

Raleigh Moravian Church

Called by God as the Body of Christ, we, the members of the Raleigh Moravian Church, a family of believers, worship, teach, witness, and serve in response to the leading of the Holy Spirit.



November 11, 2015

Dear Friends,

In 30+ years of ministry at Raleigh Moravian, I've preached many stewardship sermons, but this is the first time I've communicated my stewardship thoughts in the form of a letter. To be honest, I would rather *talk* about stewardship than write about it. When I speak about a vision for our congregation, there's emotion in my voice that's difficult to express in writing. This is a very important topic.

Thank you for your support! I will be the first to admit that the church is not very good at expressing our gratitude to those who make Raleigh Moravian's ministry possible. Many people consistently and generously support our church with their time and talents, as well as their money. In a letter, words of appreciation look like just another line on the page. In person, these words of appreciation highlight a relationship. The congregation cannot fulfill the vision before us without you!

The congregational visioning process identified three areas (Information, Inreach, and Outreach) that direct us in the Way of Jesus. When we share the joy of a child's birth through the weekly Prayer Tree email, we are following in the Way of Jesus. When we gather around a family at the death of a loved one, we are following in the Way of Jesus. When we pull together to enable our youth group to go on a mission trip, we are following in the Way of Jesus.

To fulfill our vision, the church budget for 2016 has been increased by ten percent. This increase is necessary to fund the staff positions that will help our congregation realize its vision. Appreciation for the work being done by Barbara, Becca, Claude, Jami, Jim, Sara, and Stephanie can be put in writing, but they do not begin to express how deeply grateful I am for their work in behalf of our congregation! Neither can they express the need to continue this work into 2016 and beyond. Christian education and worship, mission and pastoral care, and the ministries of our congregation would not be as effective without the capable leadership of our staff.

The ten percent increase in the 2016 budget means our congregation will be fully staffed for this *and the coming years*, which enables me to devote more time to providing pastoral care. While pastoral care will not be my only duty, it becomes my priority. This can only occur with a fully functioning Church Staff.

In preparing this letter, I have spent time in prayer for the ministry of our church and for the lives of those who make up our congregation. Realizing that not everyone is in a position to make an increased financial contribution, Anna and I are increasing our pledge by a higher percentage than in previous years, and we hope that others, who are able to do so, will increase their contributions in a significant way. Anna and I tithe, with the majority of our tithe given in support of our church's mission and ministries. For us, this is a commitment to Raleigh Moravian's future as well as its present. If you are able, I hope you will join Anna and me in increasing your financial commitment to the church to help make the 2016 budget a reality.

Thank you for allowing me to share this letter with you. It is a privilege to serve with you within this faith community that offers so much to us and to others.

Grace and peace,

Craig