



NEWTON HIGHLANDS
Congregational Church

A Future with Hope:
Looking Forward with Anticipation

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.

– Jeremiah 29:11

As we look to the future, it is encouraging to see such exciting developments within our church community over the last year. We have seen a number of new families join the church, new teachers inspire our children in the classroom and the addition of a new piano to provide beautiful music during worship!

As discussed in the recent testimonials, the spirit of stewardship is alive and well in our community, and it is for this reason that **we are writing now to encourage you to make a commitment to giving to NHCC**. How generous we are as individuals and as a community has a direct impact on how successful our future can be. The demands of a modern life make it an increasingly difficult task to allocate all of our resources, financial or otherwise. This is why the church needs our support now more than ever.

God has given us talents, which in many cases has led to financial resources, which can be shared so that we as a community can live more fully. Indeed, our giving is the symbol of that fulfillment. Giving can take many forms but as a Congregational church we rely heavily on the generosity of our members through their **annual pledges**. A **pledge** is a critical component of the planning process and enables us to support existing programs as well as find ways to grow the community in new and exciting ways. A pledge to NHCC says, “We are alive in God’s word”.

It has been a year of growth and encouragement. It is important to share news about our parish ministry – its programs, outreach and in particular it’s financial vision and needs. NHCC practices a ministry of worship, education, celebration with music and fellowship events, mutual care, mission and prayer. We own three buildings, sustain a staff of one full and eleven part-time persons, and support programs such as Christian Education, youth groups and fellowship events. We give away well over \$40,000 in cash. We do this because the Bible and our faith invite us to remember, receive, heal and share. Our scriptures encourage us to glorify God in what we create together and to reach out to those in need. All of this takes the organization, vision and contribution of members, volunteers and friends.

To be specific, NHCC needs about \$440,000 per year for our program, staff and buildings. We receive about 30% of this from building users, almost 12% from earnings on our endowment and 8% from other sources. This means we need about 50% in donations and gifts from members and friends: just over \$220,000.

Over the last few years we have taken meaningful steps to expand our shared vision for the church and have several things in store for the future. We have plans to expand our mission efforts with housing the homeless. We hope to continue with the multiple teacher model with the youth group that has been so effective over the last year! We'll undertake our building improvements for the arts (organ and stained glass) and for our children (classroom floors) and our community (kitchen upgrades), as well as long term investments in the building through the Capital Campaign. We do all this with the guidance of committees made up of the membership and at our congregational meetings. Because we have a progressive, Bible-based and hopeful ministry planned for 2016-2017, we need strong and visionary pledges of time and money.

Frankly, we're thankful to God and for our church community. Without God's Spirit and your support we could not do all this so before we even ask for anything, thank you. Thank you for your gifts. Thank you for preparing together for 2017 and beyond.

If you would like additional information about Stewardship, please speak with Pastor Ken Baily, Treasurer Jim Harper or Paul Mace and Christian Cobaugh of the Stewardship Council. Detailed reports of our finance and programs are printed in our Annual Report.

Again, we thank you in advance for your support and look forward to our future with the possibilities that a hopeful vision can accomplish.