



Better
together
AT
FOX POINT LUTHERAN CHURCH

Stewardship 2025

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. Acts 2:46-47

The train platform in Pisa, Italy, was empty. It was 1986, and I was on a 3-week break from my college study abroad program. My parents were unhappy with me because I had decided to travel through Europe **alone**. I traveled to the former Yugoslavia, Switzerland, and Austria. I drank beer at the famous Hoffbrau House in Munich with a Japanese group that adopted me. In Austria, a Chinese tour group adopted me as we drove through all of the great "Sound of Music" sites, singing along with Julie Andrews until we were hoarse.

Now I was alone on an empty train platform in Pisa, Italy, trying to get back to school. The only problem was the rail system was on strike, and no one knew how long it would be down.

So there I was, almost out of money and wondering how I was going to eat, when a girl with a backpack, my age, walked up to me on the platform. She smiled at me, and I smiled at her.

I had been rubbing the cross around my neck. It was a gift from my church made of bent square nails and leather.

"Are you a Christian?" she asked.

I smiled at her and nodded. And then the most unexpected thing happened...she hugged me! Not an I-want-to-be-your-girlfriend hug, but I'm-afraid-and-alone hug. Her name was Tracy, and, like me, she was traveling alone, low on money and now with the strike, not knowing what she was going to do.

Tracy and I sat down on the train platform and talked about our high school youth groups, life, faith, and our fears about the future. At some point, we started singing youth group church songs, complete with hand motions and laughing so loud it echoed through the terminal.

That's when it happened. The songs quickly attracted more travelers our age. Each one stuck in Pisa with a different story. Each one low on money and food and water.

Six hours after I met Tracy, there were 20 of us sitting on the platform! We decided to have a feast. We each took out the food we were carrying and shared it with the others. What was shared fed everyone, with lots of leftovers, which we gave to those who had no money.

We were laughing and playing church youth group games—the Italians thought we had lost our minds! But we didn't care! All of us were followers of Jesus. All of us were connected in faith, and all of us were (past tense) traveling alone. Now we were together, and we learned that day, **together is better!**

The theme for this year's giving campaign is "Together Is Better!" Our Fox Point Lutheran church family has grown. We have welcomed over 200 new members this year! Our Sunday School and Confirmation classes have had record attendance. The hopes and dreams of our Building Faith Forward Building Campaign and the hard work of our members and staff have created a church where people who had been alone are now part of an amazing family of love and support. They are experiencing the power of being together. They have discovered what I discovered on that platform in Pisa: TOGETHER IS BETTER!

In 2025, we need your help to make sure we can continue to be the church where people discover Together Is Better. If you have not yet given to our church, we are asking you to generously pledge to our budget. If you already pledge, we are asking you to increase your giving by 7%.

Why do we need the increase?

1. This is the first year that we will be paying principal payments on our church building debt. This will have a significant impact on our budget. In addition, we are incurring increased costs due to inflation.
2. Our youth and family ministry is understaffed! We are looking to hire more staff to accommodate our growing ministry.
3. We are starting new faith and growth opportunities, including marriage events and small group studies.

To make a pledge, you have three options:

1. Complete the enclosed card, indicating your contribution, and return it to the church as soon as you can.
2. Scan the QR code included in this letter to submit your pledge online.
3. Visit our website at www.foxpointchurch.org, scroll down and click on the "Together Is Better!" button, and make your pledge.

Thank you for being such an incredible and generous congregation. Every year I am overwhelmed by your generosity and grateful for your love for our church.


Pastor Bill Knapp
Senior Pastor