

Good Morning!

First, I am grateful for the opportunity to serve Trinity and the trust you have invested in me.

These last two years have taught me about the power and the importance of love. I got an inside seat to see dedicated clergy and lay people reach out in love and service to our parish and to others in the community.

But, as you have heard, love is an action, not just a feeling.

And as the body of Trinity [and of Christ], we are all called to serve. So, what does that look like and how does it feel to serve? What are the benefits we receive? How does this fulfill the purpose Jesus had in mind? I know many of you present this morning have served and will continue to serve in the future.

There are many here at Trinity that model both tireless service and love. Pause for a moment to think about the work and details handled by the dedicated altar and flower guilds. What about the young lives being changed by the music and youth programs? Think of the dedicated leaders for adult, youth, and children's classes working on lessons that bring God's word to life. And our clergy, offering support and encouragement for all in our parish including those in heartache and need. What about the impact the Daughters have had on our Columbia community? And, we all have tasted the love that comes out of our Trinity kitchen! Have you ever stopped and asked: who supports them?

We have many examples of service. But how does it feel to serve? I'd encourage you to talk to those who do it. I have found serving here is like any of the truly important skills I have learned, challenging in the beginning, but worthwhile in the long-term and ultimately fulfilling.

So, what are the benefits to serving? First and foremost, you are doing God's work. Some churches call this "kingdom work." Your service makes the difference to others in our Trinity faith family and transforms your heart. And those heart changes move you down the road of spiritual maturity. Everyone you love will notice these heart changes. This benefit alone would be worth the service work, but you do receive other benefits. You develop deeper relationships with those whom you serve. These relationships make it a pleasure to see these same people and their family. You develop a special bond doing God's work, especially when you must work through adversity. They change church events into family events. And that feeling changes everything. For kingdom work, the people you serve experience the love of Jesus Christ through you.

And there's more good news. This is exactly what Jesus had in mind for his church. St. Paul stated in Ephesians 4:16, "From whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love."

There's that love word again.

So, we need to love our church. All of us have something to offer. By participating in God's work our heart's change and at the same time we help others. Want to be a better parent? Organize and lead a parenting class. Want to go further with prayer? Consider joining the Order of St. Luke. Want to provide some perspective for you and your teenager or young adult? Participate in one our mission trips.

Loving our church is not just about doing work that needs to be done, it is about doing God's work. And **that** makes all the difference. I'd like to end with scripture from first John 4:16:19 ..God is love. Whoever lives in love, lives in God, and God in him. In this way, love is made complete

among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgement, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect loves drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us.

Thank you for allowing me to serve.