

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church, Lacey, WA
2012 Annual Pledge Campaign for 2013 Mission Year

On September 30, just a few days after we dedicate our seven stained glass windows (the seven days of Creation), we begin using them to focus us on our annual pledge campaign with a season of gratitude. We will not start off talking about money and giving. Not just yet. But we'll get there. First we are working to put everyone in the mind of their blessedness and gratitude.

September 30: Window 1. In the Beginning. The first day of creation is all about the beginning.

- What was the beginning of this church community like? We have invited one of the founding members to discuss those beginning days briefly at the sermon time (5-7 minutes).
- We then will ask each member of the congregation to pose this question to someone seated near to them in the pews:
 - What is was their first Sunday like at St Benedict? What do they remember?
 - What drew them back a second time?
 - If you are new here, what are you looking for/hoping for from this church community?

We will provide sheets for people to write down their answers. We will be recording all of the answers we receive.

In harkening back to our own beginnings as a congregation, we will be meeting in the Fellowship Hall with our little Altar. (Before the days of our building St. B's met in at St. Martin's University lounge).

October 7: Window 2. God's formation continues. Our building now stands. We will begin with a quick prayer outside like that first Eucharist in our new space. We will process into our church building. We will call on a founding person to talk about that first time in our new building. We have many great stories about that experience. Then, turning to the congregation again:

- What do you like best about our space at St. Benedict?
- If you could anything with our space (worship or otherwise) what would you do?

Again collect up the responses

October 14: Window 3. God says Green up, Good Earth! The land forms and what perfect timing this will be as it is also Harvest Sunday when we will have a beautiful bounty of produce at our altar and a can food drive for the food bank. We will invite someone that has been here around 10 years to talk about:

- What's alive and well at St. Benedict?
- What has died or changed in our church?
- What new life has come from that change?

Those questions will be posed to the congregation and people will be provided sheets to write down their answers. We will be recording all of the answers we receive.

October 21: Window 4. Sun Moon and Stars. How have you encountered the sun of our lives here at St Benedict? Again, a congregation member will speak on this for 5-7 minutes. The question also will be posed one-on-one for congregants and their answers will be recorded.

During this week, a letter will go out announcing that our fall gratitude season is upon us and we will mention to the congregation that their gratitude cards will be coming the following week. We want to invite people to reflect on what saying Yes to God's goodness means to them. **Lay leader will write this letter.** We might want to use some of the stories that we've gotten from folks in the previous weeks.

The covenant card goes out via email and mail this week. Printed copies will be available at the church. Folks will be asked to turn in their cards by November 18. They will invite people to record, somehow, the time and talent they offer to St. Benedict.

October 28: Window 5. The water we swim in and the air we fly in. The water we swim in is a question congregational development people ask to try and get at what our culture is like.

- What are the invisible elements that are a part of life that we forget about unless we are awake and part of a church community?
- How are we called to be different as Christians?
- How has St. Benedict changed the air I breathe and the water I swim in? How am I different?

A person from the congregation will again have the chance to briefly talk about this and the congregation also will be asked to briefly discuss and record this. We will collect the answers.

During this week, the Vicar's Warden will write a letter to remind people of what we have been talking about in church – the stories they've heard and what we hope and dream of. It will include a reminder that we will be offering the cards on Nov 18.

Nov 4: Window 6. All Saints Day & people's stewardship of all things – God calls: Bring Forth, Bring Forth! This is where the rubber hits the road. We will have a guest preacher to talk about that calling forth and what God calls forth in each of us. People will have the chance to respond to his words the following week.

During this week, the Vicar will send a letter, sharing stories and dreams of our congregation and reminding people their covenant gratitude cards are due back by November 18. She will share with them the dreams of the ministry

leaders of our church. By then, their spending plans with their programs will be in and we can share with folks what we hope to do in 2013.

November 11: Window 7. God completes God's work and rests. We also rest and celebrate our abundant gifts.

- How are we completed by coming to this place and celebrating the abundant life in God?
- How do we respond to what God has brought forth in us?
- After our rest, what is next for us? How to we continue the work of the Holy Spirit? Do Baptismal Covenant this day.

A newer member of our congregation will preach on this.

A reminder will go out reminding people to return their gratitude cards by Nov 18.

November 18: We gather up our covenant cards in celebration of what God has done for us in this place.

The plan is to have all the stories and responses we've collected available somehow in some way for people to engage visually on this day. Maybe we could ask Jan and Nancy to photograph people?

Additional notes/thoughts/questions

- Bulletin each week will have a photo of the window of the week and an explanation of what it represents. Inside cover will have explanation of window project and will thank those who have contributed.
- Still thinking about visual stuff for the narthex – maybe asking people to bring photographs or other stuff to put there as remembrances of the past and hopes for the future.
- Photo and video opportunities.
- Publication (gratefulness book) opportunities once we have collected all of this information. Maybe look toward publishing in the spring – maybe use for Lenten reflections, etc.
- **Children and youth involvement/opportunities. This is really, really important. We will have a covenant card for children and youth.**
- Prayers of the people – we will have a brief prayer for regarding our gratitude each week.
- What else?