

**ST. PHILIP
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

OCTOBER 2023

STEWARDSHIP APPEAL



Stewardship Appeal

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BLESSING AND IMPACT LEAD TO CHEERFUL GIVING

PAUL WRITES IN 2 CORINTHIANS 9:7-8: "EACH OF YOU MUST GIVE AS YOU HAVE MADE UP YOUR MIND, NOT RELUCTANTLY OR UNDER COMPULSION, FOR GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER. AND GOD IS ABLE TO PROVIDE YOU WITH EVERY BLESSING IN ABUNDANCE, SO THAT BY ALWAYS HAVING ENOUGH OF EVERYTHING, YOU MAY SHARE ABUNDANTLY IN EVERY GOOD WORK."

How have you been blessed by the church, throughout your life? What impact has the church had on your life? I look at the church and see all of the things it does and how many people are touched by God through the work of St. Philip Lutheran Church.

Growing up in the church, I attended all of the usual children's ministry events, confirmation and youth events. This is where the foundation of my faith was formed and where my memories and stories of service, relationships and faith came from. Church was the place where I engaged in conversations with other adults, had mentors, learned to be a leader, grew to care for other people in significant ways, and experienced God. The church offered me so much more than I ever thought and more than I would have gotten from going to school, doing sports and working.

As an adult, we make the decision of whether we should go and be part of a church or not. We may go to church for the sake of ourselves or for our children. As we look at the church and the benefits of church, we see that the church is a place of continued learning and growth, a place to serve, a place to feel valued and belong, and a place to

be in community. We come to realize the church has had an impact on our lives and the ministries of the church are a blessing to us and to others.

Reflecting on how the church has impacted us and been a blessing to us, we respond in a couple of different ways. One way we respond is to serve and volunteer to be part of the work of the church, to have an impact on others and bless them through the ministries of the church. We want others to be blessed by the church and be impacted in such a positive way. Secondly, we respond by supporting the church and its ministries through our giving and offerings to the church. In doing so, we are giving thanks and praising God for God's work in our lives in the past and in the current work of the church.

For the past couple of years, St. Philip has been working towards its mission of "Intentionally building relationships through Christ to grow and serve." I see us at St. Philip Lutheran Church doing good work towards our mission and reaching more and new people. The ministries of St. Philip are making an impact on the members of our church, the people in our community and those we serve.

Check out a few of the ministries that are making an impact on the lives of those involved and in those we serve!

THE IMPACT OF WORSHIP

Worship is a vital part of the church as it is one of the places the church gathers together in community to praise God, pray, learn, and come together at the table of Holy Communion. Sunday morning is the main time our church gathers together for worship. However, there are two other times our church gathers for worship: on Saturday evening and on Wednesday evenings when our youth come together for worship at the end of confirmation and sr. high youth group.

The new chapel has been a blessing to many groups, including our youth who gather here for worship on Wednesday evenings. During this worship time the youth sing familiar songs and the Word of God is shared with them in a way they are able to relate to, which helps them grow in their knowledge and faith in God.



Youth Worship on Wednesday evenings in the Chapel

This past year, we have seen many new faces in worship at St. Philip. People are looking for community and a place to belong. I believe people have felt a sense of emptiness in their lives and as they have sought different ways to fill that emptiness, many are realizing that what they are missing is God and the church. St. Philip is a warm and hospitable church where many have felt welcomed and comfortable. This is a wonderful way God is working in and through us as a church.

At St. Philip, we work hard to provide a quality worship experience for our church and those who worship with us in person and online. This is done by offering a variety of worship styles, preaching styles and a variety of styles of music. While we have different



Sanctuary Choir, rehearsals are on Wednesdays at 7:00pm

preferences for worship, we are all able to come together in unity in our faith in Christ to give thanks and praise to God. It has been wonderful seeing the impact of our worship services on our church and on those who worship with us as people are touched by the music, the choirs, the sermons, the presence of God through Holy Communion and baptism, and coming together as a community of faith. What a blessing Janet Shibly, our Director of Music, is to our church as she shapes our worship services to truly be a celebration!

For many, worship is where they are first introduced to St. Philip and its ministries. It is from there that people get involved and join a small group or attend a Bible study. These tend to be the places where relationships are built and people get connected with the church.

THE IMPACT OF SMALL GROUPS & BIBLE STUDIES

Small groups and Bible studies are influential for so many at St. Philip. This often tends to be the place where we are able to dig into the Bible or have deep conversations on specific topics, which cause us to grow in our knowledge and faith in God. It is also the place where we truly get to know other people and what they are going through. To take the time to engage with someone and to truly get to know them is so beneficial for our life and faith in the church. While it may not be essential for someone to attend small group or Bible study, people find it impactful and compelling.

There are small groups that focus on relationships and there are small groups that focus on studying God's Word and joining together in conversation. There are Bible studies that read and study the Bible and there are others that read a book and join in conversation about God, the world and our lives. Bible studies and small groups come in all shapes and sizes, with some being all women, all men, couples or anyone. The great thing about this is that anyone can find a group that they can fit into and be part of. I encourage you to check

out our small group and Bible study page on our website to see all that is going on: www.stphilip-co.org/bible-studies-and-small-group/. All of our small group leaders and Bible study leaders are truly a blessing to our church. Thank you for all you do!



Men's Breakfast at iHop on Thursdays at 7:30am

One example of a small group and Bible study at St. Philip is Pub Theology. One year ago, I began gathering people together at Locavore Beer Works for Pub Theology. This is not your traditional Bible study; it is a gathering of people who talk about life, faith and God while drinking beer, root beer or water. It is a place to get to know others and have good conversation around a topic I prepare ahead of time with a reference sheet of questions, Bible verses, quotes and insights. There are different brews and there are different views, which generates great conversation each week. The great thing about Pub Theology is



Pub Theology at Locavore Beer Works on Mondays at 6:35pm

that it has attracted people who don't attend traditional Bible studies and it has been a place that people have felt comfortable inviting their friends and neighbors. It has been a diverse group of men and women ranging from 17 to 85 years old. It has been amazing to see the impact these conversations have had on those who have attended, the relationships they have built and the joy they have in participating.

THE IMPACT OF SERVICE WORK

Volunteering is such a fulfilling act of service. When we volunteer and serve, we touch the lives of those we are serving and helping to provide for them in their time of need. Service work is part of who we are as Christians, for God calls us to love and serve our neighbor. When we serve our faith is being revealed, for it is an outward expression of our faith as our faith leads us to do good works.

The opportunities to live out our faith, through the serve and caring ministries at St. Philip, are as varied as the lives of our people. This past year, we began a Diaper Ministry, partnering with Love INC. Once a month a group of volunteers work together to distribute free diapers and baby wipes to families in need. While guests come to receive their diapers, they also receive relationships through our prayer partners, fresh baked pastries, hot coffee, and a fun play area with childcare.



Diaper Ministry on the 4th Saturday of each Month from 9-11am

It is amazing to see the impact of those who are serving at St. Philip and how much joy they have when they serve. Relationships are also built when you serve with others, which creates a loving community of care and support. We don't always see it because we don't always see those who receive the blessing of our service, but it is always a joy to see how impacted they are by the gifts they receive. We don't think much of what we are doing, but God uses us in amazing ways to care for those in need. In response, those who receive the gift of our work or the items given to them are so grateful and thankful. This is certainly the case with the Diaper Ministry and with our Sharing with Sheridan Food Bank. Thank you to all who serve and lead our serve and caring ministries; especially Deacon Korra Looschen who provides support, direction and leadership to these ministries!

THE IMPACT ON CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

For me and many others, this is where it all began. It is so important for us to raise our children in the faith and to bring them to church to learn about God and be in a community of faith. As youth go into middle school, high school, and college they experience and go through so much, which makes it even more important for them to

have the church, a community of faith to support them and care for them. As couples get married and have children, they too need to be supported as they experience new joys and struggles; including raising their children in the faith. It becomes a full circle. This is a great opportunity for people in our congregation to mentor, care and support these young adults and families; for life and the world is so much different than when the past generation raised their children.



Journey through Holy Week and Easter Egg Hunt

There are many events and ministries for our children, youth and families at St. Philip. All of these ministries foster community building, forming of relationships, forming the foundation of faith and growing in a relationship with God. St. Philip has been blessed by Melinda Svenkerud, our Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries, who brings, for example, her gift of leadership and creativity. Each year, the children have the opportunity to not only learn about Advent and Holy Week but to

experience it through stations which explain what is going on from characters in the story.

Every summer kids look forward to Vacation Bible School (VBS) at St. Philip. It is an amazing outreach to our community, with many kids coming from our Early Learning Center and from the community. The children have so much fun as they join in singing songs, doing crafts, playing games, learning the Bible stories and getting to know other kids. They leave knowing the songs and the lessons they have learned from the theme and Bible stories. Vacation Bible School has made an impact on their lives and on their faith. This year after VBS, I shared an email from someone in our neighborhood about the impact our VBS had on her and how grateful she was that St. Philip offered VBS for free and how grateful she was that one of her neighbor girls was able to come to VBS. What a blessing Melinda is to our church as she shares Jesus with our children, youth and families!



Vacation Bible School Program and Dinner

BLESSING AND IMPACT LEAD TO CHEERFUL GIVING

Seeing the impact St. Philip, its ministers, its staff and its leaders are having on children, youth, families and adults from the church and from our community, it makes it easy to be a cheerful giver. As Paul said, "God loves a cheerful giver." When we see something make a difference in people's lives we are happy to give. I invite you to cheerfully give to St. Philip in 2024 as we continue to make an impact while God works in us and through us! God has called us to come together in our faith in Christ to intentionally build relationships through Christ to grow and serve. This is exactly what we are doing and this is why we are making such a difference in people's lives.

As St. Philip reflects on the impact it has made and how we can be a blessing in 2024, we invite you to fill out a Statement of Intent card. This helps us as a church to determine our budget and plan for 2024. You can fill out a digital statement of intent card on our website at www.stphilip-co.org/stewardship or you can fill out the card in your stewardship packet and bring it to church. Stewardship Weekend is Saturday, October 14 and Sunday, October 15, where we are inviting you to either have submitted your Statement of Intent card by that day or bring your Statement of Intent card to worship to offer it to God.

WAYS TO GIVE

There are many ways to give financially to St. Philip. Many continue to find it a spiritual act of giving cash or check in the offering plate. Others have found electronic giving to be a convenient and helpful way to give. You are able to have your giving automatically withdrawn from your bank account every week, once a month or once a year. A withdrawal from your bank account helps to keep credit card fees down, which can get expensive. If you would like to set up automatic giving, go to www.stphilip-co.org/giving/. If you have any questions regarding stewardship or your giving, please contact Pastor Brad or Kirsten, our Business Administrator, in the church office at 303-979-4491.

There are many ways to give as well. Direct transfer of your IRA distribution, for those who are 70 1/2 or older, distributions from an IRA are not taxable. Estate planning is another way to give, by putting St. Philip into your will and/or estate plans. If you are Thrivent member, you are able to give Thrivent Choice Dollars to St. Philip, which goes to support projects and is used to match fundraised funds. If you have any questions about these options, feel free to call the church office.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF ST. PHILIP
LUTHERAN CHURCH AND ITS MINISTRIES!**