

Dear Friends,

Not many things feel normal anymore. This pandemic has oppressed our souls for too long. Like the thick valley fog, too much reflection on Covid can leave you craving some sunlight in your life. However, there are significant things we can be thankful for at this time. Our appreciation for the church has risen and the need to stay connected has never been more compelling. Your participation and faithfulness to the mission and the ministry of Christ at FPC has been inspirational to me for the last two years helping to break the fog with much needed sunlight. Thank you for your faithfulness.

Now there is a particular “conversation starter” I would like to have with you all at this time. While our total giving as a church has never been higher (serious hallelujahs!) our general fund giving is lacking substantially. So far in 2021, your total off-budget giving- including mission, building projects, and other designated funds have reached close to \$200,000. That is truly wonderful and reveals the depths of your generosity! However, that generosity has been in many times “designated” for particular needs, like the ADA bathroom, the ADA ramps, mission giving, memorial giving, emergency repairs, and other such things. What happens in the local church, all local churches for that matter, when people designate too much of their giving, is that the leadership of the church cannot use that money for general expenses like administration, salaries, power and the expenses of running the church. The elders must scramble for solutions and carry the weight of those administrative expenses on their shoulders. I will tell you up front, the persistent fear of having to let staff go, or making deep cuts to our vital programs, is a heavy weight for me and the very thought of it breaks my heart. That can become a heavy burden to bear, especially when your giving to other projects has been so generous.

This letter is a sincere invitation for you to give specifically to our general fund to help us cover the expenses of maintaining the work of the church. That work is more vital now than ever. We are very busy in ministry. Our staff are talented and engaged with their whole hearts helping us to do the work of Christ and touch the lives of many. Our operating expenses are constant and are always bearing on our hearts and minds.

Would you prayerfully consider an “undesignated” end of year gift to our general fund as we seek to close the general fund “income to expense” deficit? Again, it is a real moment of praise to consider the total giving this year, but the burden of paying the bills, maintaining administration and staff are heavy indeed when the general fund experiences scarcity. The Apostle Paul instructs us in Galatians to “bear one another’s burdens and thus fulfill the law of Christ” Would you consider helping bear our general fund burden at this time?

With your unmatched generosity in 2021, we are looking forward to touching many more people with the love of Christ in 2022!

May God richly bless you as you give.

Pastor Craig