



If these seeds would take root in my liberty,
and if His will would grow from my freedom,
I would become the love that He is, and
my harvest would be His glory and my own joy.
And I would grow together with thousands
and millions of other freedoms into
the gold of one huge field praising God,
loaded with increase, loaded with wheat.

— *Thomas Merton*



Dear Friends-

We each have been given the gift of life. God planted in each of us a seed, and with the waters of baptism, and the warmth of the sunny days of our lives and the love we found in them, we have grown and developed into the gifted human beings we are today. In our church community, we share these gifts—gifts of song and praise, gifts of prayer and worship, gifts of reason and insight, and gifts of self-sacrifice and service. And when our compassion is stirred by someone's pain and grief, we shine the light of our love into those places where there is some darkness, and we support each other in times of trouble. And when our hearts are fired up with spirit by our neighbor's triumph, we tell tall tales and laugh, and celebrate our joys and homecomings. No matter what, each week, we touch shoulder to shoulder around the table, and break bread, as Jesus did with his friends.

All the gift giving—hand to hand—touches our hearts and awakens an abiding sense of gratitude—a honeycomb in “a bee-loud glade,” or a summer garden watermelon filling our hearts to bursting—and we feel this mysterious drive to share the richness and sweetness of our hearts, to labor in our shared garden with gratitude, and to plant new seeds. We find in our hearts the Holy Spirit, like a child born into a new life yearning not for new toys, but for spiritual gifts, and we recognize our great task: to care for the garden, to nourish it and help it grow and bear fruit- to feed and sustain not just our church community, but the larger world; to serve our neighbors in the Body of Christ.

continued

Stewardship is this labor of gratitude—it helps us to accomplish what the gift promises, which is to become the love that God is. We are not called to do this work alone, but together in unity and fellowship. Jesus said to his friends, “And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last . . . I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”

As you review the pledge card, consider that your monetary gift will yield increase—we are greater than the sum of our parts—it will yield a harvest of nourishing and loving ministries, and it will protect both the historical legacy of the preceding generations, and the unknowable possibilities of the future All Saints.’ This is the task before us: sustaining generations of loving one another and God—becoming the love that God is. Please pledge as generously as you can and listen to your heart. Ask whether you are called to join the stewardship ministry and help labor in this garden of gratitude.

May God’s love and peace be with you-

The Rev. Adrien Dawson
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