

Dear Main Street Family,

I have several items to share with you today. I've grouped them together using Main Street's mission statement: *Love God, Grow in Faith, Serve Christ*.

Loving God

Last Sunday, I concluded my sermon series called ***Enough: Discovering Joy Through Simplicity and Generosity***. The final topic was "Defined by Generosity." I talked about the fact that generosity is a fruit of the Holy Spirit and that our faithful response to God through tithes and offerings is one of the ways we live the salvation life God offers us. If you were unable to be with us, you can listen to the sermon message on our website by clicking [here](#).

This week you will be receiving an estimate of giving commitment card in the mail. On a practical level, we ask our members to turn in estimate of giving cards each year so that our Finance Committee is able to set an accurate ministry budget for the coming year. This allows us to make the most of every dollar given to the church. On a personal level, the commitment card is an opportunity for you to spend time in prayer and reflection, considering what offering you would make to God through our church in the coming year. Please be watching for the mailing. Then fill out the card and bring it with you to worship this week for Commitment Sunday (November 6.) I hope you will be able to join us as we celebrate and consecrate our gifts to the ministry of our church for the coming year.

November 6 is also All Saints' Sunday. Christians traditionally celebrate the lives of the Saints who have died in the past year on November 1. (November 1 used to be called All Hallows Day, which made October 31 All Hallows Eve, which became Halloween.) So on the first Sunday of November, we read the names of church members who have died, thanking God for their faithful witness and for their service and sacrifice. On Sunday, we will remember that Main Street Church in 2011 is built upon the foundation of the generosity and commitment of all who have gone before us and who now rest from their labor.

Don't forget that on Communion Sundays, we receive a special offering that goes into the fund we use to provide financial assistance for people in need in our church and community. The need is great: we receive requests for help every day. We help as much as we can, but the needs are greater than our resources. Your generous support of this fund is one way Main Street church serves Christ in in the world.

Remember to set your clocks back one hour on Saturday evening! And note that, starting Sunday, Sunday School will begin at 9:45am. (Choirs will still gather at 10:30am on Sunday mornings to prepare for services.)

Growing in Faith

I want to thank everyone who led and participated in the Enough discipleship classes. More than 80 people read the book and gathered in small groups to discuss how we can discover joy and contentment through simplicity and generosity.

To help you prepare for the Advent season (which begins November 27) and the celebration of Christmas, Anne Hough will be leading a four-week discipleship class called, "The Songs of Christmas" on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 pm beginning November 9. More information is available in this week's eSpire. You can sign-up for the class by contacting the [church office](#) or marking the connection card on Sunday morning.

Serving Christ

Between now and the end of the year, you will have several opportunities to serve Christ through Main Street Church. Detailed information about service opportunities will be available in the eSpire and in Sunday's bulletin. My purpose in mentioning them today is to invite you to remember that serving Christ in the church and serving Christ in the world (through the ministries of the church) is one our primary commitments. I hope you will prayerfully consider how you and your family might be able to help.

Please look for more information about the following ministries and plan to participate: Operation Christmas Child; Thanksgiving Dinner for elderly and shut-ins; Angel Tree (White Christmas) gifts; Meals on Wheels delivery; Christmas Dinner for Food Pantry clients. Not only will you be blessing others and helping transform our community, but I believe you will be blessed in the process.

There will be another opportunity for service on Friday December 2. Main Street is one of the churches hosting the Virginia State LARCUM Conference. The welcome reception, opening session, and opening worship service will be at Main Street on Friday evening. We will also be serving a meal for the visiting Bishops and Conference leaders. This means we will need many people to help with food preparation and service, hosting the reception, greeting, ushering, and providing hospitality. Hosting this event is quite an honor for Main Street and I ask you to please mark your calendar and plan to help. Notify the [church office](#) or mark your connection card on Sunday if you can help.

Finally, I thank you for all the ways you faithfully respond to God's grace and share in mission and ministry through the church. I look forward to seeing you on Sunday.

In Christ,
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