

# Abundant Life

## GENEROSITY 2022

November 5, 2021

Dear Church Family,

Several months ago a song got stuck in my head, and I'm not sure why. It's called "Seasons of Love" from the musical *Rent*, and it has a catchy chorus line that sings, "Five hundred twenty-five thousand, six hundred minutes...how do you measure, measure a year?" Now, every time one of our kids asks, "How long until...?" I begin to sing, "Five hundred twenty-five thousand, six hundred minutes..." They just roll their eyes. I don't blame them.

The song goes on to imagine other ways we might measure a year: "in daylights, in sunsets, in cups of coffee, in inches, in miles, in laughter, in strife." This has me wondering, how do we measure a year around here? How about 108 Sunday morning worship services in 2021—including an amazing, outdoor Easter service at Evelyn's Park? How about 40 weekly Zoom prayer services? How about the hundreds of sandwiches that volunteers have made for homeless men and women, or maybe the thousands of pounds of food you donated to CCSC's food pantry? How about 5 baptisms, 4 professions of faith, 3 new air conditioning units, 2 virtual mission trips, and 1 historic freeze?

There are countless ways we could measure the year: the warmth and comfort of being back in-person for worship; the friendships we've kindled in small groups and bible studies; the prayers we've said for folks who are ill or grieving. In the musical, the song crescendos into a lovely thought: "How about love? Measure in love." Maybe that's the most important way to measure a year—in love. Our church is a measure of God's love in our lives, in our families, and in our neighborhood. I am so grateful for all you do to make that possible. Thank you.

As we begin our annual generosity and stewardship campaign this month, I encourage you to reflect on what you love about our church and what your giving makes possible. This year, I'm inviting you to make a commitment to be generous to the ministries of Bellaire UMC in two ways:

- **A pledge for giving in 2022.** Knowing how you plan to give helps our church leaders plan responsibly for the year ahead. If you made a pledge in 2021, prayerfully consider how God is asking you to commit in 2022. God might be asking you to continue at the same level, or God may be asking you to step up to a new level of giving. If you have never made a pledge before, this is the perfect time! The year ahead will be full of new things, new people, and new possibilities—and your giving will empower our church's ministry here at the corner of Bellaire and Newcastle. Learn more and find resources at [www.bellaireumc.org/generosity](http://www.bellaireumc.org/generosity).
- **An end-of-year, over-and-above gift to our FORWARD Campaign.** This three-year capital campaign has made possible major renovations to our campus, including the sanctuary, Welcome Center, and Fellowship Hall. Your end-of-year gift will help us finish the campaign well, carry less long-term debt on the project, and ensure a smaller burden on our 2022 Ministry Budget.

A commitment card is enclosed with this letter, and on Sunday, November 21 we will have the opportunity—in person and online—to make our commitment to God and to the ministries of Bellaire UMC as part of our morning worship services. Plan to bring your card with you as we celebrate the year that God has given us and the future that God is unfolding before us. As always, let me know if you have questions or if I can be helpful in any way.

In Christ,

Pastor Seann

I CAME THAT  
THEY MAY HAVE LIFE  
AND HAVE IT