

HOPE GROWS HERE
11.22.2020

HOPE GROWS HERE is more than the theme for our three-year stewardship campaign. It is a Statement of Fact & Testament to Our Faith.

FACT: Last year we set a number of goals and have made good progress in achieving them. We have: reduced our deficit; received 25 New pledges, and increased our Marks of Mission/Fair Share giving from 8 to 12%. We were able to do this thanks to your generosity and continuing commitment to your pledge this year. **THANK YOU.**

There is more to do. Growth doesn't happen overnight, and the kind of growth we envision for St. Matthew's takes more than one year. That's why HOPE GROWS HERE is a three-year campaign for 2020, 2021 & 2022.

Our Youth are our Future and give us HOPE. On October 16th, we confirmed 16 our young members. Our Kairos youth program has stepped up and held in person programs when it was safe to do so. They have spruced up the church's outside grounds and participated in the food drive for the Hopewell Valley Mobil Food Pantry. The Youth Choir is back. St. Matthew's Pre School is open with 25 students. Our youth groups, with help from our parish family, provided more than 450 Thanksgiving dinners for the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen.

We sought to have more engaged Outreach and we made progress here too. We raised more than \$2,700 for Homefront to support its mission of helping families break the cycle of poverty. We continued to partner with Arm-in-Arm, Urban Promise, and TASK. We provided scholarships for: St. Matthew's Pre School, El Hogar, and to an Urban Promise young man, Keith-Mar Jackson, who is in his sophomore year at Rider University.

We have funded our Youth Ministries and Outreach efforts, in large part from the proceeds of our Rummage Sales and Christmas Bazaar. We have not been able to host those events this year and have lost about \$24,000 in income. In order to close this gap we are asking you to give,

over and above your pledge, so that we may continue these important ministries. We need an average of about \$200 per pledging family to close this gap.

FAITH: This year we have faced challenges like never before. The Covid virus has impacted our St. Matthew's parish family: some have been exposed to and contracted the virus and sadly some have died. We have had to close our doors for worship for a number of months at a time when we most need our Church.

These times have tested our Faith. But Faith doesn't mean we won't have challenges. Faith gives us the strength to face challenges. How we responded to these challenges is a Testament to our Faith. Rev. Ophelia, Wardens, Vestry, Staff & Volunteers made sure we could worship safely and remotely each & every Sunday proving that CHURCH is so much more than bricks & mortar. How we've supported each other in our parish family and in our community is also a testament to our Faith.

While our Stewardship Campaign is different this year, we continued moving testimonies and heard from from Brogann Bowden-Sanderson, Joe Lawver and Debbie Lindthorst. Each has inspired us and gives us HOPE.

Please support St. Matthew's with your **Pledge** so that HOPE may continue to GROW HERE.

THANK YOU

Jim McGuire
Stewardship Chair
11.22.2020