



the Reformed Church of Bronxville

A FAMILY OF FAITH, A HOME FOR ALL, AT THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

November 14, 2021

Dear RCB Friends,

When several of us began discussing the 2022 Stewardship Campaign, which I enthusiastically agreed to chair, I was super excited to share with everyone all the great things that have been happening at and through The Reformed Church of Bronxville. This is especially true as we continue to emerge from the pandemic, and life at RCB is becoming more “normal” seemingly every week. Then back in September, I got this email from Matt:

Aaron, I'm sure you're slammed. With your blessing, I'd like to move forward with this year's Stewardship theme of "Giving Thanks." Rather than simply acknowledging the many thriving programs in the Church, when we truly reflect on all that God has done for us in Christ, how can we ever truly say "thank you" enough? I'm trying to kick things off with a spiritual tone of generosity. Happy to discuss further. Thanks. Peace, mjlw

I was mildly annoyed. I wanted to talk about the exciting repositioning of our mission focus and undeniable energy and momentum in our youth, and how the last three years of good stewardship have set up RCB to leverage our giving to truly impact our youth and community beyond the 10708 Zip Code. I had data, quantitative analysis, and compelling arguments.

As I thought more about Matt's note (while steadfastly ignoring his requests to write this letter), it occurred to me that he had jumped right into something that I have always struggled with while serving as a steward and asking people for their pledges. While the things we do at and for RCB are important, the “Giving Thanks” theme perfectly highlights how differently we should feel about gratitude in response to the goodness and grace of God.

As you reflect on your pledge this year, one thing you might consider is where your giving to the church falls in your giving priorities and why. Does it reflect the spirit of thankfulness that Matt articulates above? These are personal decisions for everyone but certainly worth a moment of prayer and reflection.

I grew up in a tithing family, and when I finally graduated and was a lowly Second Lieutenant in the Army making around \$1,600 per month, I called my Mom to ask if I should be tithing gross or net. Her reply was simple: Depends on whether you want gross or net blessings! She followed up with an encouraging note that week with the following verses from 2 Corinthians 9:6-7:

(over)

“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

At the time, I thought maybe she was trying to let me off the hook for the mildly sarcastic, gross blessings line, but what I think she was getting at was the importance of the centrality of gratitude in the choice.

With our 2022 theme of “Giving Thanks,” our prayer is that you will be filled with gratitude and joy as you consider your pledge for The Reformed Church in 2022. Thank you in advance for your support.

Grace and Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Hood', written in a cursive style.

Aaron Hood

You can find more information about Stewardship and make your pledge today through our website:

www.reformedchurch.org/give

Alternatively, you can email your pledge to giving@reformedchurch.org or call the church office.