

November 1st, 2019

***Rooted in God, our faith grows, spreading branches that shelter, heal and nourish.***

Dear Family and Friends of St. Matthew’s,

We have again recently witnessed with awe the wonder of God’s annual painting of vibrant autumn leaves across the Northeast trees. The joyous Advent season highlighting community goodwill and cheerful Christmas trees will soon follow. St. Matthew’s is a unique and sacred tree of its own. It is ***Our Tree***, whose roots are deeply engrained in the bedrock of our faithful multi-generational community. And Our Tree has never been so flourishing, so transformative, so generous in its giving, as it is today…

Season after season, Our Tree spreads branches that ***shelter***: It provides us with a safe sanctuary where we gather to worship each week. It binds us with our Mission Partners, such as Open Doors, where our financial support helped transform a barren dirt patch into a playground for children living in the homeless shelter. And with HomeFront, which provides us with hands-on opportunities to perform house repairs so that people can continue to live securely in their own homes. And together with our friends at the Wilton Presbyterian Church, we open our sacred space to community groups in need such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Rise Against Hunger.

Our Tree spreads branches that ***heal.*** With our third Mission Partner, Circle of Care, we help bring comfort and solace to families suffering from the broad effects of childhood cancer. Within St. Matthew’s, we have relaunched a pastoral care team, some of whom are trained to be Eucharistic Visitors. Whether it be the loss of a loved one or a pet, struggling with a challenging illness, an economic misfortune, or the arrival of a poignant anniversary, Our Tree provides the salve that supports, restores and protects. Together.

Our Tree spreads branches that ***nourish***. In some cases, this is manifested by literally feeding people at a fellowship event or through sandwiches made by our confirmands for Chapel on the Green. But we also provide spiritual nourishment through Christian formation opportunities such as Pub Theology, Bible Study and special services like our Intergenerational Advent Worship. And our multiple choirs nourish us weekly with a stirring sense of joy that only fine music can inspire.

As we spread the branches of Our Tree across each of these domains, they grow stronger and draw us into God’s magnificent forest, enabling us to transform our gifts into what our parish, our community, and the world really needs. We are the planting of the Lord, growing deep roots and spreading strong branches to display the splendor, love, and goodness of God.

To continue to perform this vital work together, we need your help. First, please double check your pledge statement (attached) and make sure you are up to date with any outstanding payments for your 2019 pledge. Secondly, we ask that you prayerfully consider how much you can pledge to support our growing and innovative programs in our 2020 pledge drive. With our appreciation and respect, we ask that you make your pledge online (stmatthewswilton.org/give), or return your pledge form via mail or in the offering plates in advance of our Pledge Sunday on December 8th.

Our Tree emanates from, and is overflowing with, the Gifts from God. Let us all ensure it continues to shelter, heal, and nourish our cherished and sacred community throughout 2020 and beyond.

With abiding gratitude,

The Rev. Marissa Rohrbach Peter Denious and Tim Jarvis

Rector Co-Heads of Stewardship 2020

*They will be called oaks of righteousness,
    the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.*  [Isaiah 61:3b]