



November 13, 2016

185 High Street
509 Forest Avenue
Portland, ME 04101
207.899.2435

www.hopegateway.com



stewardship 2017

Dear Friends:

Let's face it: There's a lot that feels heavy this fall.

So much uncertainty.

So much disappointment and fear and grief.

So many questions still to be answered.

In the face of all that threatens and thwarts, all that stops us in our tracks, all that would divide us, we have a choice: Will we isolate, retreat, hunker down and hope for the best? Or will we recommit to the difficult but rewarding work that comes when we follow Jesus into deeper waters?

Maybe now more than ever, the ministry of HopeGateway matters. Maybe now more than ever what Portland needs, what the world needs, what each of us needs, is a community of diverse people, united in love, extending hospitality to the newcomer, feeding those who are hungry, celebrating the belovedness of those on the margins, holding fast to a vision of peace — doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God.

That's what we're about, and that's why God invites each of us to commit ourselves fully — through our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness. Recognizing the profound truth that everything we have in life — even life itself — is a gift from God, and recognizing the tremendous opportunities and challenges before us, will you offer not your leftovers but your very best to God?

On Sunday, November 20, you will be invited to make a stewardship commitment for 2017. This packet contains your Stewardship Commitment Card, as well as some materials which are intended to help you make decisions about your stewardship in the year ahead. This week, please spend some time in prayer. Then complete the enclosed card, expressing your commitments for the year 2017.

Please bring this card with you, completed, to worship on Sunday, November 20 — 9 am or 11 am at 509 Forest Avenue. As an act of worship, we will bring our commitment cards forward, giving thanks for God's many blessings and committing ourselves to God through our faithful stewardship in the year ahead. (If for some reason you are unable to be with us for worship on the morning of Sunday, November 20, please try to drop your commitment card off ahead of time, or mail it back to us as soon as possible.)

If you have questions or concerns about stewardship, or about any aspect of your spiritual life, please don't hesitate to be in touch. It is a joy to serve as partners in ministry with each of you, and we look forward to seeing all that God will accomplish through our church in the year ahead.

In Christ's love,

Revs. Allen & Sara Ewing-Merrill
co-pastors