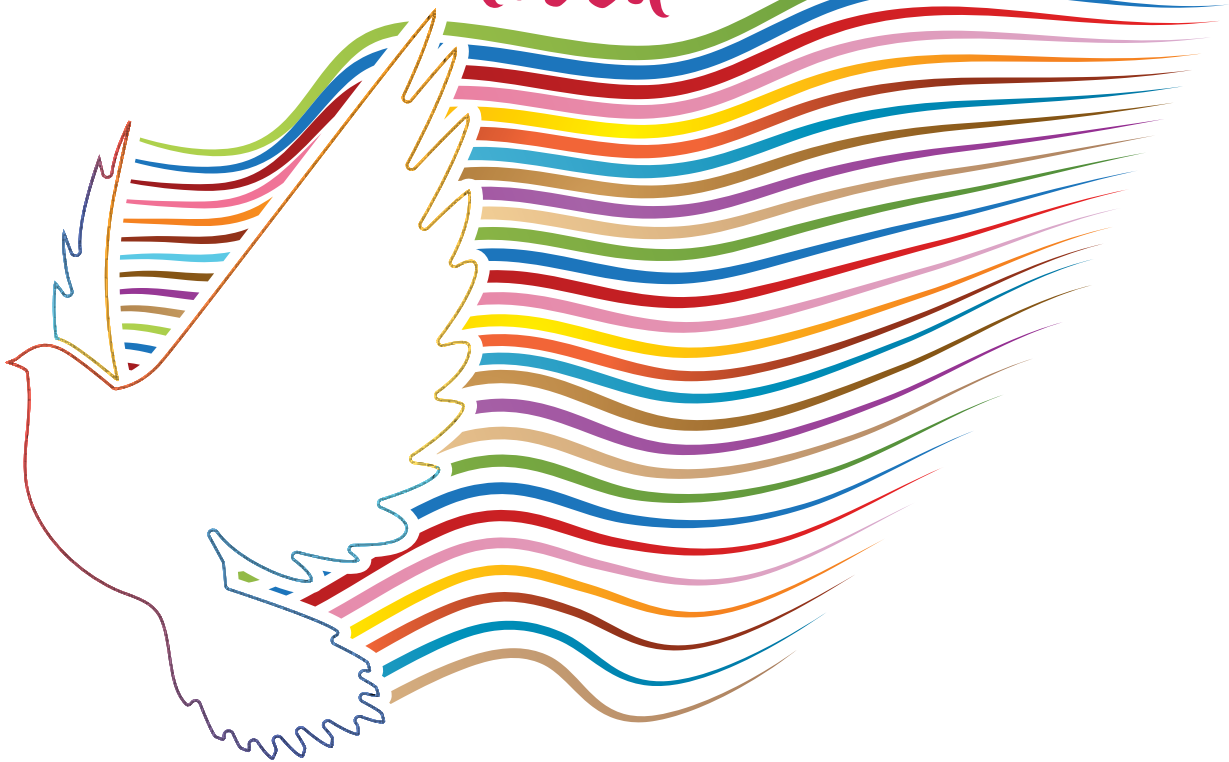


St. Columba's Annual Campaign 24



***moved by
the Spirit***

Moved by the Spirit



St. Columba's Annual Pledge Campaign 2024



ST COLUMBA'S **Annual Pledge Campaign 2023**

Dear Ones,

One day as Moses was keeping watch over his flock, an angel appeared in a flame of fire out of a bush. The bush was ablaze, yet was not consumed. God called to Moses, "remove your sandals; the place on which you stand is holy ground." Since ancient days, commentators have observed that the miracle is not that the bush was burning. Many a bush is ablaze with the glory of God.

The miracle is that Moses noticed, stopped, and heeded the presence of God. Moses turned his attention from what he himself was doing; instead, Moses noticed what God was doing. Dear ones, what is God doing? What is God doing among us? Everywhere I turn these days, I sense the Spirit moving us, prompting us, drawing us to live God's love in myriad ways; drawing us close; filling us with visions, sending us out. In awe, I take off my shoes with gratitude for you, for your witness, for the ways we are being moved by the Spirit!

We are being moved by the Spirit to:

- Join our voice in song with others in our choirs
- Discern how we are called to acts and lives of reparation
- Invite family, friends, neighbors, strangers for supper on Wednesday
- Partner with others for justice
- Quietly tend to the care of the sanctuary - that the holiness we experienced upon arriving may be experienced by those yet to arrive
- Take our faith outside – to the courtyard, the labyrinth, the daily interactions of our lives
- Read the Bible; teach, learn, converse, pray, laugh and grow in discipleship
- Plan how best to use our property for mission

This is holy ground. I feel so blessed by our community together as we take our turns – leading, following; sometimes weary, oft times inspired. Through our seeking together, we discover the depths of our belovedness before God.

This brochure offers a picture of St. Columba's vision and mission for the coming year; our priorities and ministries – and the resources needed. Please take a look. When considering a gift or pledge, we naturally begin with ourselves: What do I have? What do I need? How much can I give? This year, I invite you to begin with God and ask, how is the spirit moving in my life and through our life together? How is God calling me to deeper faithfulness? What does life with St. Columba's mean to me?

Each year I seek to stretch in giving; doing so opens my heart to God. Giving generously is a spiritual practice; giving is good for our souls. I pray that you join me: begin with God and let yourself be moved by the Spirit! Make a wildly generous pledge. You'll be glad you did.

Peace!

Ledlie

The messages, prayers and actions of our clergy and parishioners inspire me to think beyond our comfortable corner in Northwest Washington and give me courage to try new habits and explore new conversations that help me live more lightly on this earth. By supporting St. Columba's, you contribute to the Environment Committee's programs that empower us all to care for God's creation.



Karen Abrams



When Kabul fell and Afghans began fleeing, I knew St. Columbans would be called on to welcome and assist a new wave of refugees. I felt "moved by the spirit" to lead others as I had prior experience volunteering with the Refugee Response Ministry. Parishioners stewardship dollars ensure we have the staff and clergy necessary to respond when we're "Moved by the Spirit."

Keri Piester



Over the past three years, we've witnessed what seem like unending waves of terrible suffering: a global pandemic, a downturned economy, acts of racial injustice, and more.

At St. Columba's, we did not turn away from these painful experiences. Our church invested resources to help our community understand what was happening, to bear these burdens, and to work through them together. St. C's expanded online to make worship services and programs more accessible. It offered outdoor worship that included focus on young families, as well as other in-person gatherings like Wednesday Suppers and Columba Circles to tend to our neglected need for personal connection. It sponsored outreach appeals to raise funds to help the least fortunate, including through the Water Ministry, the Homeless Initiative, Grate Patrol, and Friendship Place. It sponsored three Afghan refugee families to help them move to new homes nearby. It convened a Task Force to guide the church in integrating anti-racism into every facet of congregational life. And it continued to implement improvements to our building and grounds to better serve the future needs of our congregation and our neighborhood.

Today, we see a remarkable awakening at St. Columba's. Our Wee Worship service has attracted dozens of new families. Our renovated Nave saw more than a thousand in attendance at Christmas time and Easter. Our Wednesday Suppers were so popular that their initial three month run was extended to seven months. Our Columba Crew Sunday School program has seen so many children that additional teachers had to be recruited. Our Basecamp middle schoolers not only attended but brought friends to Friday church youth parties and sleepovers, and our Summit high schoolers brought 32 people to West Virginia to repair and rebuild homes as part of the St. C's Appalachian Project. Our new Labyrinth Courtyard created not just a new meditation space but a new focal point for performances and a source of daily peace for our neighbors. Our new Strategy for Anti-Racism established priorities for combatting racism as individuals, as a church, and in our community. And our congregation is seeing incredible energy at church events, including a chili cookoff packed with over two dozen entrants, and a Columba Day featuring activities for all ages and a wide-ranging feast that included dishes from one of our refugee families.

The Holy Spirit is alive at St. Columba's, in ways beyond our capacity to fully understand. This Spirit is enlivening our ministries, bringing new souls to our church and new hands to help us in our work. And it is moving each of us to be more present with each other, to deepen our spiritual lives, and to be in service to others. It is showing us that when we endeavor to live God's love, astonishing things can happen.

We hope you will be moved by the Spirit to support St. Columba's with a generous pledge of financial support for the coming 2024 calendar year. Our church needs our help more than ever. Inflation has increased our utility and other operating costs, to include impacting our ability to provide basic cost-of-living increases to our incredible clergy and staff, who provide crucial expertise and support to our ministries and programming. More resources will also be needed to sustain and advance the investments we've made in our technological capabilities and our building improvements.

Not all of us have the same ability to give. That makes it even more crucial for each of us to prayerfully consider a financial sacrifice that is commensurate with our means, that recognizes that all we have comes from God, and that honors our church's service to the community. We thank you for your support!





" The community that I have gotten to know during my years at St. Columba's is at the core of what's important to me as a church member. As I learned about the lives of the 3 Afghan families and the challenges they faced during their first year in Washington, it made me reflect on my family's life. These needs are substantial and we can make a difference in the lives of the broader community by providing important financial support."

Christina Sprague

Dear Fellow Columbans,

The Spirit is moving within St. Columba's! You can see it, and you can feel it. Our vibrant, active community is moving in ways large and small, seeking to make a difference in the lives of those within our parish and across our region. Columbans are coming together to change lives in the DC area by addressing family homelessness; welcoming and settling Afghan refugees families; feeding and caring for those who come to the Water Ministry; and raising awareness of equity issues in our own neighborhood.

Columbans are also coming together to build a vibrant faith community that supports us through fellowship and spiritual growth — Sunday School, youth group, Wednesday night suppers, bible study, book groups, fathers' group, altar guild, flower guild, and so much more.

As each of us travels on our own unique faith journey, and finds ways to live God's love, the Spirit moves with us. As we go, we are touched and held up by this wonderful community. Small acts surround us that can mean so much, like the welcoming smile from a Sunday morning usher; the lovely music from the choir and orchestra; or the joy of watching (or participating in) watermelon in the courtyard. Opportunities to create new friendships and deepen old ones are truly meaningful.

Yes, indeed! The Holy Spirit is moving at St. Columba's! That's why we love the theme of this year's stewardship campaign - Moved By The Spirit.

We invite each of you to consider how the Spirit has touched you, called you, moved you. Then, prayerfully consider your annual pledge to St. Columba's as a way to give thanks. Pledges are our primary source of revenue - the fuel for our vibrant parish life. And pledging is an outward expression of gratitude. Give thanks for this community that is working to Live God's Love and walking with you on your journey of faith.

With gratitude and love,
Sara and Gina