



Dear Members and Friends,

What a year 2020 has been. I can't recall a seminary class that could have prepared me for the challenges the Coronavirus and physical distancing brought to my "normal life." So if you're feeling overwhelmed, afraid, angry, or shock...I get it. So much feels and is different. And yet some things remain: the abiding love of God, the connections of friendship and prayer within our congregation, and our commitment to reach out in service to our neighbors.

Here at RPC, we are learning new ways to still be the congregation we treasure. Sally, Frank, Sandy, Doug, Ellen, Dennis, and I prerecord our worship services that air each week. Do you know that we have folks from at least four states

besides Illinois now regularly joining us for online worship? We have Zoom Coffee Fellowship every Sunday. And Theology on Tap has had some interesting and profoundly satisfying conversations. The Men's & Women's Forum continues to meet. The Women's Bible Study Group meets via Zoom and the telephone. The Little Food Pantry is well funded, well-stocked, and well used.

I want to thank you for your financial commitment to RPC. Your gifts have helped sustain the faithful mission and ministry of our congregation. Your support is critical to our sustainability. I hope your circumstances will enable you to continue your contributions. If they have changed, please know I understand. Conversely, if you find you are able to make an additional gift beyond your normal amount, that would be wonderful! As you know, we will not be able to have the fundraisers that support our General Budget. If you can donate cash that you were planning to use for some of those wonderful fundraisers, that would help us during this difficult time. Please know that your donation, no matter its size, is deeply appreciated and empowers us to carry out RPC's ability to make a difference in people's lives.

Enclosed you will find the Estimate of Giving Card for 2021. Please prayerfully consider your financial pledge for 2021. I know that the future seems very uncertain, which is why we have called the pledge card an "estimate." Your commitment can be changed at any time as your circumstances change. Your commitment and gifts are what proves that RPC is not a building, but a thriving church committed to mission and ministry.

Some in the RPC family face personal economic challenges because of this pandemic. Please reach out to me if you need support. Together, we can support each other through this difficult time. Together, we can answer God's call to mission and ministry. Together, we can be spiritually united even when physically apart. Together, we are like trees planted by the streams which have no fear when drought comes.

With gratitude,
Dale

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