

October 15, 2024

## Blessed Ones in Christ,

Grace and peace from Baker Memorial United Methodist Church. On behalf our church leadership and staff, I pray God's blessings upon in your life and household.



It is the harvest season in the Midwest. In a recent conversation with one of our church members she noted how her time is split between her family's home in St. Charles and the family farm downstate where corn and beans are being harvested. We pray God's blessing upon our farmers and farm workers in this tremendously busy season. You, too, may be bringing in the crop from your garden: green beans, pumpkins, tomatoes and endless zucchini. Is it a harvest of plenty?



**Psalm 65 reminds us of God who serves as our ultimate provider.** Our Creator's provisions may come in many forms—through an answered prayer, forgiveness from our wrongs, our daily bread, the love of family and friends, or unexpected blessings. Perhaps this is what inspired Thomas Chisholm to write the refrain of "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" as "*summer and winter, and springtime and harvest...all I have needed Thy hand hath provided.*" The Psalmist sings of profound comfort whereby we can trust that God's provisions are available to sustain us in every season. Have you known this to be true?

**In light of this divine provision, Baker Memorial Church's upcoming Stewardship Season, November 3-November 24, 2024 invites all of us to respond with our gratitude and generosity.** Stewardship is not merely about managing our resources; it's about recognizing that everything we have is a gift from God. This perspective encourages us to share our blessings with others and with our church for the good of its mission: to invite everyone to experience Christianity for today's world!

In Matthew 9:37-38 Jesus tells his disciples, "*The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.*" As we read this scripture it reminds us Christ's call is for one and all to serve the will of God through the ministries of the church. Thank you for all the ways you have "labored" in the field to bring forth the hope, peace and love of Jesus to our community and world. As we continue to practice stewardship, let's be intentional in our giving. Every prayer, every portion of your time, every person in ministry, and every pledge of financial support plays a role in the harvest of God's blessings for the future of our church.



**The stewardship season HARVEST: God Provides! will soon be upon us.** In early November, every household will receive stewardship information with a preliminary 2025 narrative budget and pledge card. Rejoice with me in the knowledge that our current financial health is strong with most bills paid, large capital projects completed (see the enclosed update), and members' 2024 financial commitments continue to be generously fulfilled: **THANKS BE TO GOD!**

**Continue to rejoice in God who provides and begin to prayerfully reflect upon your pledge and commitment of financial support for 2025.** In commenting on her prayer, Christine Sine

writes: "God's harvest comes not just in the bounty of the produce we pull out of the garden – it comes in the wonder of his love, in the nourishment of his generosity and in the outpouring of his forgiveness." I invite you to use Christine's prayer as together we prepare for our stewardship season "HARVEST: God Provides!"

### God of the Bountiful—A Harvest Prayer

*God we thank you for your harvest which feeds us so many times each day.  
We are nourished with your forgiveness and hope  
We are sustained with your strength and patience  
We are filled with your grace and compassion*

*God we thank you for feeding us with a harvest of plenty  
We are restored through your generosity and healing  
We are replenished with your abundance and joy  
We are reminded of your selfless abandon*

*God we thank you for feeding us with the bread of heaven  
Your gift of Christ sustains our lives  
His presence restores the promise of your love  
His life fills our hearts with your everlasting light*

*God we thank you too for filling us with the water of life  
May we drink deeply that our thirst may be quenched  
May your river continue to flow  
Over us, in us, through us  
And out into the world you love.*

In Christ,



**Rev. David Aslesen, Pastor**  
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*Enclosed is a report from Capital Campaign Team Phase 1. We give thanks for the labor of the team to bring forth our building renovations and setting forth a plan for future projects.*

