



Fox Point Church
7510 N Santa Monica Blvd
Fox Point WI 53217

October 13, 2017

Dear Members of Fox Point Church,

What I realized as I looked back at 16 years of stewardship letters to our membership is that I have always put the ASK at the end of my letter. I typically begin with a wonderful and heartwarming story that I hope moves you to give. NOT this year! This year the ASK is so IMPORTANT that I am putting it first. If you fill out your pledge card immediately after reading the first few paragraphs, you don't have to worry about reading the rest of this letter--*although I do have a good story!*

So here it is.... the ASK!

I need your help. In 2018, we are going to grow our staff and our church budget by 8% so that we can continue to be the place where all of God's people find real faith for their real lives.

Here is what we are hoping to do. We are looking for a new pastor who will help us grow our **Youth and Family Ministry**. Pastor Bruce and I have been managing this important ministry area. We will continue to be involved with our youth and families, but a full-time pastor will be able to give more attention to these groups and will free us to innovate and create faith experiences for our entire congregation. We are also looking for help in our pastoral care staff for our seniors and homebound, and we need additional administration staff to support all of our rapidly growing ministries. These are vital areas of growth if we are to continue caring for our whole congregation.

This year if you have been giving between **\$1- \$999**, and if it's possible, we ask you to increase your giving to at least **\$1,000**. It costs approximately **\$2,000** per family to maintain the numerous and varied ministries in our church. That is the amount we need to support our pastors, lay ministers, office staff, and custodians, to manage all the spiritual care we provide from birth to death, to make sure we take care of those in need, and to maintain and care for our church building. That is **\$3** a day, **\$21** a week, or a little more than **\$83.3333333** a month.

If you are gifting over **\$1,000**, we are asking that you increase your gift by at least **8%**. In other words, if you gave \$1,000, it would mean an **\$83** increase, or **\$6** a month.

I am asking everyone to grow in their giving! My daughter Hannah made the commitment to grow, and now I ask you. And best of all, I know you will respond!

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

And now the Story....

It was surreal listening to my daughter Hannah last Sunday as she gave the temple talk for this year's stewardship campaign. I watched this 23-year-old woman, who arrived at this church in 1998 as a 4-year-old, grow up before my eyes. She was poised and articulate, but most of all, she was so clear in how much she loves God and our church.

This past July, she started a new job in Chicago. Every Sunday morning she would excitedly tell me where she was going to church. However, every Sunday evening she would say, "Dad, it's not Fox Point Lutheran!" I would love to tell you that she misses her Dad, but that's not the whole story. She misses our entire church! She misses the preaching, the music, our Sunday School, and our youth ministry. She misses the deep friendships she developed. She misses the place where she experienced God in ways that made her shiver. She misses a community that supported her when she was sad and anxious. She misses the opportunities she took to help the "least of these" find a way up and a way out. She misses all of you...because you are, and continue to be, her family. And she hopes that one day soon she will find a church and a church family that can move her and love her as much as our church does.

At the end of her talk, I was in tears. I was not only proud of Hannah, but I was proud of and thankful for this place. This is an amazing church because you are amazing people. And now the BUT!

We are an amazing church, BUT we are growing so fast that our staff is struggling to keep up with caring for everyone who walks through our doors.

At the end of her talk, my daughter told the church that she hoped that we would continue to be the place where a 4-year-old could come up for the Jr. Sermon and have the same long, deep, and life-changing experience through the years that she had enjoyed. She hoped that we could continue to love and support every single person who worships with us, so that they, too, could find a real faith that moves and transforms their real lives.

And then I thought of this year's stewardship theme: *Faith it's all about....* It means that together we have created a wonderful place to come and fill in the blank.... Some of us come for healing, some of us come for inspiration, some for transformation, some for their kids or teens, some to find comfort in dying or because someone they love is dying, some to work for justice and peace, some to find God, some to thank God, some to laugh and to find joy, and some to find a safe place to cry. That is what we strive to create as the friends and followers of Jesus.

Thank you for your love and your help. Thank you for reading all the way to the end. Thank you for loving God's church and for all we will do together in the coming year.

With great love and faith,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Bill Knapp". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pastor Bill Knapp