

Stewardship Moment
Sam Wiant
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Good morning! My name is Sam Wiant and I have the honor of serving as Trinity's Senior Warden and this morning I have the even greater honor of speaking to you as we begin our Stewardship campaign. The theme we have chosen for the campaign this year is: Trinity – Stronger Together: Remember. Restore. Reimagine. Over the coming weeks, fellow Trinitarians will come up here to speak to the other elements of that theme but this morning I want to talk about what it means to Remember.

Faulkner said "The past is never dead. It's not even past." That's why remembering is so important; we need to acknowledge and recognize the past because we're always carrying it with us. I know for me, and maybe for some of you as well, especially after the past 18 months, it feels like I am carrying so much. I loved our service of lamentation last week and the opportunity to come together and name and mourn all that has been lost during this pandemic time – the people, the relationships, the sense of security, the ability to be together. Those of us fortunate enough to live through these times will carry these memories for the rest of our days. But it's important to remember more than just the sad parts. For even in the midst of our sorrow and estrangement, God continued to show up. We need to remember those times too. For me, it means remembering Compline services over Zoom back in the early days, it means remembering Devon calling me one particularly rough Thursday afternoon when between fear and frustration and remote learning and isolation our whole family seemed to be at the end of our rope and being reminded that it was okay to not be okay, and it means remembering that Vestry meeting this past Spring, where after a long period of discernment about where the spirit was calling us to be, the Vestry stepped out in bravery and hope and approved the hiring of a full time minister for Children, Youth, & Families.

One day, this pandemic will be over; we are not the same people, we are not the same church we were when it began. But remembering means more than just looking back as far as January 2020. For 170 years, Episcopalians have gathered in this area under the name Trinity and we carry those memories with us as well. We remember baptisms, weddings, and funerals. We remember pageants and pageantry and we remember moments of deep quiet, listening for that still small voice of God. For some of you, it means remembering coming here as children with your parents or grandparents. For others it means remembering watching your own children grow up here and get sent out into the world. For some of you who may be newer, maybe it means remembering the first place you were welcomed to worship as your full self, with all your questions and uncertainties intact. But whether you've been a part of Trinity for decades or if this is your very first time with us, your thread is now tied into the rich tapestry of this community.

Remembering means even more than just the history of Trinity church. Look at the crest of the Episcopal Church and the white x on a blue field in the corner, the cross of St. Andrew, the cross of Scotland. That cross is there so we remember, when the Episcopal Church in America was young and Samuel Seabury couldn't be consecrated as a Bishop in England, he was able to go to Scotland and be consecrated there, which enabled the Bishops of the Episcopal Church to remain in the Apostolic Succession – the idea that you can trace back the lineage of consecration from any Bishop back through the millennia to the first Apostles. Regardless of theology, what I find important about this is remembering that we here this morning represent the most recent link in a chain of continual Christian community that leads from this September Sunday all the way back to the very beginning of the Church. And that is a comforting thought.

As I said earlier, we are beginning our Stewardship campaign and our task is a significant one. While we aren't being asked to hoist our building up onto logs and roll it to a new location, as has happened in Trinity's past, it sometimes feels a little like that. In order to finance the many existing ministries of our church, as well as our new Children, Youth, and Family ministry, we will need to increase our total pledges by 20% from last year. While that figure can sound daunting, I believe it is within our reach, I believe that our link in the chain will not be the one to fail. So, as you think about your pledge to Trinity for the coming year, I ask you to remember both the pain and the way God appeared to us for the past 18 months, to remember the long history of struggles and triumphs of Trinity, and the longer history of the Episcopal Church and the Christian Faith itself. Most of all, I want you to remember who we are, because we are Trinity and we are Stronger Together.

Thank you