



Beloved Friends,

Over the last four weeks, we've been thinking and praying together about how Christian life includes cycles of exile and return. We've given thanks for the tools that God has given us to connect even in diaspora, to be together in Spirit even when we aren't together in body.

And yet: there's one more step in the dance of Christian life.

There is exile, there is return, and then there is a third movement: being sent back out into the world for the sake of our neighbors and creation as a whole. It's being commissioned, sent for the sake of God's love and justice, God's future of hope.

Salem is a community of return, a place of homecoming. And it's also a community of sending, a place that commissions us as agents of God's love and grace, so that all may experience a sense of homecoming into God's new world of compassion, dignity, and joy.

This Sunday is Giving Sunday. Hopefully you've been praying this year's Giving Prayer by over these last weeks. Hopefully your prayers are helping to clarify how, with the Spirit's wisdom, you can contribute to the ongoing returning and sending that makes Salem who we are today, and who we'll be tomorrow.

Christianity was made for this: building bridges of homecoming and commissioning, sending and return, welcoming the stranger and being sent forth to visit the sick and imprisoned. Salem is made for it, too, as is each one of us, a child of God in the image of God. To be clear, though: we are made to do this together, offering up all our skills, our hopes, our ideas, our money, and our hearts to answer God's call.

So please submit your [electronic pledge card](#). With a past so full of grace, our future, thanks be to God, is likewise full of hope.

Thank you for your generosity and leadership — and see you Sunday!

Blessings,

Pastor Amie Odahl

Lauren Kaye  
Council President

Ali Smyser  
Generosity Chair