



FROM THE PASTOR

When the Steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.” John 2:9-10

February 1 marks one year since my call as pastor to St. Timothy ELCA began. What a year it has been! The greatest gifts have come in the conversations I have had with you. Those of you that have given of your time, telling me your stories and the story of the church have blessed me richly. It isn't easy to connect and build relationships these days, but you have been willing and we are a better congregation for it.

Normally, when a person accepts their first call to a congregation, there is a lot of hoopla. There's an ordination with a crowd of congregants, friends, family, and colleagues. Then there is an installation to ritually confirm a pastor as the servant leader of the congregation. For us, doing these things during COVID meant muted celebration with people watching from home. There wasn't much personal connection involved.

The coming together of a congregation and pastor, the installation, is much like a wedding. Not only did we have a watered-down version of the wedding, we also missed out on the honeymoon phase that usually marks the beginning of such a relationship. We've been struggling from the beginning to know how best to continue ministry while also keeping our community as safe as possible. As I look back on this year, I believe we have done that.

As I look with hope on this second year of ministry with you all, I am thinking about Jesus's miracle of turning water into wine. This year of amended ministry has felt watered down, but really water is a holy thing. The jugs of water that Jesus used to make the wine had been prepared for the purification rituals. Ritual purification was an important part of healing. Taking time to heal is crucial in this world of illness and sorrow.

That said, Jesus doesn't want ministry to be hard all the time. Jesus wants us to have joy as a community gathering in his name. We aren't sitting around waiting for him to change the water into wine, we are actively doing important things, but I also know that the day is coming

when he will surprise us with the most delicious wine we have ever tasted. One of these days, hopefully sooner than later, we will gather to feast together. I can hardly wait!

In preparation for that time, I am going to give you all a little bit of homework. It may seem like I'm asking you do something that is just too much in our busy world, but I promise you, that it will bless you as much as it will help our community. I want each person that reads this article to open up the directory and call one family that you know, but haven't talked to in a while. A church is not a wheel with the pastor as the hub connecting to everyone in their own separate spaces. A church is a web of interdependent people – of all ages – loving one another.

I love you. Jesus loves you. And when our water turns into wine...when the party really gets started...I want you to know just how much you love one another.



It's never too late to commit to serving the Lord with your earthly riches

MY PLEDGE... FOR CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

When making your pledge, please consider tithing.

Name:

Address:

Regular/Operating Fund Giving

I pledge to contribute to the Operating Fund \$ _____
 Weekly • Monthly • Other _____

This pledge represents:

A New Pledge • An increase from last year

Building/Maintenance Fund Giving

I pledge to contribute to the Building Fund \$ _____
 Weekly • Monthly • Other _____

This pledge represents:

A New Pledge • An increase from last year

Auto Debit is an easy way to fulfill your giving, while at the same time, ensuring that you will meet your pledged amount.

No weekly envelopes, just an automatic transfer (at the frequency you decide) from your account to the church.

If interested in signing up for auto debit, please contact our Office Manager, Laurie Crowley. (Still complete this pledge card today)