

# Stewardship Minute Testimonial

2022 Every Member Pledge Campaign  
Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill



## Accepting the Challenge of God's Call – Why I Pledge

by Kathryn Jackson Haskin

I'm Kathryn Jackson Haskin, and Matt and I came to Immanuel as newlyweds. We feel blessed to be growing in our faith here and raising our daughter in this community. There are several important reasons we chose The Episcopal Church as a faith home, even before Immanuel – we were both welcomed at the table for Communion, all genders can participate in lay and ordained ministry, LGBTQ siblings in Christ are fully welcomed, affirmed, and can serve in all aspects.

Immanuel more than checked these boxes right up front for us, but the reason this is our home are some of the elements I would have described previously as the intangibles. The feeling of community. An honest and real embrace of kids – and the sounds they bring to church services. The legit acceptance and valuing of questions from adults as an integral way to deepen faith. A lived commitment to service to others. I wasn't sure how to measure these elements, but I knew they would hook us to a church home. These are the intangibles that I now see as tangible.

As I thought about what I wanted to say related not just to why Immanuel is important to me, but why pledging our financial support through the Every Member Pledge is so important, I came across the following quotes in a book I was reading. I'll share two brief excerpts with you:

The book is *Wholehearted Faith*, the author is Rachel Held Evans. She writes in the first chapter about the way she learned about Mary, and what the story of Mary in our faith can help us learn. She writes "To understand Mary's humanity, and her central role in Jesus' story is to remind ourselves of the true miracle of the incarnation and that is the core Christian conviction that God is with us, plain old ordinary us...." She goes on a few lines later to say, "Inherent in the Incarnation is that God came to embody relationship, to remind us that is personal and interpersonal."

This idea of God with us – as personal AND interpersonal - is tied for me to why our annual pledge to this church is important. It's an annual way of me saying that God is

in community – and that my faith journey is strengthened by and inextricably tied to all of those who have been with us at Immanuel yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

In this community, I feel God's presence and I feel the challenge to be a better follower of Jesus here. My pledge is in some ways an acceptance of that challenge – that God calls us – calls me – to not just a personal relationship, but also one that is inclusive of the beautiful and messy ways that being in a community shows up. Our faith community is doing the work of living into the promise that God is with us, and I see my pledge as one way – a very tangible way – that I can invest in making sure this community is cared for to keep doing the work we are called to do.

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