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*We give because we bear the name of Christ.
We give with JOY, delighted to be able to offer with outstretched hands
gifts in abundance.*

*We give in HOPE, for the gift will be blessed and multiplied – a single
seed becomes a head of wheat.*

*We give in FAITH, this blessed gift will be enough, because we bear the
name of Christ.*

February 28, 2023

Dear people of God in Algoma –

Grace and peace to you as we make our Lenten pilgrimage of faith.

On behalf of the incumbents, the wardens, and treasurers of our beloved diocese, I am writing to thank you for the many and extraordinary ways in which you have demonstrated your love for Christ in the past year, by your loving and faithful service towards the saints in your parish, and to those beyond its walls.

Everything that we have in life is a gift from God, even our very lives themselves. As such, we treasure what we have, and we tend to these gifts as God would have us do. An analogy might be to imagine that we are the stewards of God's Kingdom here on earth, including the churches to which we belong.

Stewardship is a core theological concept and is at the very heart and foundation of our lives as Christians. It is about conversion and transformation of our hearts as much as it is about budgets and income.

“When we allow ourselves to be converted – to be transformed – so that we understand that we are stewards of one another, stewards of the newcomers in our midst, stewards of our children and older members, stewards of our communities, stewards of our facilities and budgets and programs, stewards of the vision God has given us, then truly we will have become Barnabas the encourager.”

(Transforming Stewardship, C.K. Robertson)

The choices we make, then, about how and where we spend our time, where we give our money and other worldly goods, even when our lives are difficult, are theological choices. You chose to give yours to build up and strengthen the body of Christ in the world, and that has made a world of difference.

We hope we can count on your prayerful and practical support again this year.

Let us count some of the ways you have been generous with your time, talent, and financial givings:

- For your faithful attendance at services of worship on Sundays and other occasions during the week.
- For the many ways your ministry has enriched the worshipping life of our parishes through your love of song and music; your proclamation of the Word; your assistance at the Lord's Table; for teaching in child, youth or adult programs; through your ministry of hospitality and welcome as sides persons, greeters, preparing the altar, arranging flowers, and preparing online services or paper bulletins.
- For your leadership and participation in the administration of our parishes as you sat on church boards and in the wider councils of the church.
- For your desire to deepen and grow your faith by making discipleship formation a priority. outreach programs
- Through your gifts of time spent working at one of the teas, dinners, craft sales, coffee hours, and your parishes many outreach programs. For your time assisting at services in retirement homes or nursing homes. For your time spent cleaning the church, mowing the lawn, keeping the buildings in good repair, painting, and being available for any work parties that happen throughout the year – every minute is appreciated.
- Through your faithfulness in making regular financial contributions to your parish which enabled ministry to happen and ensured that bills were paid in a timely fashion. Your financial gift helped your parish leaders prepare a solid budget for the coming year. Your financial gift allowed for repairs or regular maintenance to our church buildings to happen. Your financial gift made new outreach projects – local, national, and global - possible. So many of you continued to give sacrificially to your local church and all kinds of other causes whilst living on fixed incomes at a time of escalating cost of living. Thank you.
- For your ministry of caring for the lonely, the sick, the isolated, or the bereaved by your phone calls, visits, cards and letters and flowers.
- For being warm and welcoming to newcomers, strangers and those who would never miss a Sunday in their lives.

- For staying the course even when the road seemed long and windy and the future uncertain.
- For the love you have given freely, without expecting anything in return.

For all of this and more I offer my deepest thanks,

+ Anne: Algoma

The Most Rev. Anne Germond
Archbishop of Algoma

