



Valley Presbyterian Church

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The Rev. Dr. John Wahl, Pastor

God's Economy of Generosity

"Everybody who gives even a cup of cold water to these little ones...will certainly be rewarded"
(Matthew 10:42, Common English Bible)

Dear Members and Friends of Valley:

It is with sincere thanks that – on behalf of the Session, the members, and the mission partners of this congregation – you are commended for having given generously in support of the ministry and mission efforts of Valley Presbyterian near and far.

People tell me that they give to the church for a number of reasons: in thankful response to the blessings they have received from God, in hope of making their world and community a better place, as a personal spiritual discipline, and as a way of sharing God's love with others.

All of these, and more, are certainly valid reasons for giving. We believe in God's own generosity: in all that has been and is being created, God provides fully and extravagantly, not holding anything back, generating within each of us capacities of time, talent, and treasure.

Thus, when we give – in any of these ways – we are imitating the God that we worship and serve. In Matthew's gospel, Jesus reminds us that even the seemingly smallest gift will not go unnoticed: when we give of ourselves for others, it makes a difference both on earth and in heaven.

The list of the ways that this congregation shares of itself with our neighbors is long. Here are but a few of our ministries and mission partners:

- *Heart of Valley Preschool* – now with an enrollment of almost sixty children and a staff of ten excellent educators.
- *Pass-It-On Resale Store* – a hub for donations, volunteers, and support for many local families and partner ministries.
- *Chagrin Falls Park Community Center* – helping to serve vulnerable families and children through our Faith Garden, school supplies, holiday gifts, and more.
- *Homeless Hookup, CLE* – packing hygiene bags and providing donations to help meet the needs of the most vulnerable.
- *Next Step* – the recipient for our next CONNECT event; assists young people who are transitioning out of foster care prepare for independent, adult living.
- *Dougbe River Presbyterian School* – educating 230 boys and girls in Liberia, founded and supported by our Presbytery and its local congregations.

In God's economy of generosity, the church – the body of Christ and its members – is able to accomplish more than we could hope or imagine on our own. Our spiritual life – offering our praise and thanks to God in worship – feeds this ability to give and to change lives.

We are blessed – as a church – to have the talents and dedication of worship and music leaders, loving attention to our building and grounds, work behind-the-scenes by volunteers and staff, leadership from our session members, and hospitality and care through our deacons.

As part of our *Thriving Congregations* initiative, we have heard from many of you about the things you love and appreciate about this church, and the desires you have for its future health and vitality. Your input is crucial as we seek to move forward in discerning a focus and direction for Valley.

Valley is blessed by the generosity of its members and friends. We do not talk about Stewardship and giving as a means of scolding, coercing, or directing the ways that people choose to give. Instead, we do it because it provides valuable information for our leaders to use when planning for the future of the church, our ministry, and its mission.

Enclosed with this letter you will find, for your prayerful consideration, a pledge card for 2024. If you are able to attend, **Pledge Dedication will take place during worship on Sunday, November 12** where the cards will be received during the service. Otherwise, we hope you will return your completed pledge card to the church office as soon as possible.

With thankfulness, we celebrate God's economy of generosity, and we look around to see who in our midst might be in need of that cold cup of water.

In Christ,

Pastor John