



November 2, 2021

Dear FCC Members and Friends,

After almost two long and difficult pandemic years, now we can see light at the end of tunnel. There are still challenges ahead, but with a hope-filled heart, we can look forward. We can anticipate the return of what we joined FCC for: worship together in our beautiful sanctuary, fellowship and togetherness, and the chance to make concrete and positive differences in our world.

That is why the theme for this year's Stewardship Campaign is, "With a Hope-Filled Heart."

Of course, we always held on to hope. Even during the depths of the pandemic, Martha, Keith, Jonathan, Chris, Angela and all our many volunteer leaders not only kept the lights on but also drove many positive changes at FCC. Martha joined the tech revolution and mastered digital broadcasting. Thanks to her willingness to embrace innovation, we will continue to broadcast services even after the pandemic, so that homebound and far-flung members and friends can participate in worship. The Board of Trustees pushed ahead improving our facilities, replacing carpeting and blinds in the Sanctuary among other projects, for which special donations were received. The Columbarium has a beautiful sculpture with thanks to two major donors and others who have family members interred there. And, perhaps most exciting of all, our Director of Christian Education, Jonathan Riedel, announced his call to the ministry.

The pandemic-driven exodus from New York City, meanwhile, led three hundred new families to move to Chappaqua, giving us an opportunity to bring new families and friends into our Congregation. Indeed, due to the terrific leadership of Xann Palmer, Play Care has emerged from the pandemic stronger than ever. Xann has expanded the class schedule and hired more teachers, and there is still a robust waiting list.

To be sure, the past year and a half has been disorienting and frustrating. The number of lives lost to the coronavirus is difficult to comprehend. And, sadly, several members of our congregation moved away in the past year without us being able to gather to say a proper FCC goodbye.

But when has the world ever stopped changing? And the waning of the pandemic makes it so much easier to hope for the future. As we look to the year ahead, we are blessed to have high hopes for our congregation, for ourselves, and for spiritual renewal. Like a child has hope for Christmas presents, we all have hope for blessings in 2022.

Of course, hope alone will not make a positive difference in the world or get us where we want to be. Let us together give our hope momentum by giving generously to our annual campaign.

No one knows what the future will bring, but we know our mission. Making a positive difference requires our time, talents and also our financial resources. Through our mission and outreach, through sharing our facilities with AA and the Emergency Shelter Partnership, by filling up Luke's Pantry, by supporting families in need, we make a positive difference in the lives of our neighbors.

Let's keep it going. In so doing, we will rebuild the fellowship, friendships, and sense of community we enjoyed before the pandemic.

Sincerely yours,

Scott Blasdell

Paul Warren

Ed McLaren