

October 2025

Dear Beloved Family,

We have entered that meaningful season in the life of the church when we reflect on stewardship—how we offer our time, talents, and resources to the glory of God. This year's theme, *"Gathering to Worship, Reaching Out to Serve,"* calls us to remember who we are and why we are here.



When our team began planning for this campaign, I asked everyone to share why they came to First Presbyterian and why they stayed. For me, the answer is simple: I came seeking a church that was both welcoming and courageous in its commitment to social justice. I stayed because First Presbyterian became my family—the people with whom I worship, pray, serve, learn, and grieve. In these past few difficult years, I cannot imagine walking through life without this community's love and support.

Our congregation has weathered much change—ministers, staff, and worship leaders have come and gone. Yet the truth is, they are not the church. *We* are the church—you and I, together—and God continues to call us to faithful work and worship.

Years ago, a colleague asked how much I gave to the church. She assumed I tithed and when I responded I didn't have quite enough money, she challenged me saying I didn't have enough faith. Her words stung—and transformed me. From that time on, my tithe became the first check I wrote each month. And I have never gone without what I truly needed since. That lesson of faith still guides me.

I confess, I feel ill-equipped to ask others for financial commitments. But stewardship is not really about raising money; it is about trusting God, sharing our vision for the future, and responding together in faith.

Our budget supports the essentials—our staff, our building, our insurance—but also the ministries that give our congregation its heart: worship, care and outreach, compassion and social justice, and spiritual formation. This year we are asking two things of you:

1. Share your vision for the future of First Presbyterian, so we can faithfully align our resources with what matters most to you.
2. Commit your gifts of time, talent, and treasure, so that together we can continue to be a light of hope and love in this community.

Recently Glenn asked us a powerful question: *If this church were not here, how would our community be different?* I would add: *How would **our** lives be different?*

I invite you to search your heart, pray for guidance, and respond with generosity and faith. Together, let us assure that First Presbyterian remains a place where we gather to worship and reach out to serve.

With love in Christ,

Debbie Gibson and the Stewardship Committee