

Good morning! I am Julie Frederiksen and This is my 9 year old daughter Evie Frederiksen. We have been asked to share our reasons for pledging at St. Paul's.

Evie first: What I love about St. Paul's is the snacks, and the food. Well, I really like the service and the people. Ummm I mean the chocolate cake (here is the part where you can laugh)....

The theme of this pledge season is "Letting your Light Shine." I believe when I started to come here my light was like a wavering candle on a windy day. I had lost some of my pep and optimism in people's capacity to love or respect one another- I was very distressed about the increased dehumanizing happening in our culture- more and more us vs. them. Honestly, I was also pretty worn out as a mental health provider, mother of three and as caregiver to my mom who died this week from a long road with dementia.

Fortunately, I knew where I could turn to get my light back- the Episcopal church.. I grew up with the constancy of The Episcopal church- truly a deliberate gift from my parents. Not only did I go- but I was the default kid to be the acolyte, to staple newsletters, I was a junior choir member, a handbell player, EYC member (I even played the the recorder with my brother for some christmas eve carol- there was nothing my mom would not volunteer us to do and I was willing and excited to be a part of it - well... mostly). I went on to work in youth ministry in Eastern NC for a number of years in college and after. Across my life the laypeople and priests of the Episcopal church baptized, raised and comforted me, confirmed and married me, they blessed me when I was ill, they gave me communion at the bedside of my parents' dying, they taught me playfulness- so I knew where I needed to go to stoke the flames of light- it was the Episcopal church.

Since joining St. Paul's, I have been renewed with beautiful and meaningful music and worship, the pastoral care, hospitality in every way, meaningful sermons and adult education, and the knowledge that my kids are also getting to know the church as their foundation.

I have been renewed and reminded of the power of the Holy Spirit. So warmly received by so many. Being at St. Paul's has also been very healing for my husband David, a PK, a preacher's kid; he has been able to return to a parish to

find that he had indeed been missed and loved for himself, his authentic self. We are better as a couple and a family to worship and be in this community together.

Money can be an uncomfortable topic but giving money to the church is an essential part of widening the church's ability to be successful in ministering and spreading God's love.

I have listened to pledge drives at church for a long time- and I remember one powerful economic messenger who relayed the math of giving up one cup of coffee a day and giving it to the church could become a million dollars and how many people could be reached and touched by Christ's love by giving that cup of coffee up. I don't carry that fund raising skillset but I do hope you will take some time to consider what amount you can give every month automatically and not to feel that any amount is inadequate but all money is going to help St. Paul's to carry out the mission: which is to have : Open doors, open hearts and open hands to welcome all to live God's mission, teach Christ's love and transform our community by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Thank you