

Stewardship Letter

Dear Beloved,

We are so excited about all that is happening at Urban Sanctuary this year, and all that will continue in the year to come. Amid our pastoral transition and our land discernment process, we

are amazed at the ways in which God continues to show up in ways we hadn't considered before. This fills us with hope as we begin our stewardship season.

You may remember that earlier in the year, the interview process with our interim Remi Shores was interrupted when they discerned that they needed to take some more time before considering a new call. They took that time, and now, here they are! We feel that this pastorate is just that much stronger and healthier for the fact that Remi took time before settling into it, getting to know us through pulpit supply and joining us when they, and we, felt more sure about the call. We're thinking about this story as a reminder that sometimes times of uncertainty, transition, liminal spaces, and even a little bit of chaos, can end in something better than we could have imagined.

You also know that this is not the only transition we are going through! We are forming a Transition Team to help Remi as Interim Pastor discern what our church wants to do with this interim time, and what we will do next when the time comes to call our next settled pastor. These conversations happen in parallel with our ongoing Land discernment, as we think about how God is calling us to steward the resources we've been given. We are reminded of the prophet Isaiah's words (43:18-19) when he says, in the voice of God, "*Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth! Do you not perceive it?"* We pray for eyes and ears to perceive the new things God is doing, the things springing forth in our midst.

Even now, we see new life and new ministry springing forth: our monthly Resistance Sing, where activists find joy and rejuvenation for their work. A new weekly Bible study for fellowship and learning and growing together. An opportunity to use our space to provide affordable housing for our neighbors who need it. Look at God!

It remains the case that all of this ministry costs money. The Spirit provides ideas, we volunteer our time and energy, and money makes the whole thing go. Our staff, our space, and our material resources cost real money. As our church discerns how to be good stewards of our land, we hope you are also discerning how to steward your own material resources. In an economy that does not seem to care about the poorest among us, we hope it feels like a resistance move to withhold some money from that worldly economy and insert it into this church's economy, which we're doing our best to run like God's economy: where there is always enough, and more than enough (Exodus 16). We trust that the God who got us this far will continue to see us through. With God's help, and with your help, we continue to be a boldly progressive spiritual community rooted in the Christian tradition.

In the coming weeks, you'll hear more from us about stewardship season, and begin seeing stewardship cards in your bulletins. We'll also be publishing information about the 2027 budget. We hope you'll be prayerfully considering how you might contribute ahead of Commitment Sunday, which we will hold on January 31, 2027.

Thanks be to God!

with love,
The Finance Team