

Dear Friends,

When I was a hospital chaplain, I wore a pager that would beep when my attention was needed somewhere in the hospital. Sometimes it would beep in rapid succession. Of course, I can't be in more than one place at a time so I'd have to prioritize my response to the pages. With practice, I became pretty good at discerning how to prioritize multiple and sometimes competing pages which made my work more effective and less stressful.

Most of us don't wear pagers at work or anywhere else for that matter, but we do experience multiple, sometimes competing calls for our attention and commitment, including from our faith community. In our consumer driven society we're most often trained to consider convenience and (lower) cost above all else in determining value and ordering our priorities. From a consumer perspective, church is at a disadvantage for it is not always convenient or cheap.

But church is not a consumer product. Its value to our lives is not fairly assessed or measured by how easy or low cost it is. Rather its value rests in the depth and breadth of the claim it makes on our lives. The way it inspires and challenges us. The opportunity it offers us and others to experience and explore meaning, purpose, and community. And the alternative vision it casts and calls us to live into being in our own lives and the wider world. These are the metrics by which we are asked to assess the value of our faith and our church each day. And these are the metrics I invite you to use as you reflect upon your financial commitment (pledge) to SUUS during our annual canvass which begins April 7th.

Your pledge to SUUS is part of the "time, talent and treasure" we ask of people to support and sustain this faith community and which we receive with gratitude in whatever proportion people are able to give. As both a responsibility and privilege of membership, your giving, including your pledge, ensures not only our ability to meet routine operational expenses, but also the continuation of our religious community and faith tradition on the shoreline. Which, having inspired the commitment of generations and stood the test of time, today serves as a strong, viable religious alternative and spiritual home where individuals and families with diverse beliefs, practices, and life experiences gather in cooperative, covenanted community in service to each other and the world.

So please, join us Sunday, April 7th, after worship to launch this year's pledge drive with a celebratory pizza and salad luncheon and a brief presentation from the Board. I look forward to seeing you there. Thank you!

Peace and blessings,  
Rev. Craig