



October 2, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is with a heart full of gratitude that I sit down to write this letter to our Advent family. Our Stewardship verse for this year is Ephesians 2:8: *“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.”* What wonderful, amazing, and merciful news!

We love because Jesus first loved us, and we give because of what Jesus continually gives to us. Our posture in giving is a posture of gratitude for what God has done for us.

This year has been a difficult year. The long slog of COVID and the hurt within our own church drives me to my knees and makes me groan as we wait for Jesus to return and set all things to right.

However, praise God that he does not leave us alone. He gives us the Holy Spirit, he gives us the Church, and he gives us one another who worship together as the Body of Christ. More than ever, this year God has given me a heart of gratitude for our church family at the Advent. I may not see all of you every week, as you volunteer to teach Sunday School so parents may worship, or quarantine to protect others from COVID, or simply attend a different service than I do, but I take great comfort in the knowledge that you are here. I am not alone, and have the support of our church family during these difficult days.

As Emily and I consider our pledge this year, we acknowledge that all we have belongs to Jesus and that we give out of a posture of gratitude. One of the richest gifts we thank God for is each of you, our fellow Adventers, our brothers and sisters in Christ. I cannot express how grateful we are for you and what a privilege it is to worship with you. I invite each of you to join us this stewardship season in considering all that Jesus has done for us.

A pledge card is enclosed. Please take the time to pray and consider how richly God has blessed you. Then as a response for what he has already done, please return your pledge card to the Advent either in person on Stewardship Sunday (October 10), online at [AdventBirmingham.org/Give](http://AdventBirmingham.org/Give), or by mail.

Your Brother in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew Menendez".

Matthew Menendez  
Stewardship Chair