

# St. Andrew's Episcopal Church of Boca Grande



Feast of All Saints  
November 1, 2020

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

As your Rector, I relish the moments of connection we have been able to create at St. Andrew's during this difficult year. Through phone calls, worship services filmed around the island, socially distanced Drive-Up Communion, garden worship (as weather permits), as well as Zoom offerings of Morning and Evening Prayer and Zoom Men's and Women's Bible Studies...we have extended the boundaries of our church; dreaming new ways and forming new spaces where we can be together. Who could have imagined pastoral visits occurring by Zoom or that I'd officiate a virtual memorial service for a parishioner's family? If anything, this year has reminded me of a central truth: St. Andrew's is not dependent on the 'brick and mortar' of our beautiful church building. Our home is built first on the foundation of Christ, and then upon the loving and generous spirits of our parishioners, stretched far and wide across the country. **Although we are apart for now, we remain one St. Andrew's family, wherever we are.**

In Psalm 84, the psalmist exclaims, "*What a beautiful home, O Lord of hosts! I've always longed to live in a place like this.*" How we have yearned for the physical space of our church these last seven months! But the psalm continues: "*Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young—a place near your altar, O Lord of hosts.*" Like the birds of the air, we also have found a way to create home together – bound by the living God in our midst, whether worshipping in houses, in person, on Zoom, YouTube or beyond. In every space, our St. Andrew's family reminds us of God's love and provision when we too feel faint.

The pandemic has required us to be more intentional in every aspect of our lives. There are so many uncertainties in the days ahead. For that reason, I invite you to be equally intentional in your commitment to support St. Andrew's Episcopal Church with a financial pledge for 2021. As we seek to create **home** together at St. Andrew's, we need you to continue the church's essential work of sacrament, mutual care, learning, and outreach with us.

*The pledges we received for 2020 have been critical in maintaining our St. Andrew's home – especially during the pandemic. The Vestry leadership and I are humbled and grateful for your support. Because of the generosity of our parishioners, we have created innovative liturgies and formation opportunities both online and in person so we can continue to be connected as a family even when we can't be together. We have also increased our support to our outreach partners - - especially in the area of food/feeding ministry. Moreover, we were able to pay all of our employees fully throughout the months of sheltering in place. Now, I ask that you make a faithful pledge, as is possible for you. The pandemic is not over yet, and we continue to require support in order to serve the*

needs of our parish and neighborhood community with imagination and abundance. To create home at St. Andrew's for all.

Please join me, the Treasurer, Wardens and Vestry, in **making a pledge before November 30<sup>th</sup> – which is our patronal feast day - the Feast of St. Andrew.** We will celebrate St. Andrew's day with a special service of music and light (Advent Lessons and Carols) and where we will consecrate the pledges received. This will be a celebration of our St. Andrew's family and home that we are creating together as we begin a new church year!

Blessings on your discernment for 2021. I'm so grateful to share a home with you at St. Andrew's.

With love and gratitude,

The Very Reverend Michelle Robertshaw, *Rector*

