientation and loss, Isaiah urges them to notice and pay attention to what God is doing in their midst. Signs of hope, new life, and restoration abound: we just have to notice. We chose this verse because after a long season of transition and pandemic, St. Benedict's, too, is seeing newness and vitality and looking towards a future faithful to God's call. Signs of God's new things are all around us. There are new faces enriching our parish's life in Christ; faithful folks serving in new ways like choir or flower guild—sharing their talents in new ways; the joyful sounds of children at once-quiet 8:00 worship; new hands making sandwiches for neighbor; new baptisms and confirmations marking new life in Christ. In 2023 we will discern together a new focus on serving our neighbors in Smyrna.

All of these things are possible through your consistent and generous financial support of St. Benedict's. Staff and programming support the people of St. Benedict's in deepening our faith, loving and serving God and neighbor both within the walls of our parish, and out in the world. Thank you for your many faithful gifts of treasure, time, and talent. We ask you to prayerfully consider making a financial pledge for 2023. Yearly pledges allow us to make wise financial decisions with an accurate budget and plan our ministries for the coming year. Planned, regular giving is an act of spiritual maturity. Enclosed is a 2023 pledge commitment card, which you can return to the church in the offering plate or by mail. If you prefer to pledge online, you can at mysaintb.org/giving.

We have a special goal this year: a new thing we perceive God doing. We'd like to increase giving to support calling a full-time Associate Rector to St. Benedict's in 2023. Over the past year, the vestry has consistently heard a need for greater programmatic focus on children and youth, and as our parish grows, we require greater capacity for pastoral care and outreach. We recognize it will take time to grow stewardship to a level that can sustainably support this position. The vestry created a plan to use some of our significant cash reserves, and increase giving to fund an additional third of this position each year, making it self-sustaining by year three. This year we are looking to increase giving by 12%, through a combination of increased and new pledges. You'll hear more details from our wardens in the weeks to come. Please prayerfully consider making a new pledge, or increasing your current pledge, as an act of faith that God is doing a new thing at St. Benedict's.

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Jenna Strizak
Rector

Greg Stevens
Stewardship Chair & Jr. Warden