

# In God We Trust, With God We Do.

*Faith, without works, is dead.*

At least, so writes James, brother of Jesus in his letter to the earliest Christians. If you have faith, but it is not shown in your life, what is the point? If it serves only you, is it really faith – of the Jesus-following kind – at all? These are the questions of our stewardship season, and they are the questions of the Gospel itself. If it is *in God we trust*, then how is it that *with God we do*?



The pages of our [2023 Stewardship Brochure](#) begin to answer these questions, at least from the perspective of our communal life together here at First Church. Our faith produces challenging and lively worship. It nurtures our intellectual and spiritual lives, and connects us – deeply – with one another. Moreover, it charges us with the inheritance of a prophetic public witness – both in the preservation and central location of our historic physical resources, and in the justice and service ministries of our congregation. We hope it becomes clear, in looking at these pages, that faith is vibrantly alive in works here at First Church.

On an individual level, what these pages ask us to ponder is how *your* faith will influence the work of *your* life. In what ways are you answering faith's call to give of yourself – life and livelihood – to the work of God? Is your faith alive and well or beginning to stagnate? If it is the former, then these pages might read as affirmation. If it is the latter, perhaps they might read as invitation to twine yourselves more deeply with the life of this place.

Indeed, after 2.5 years of a global pandemic, the strength demonstrated in these pages is, in and of itself, a miraculous work both *of* and *with* God. As you read, keep in mind the strength and diversity of programming and people that you see, and the place of support that First Church has held for you in this time. We are only able to be in this place – a place of beginning and possibility – because of the support of our dedicated congregation. We will only be able to live in to this possibility with the continued support of each and every one of you.

This is not a throw-away fundraising line, but a maxim of the gospel. Our faith is alive only if our works are alive. As a congregation, our work is our people. We literally cannot do this without you. So we hope you will consider this prayerfully, because this means you are the good news.

Thanks be to God.

*Elissa*

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