



**FLING WIDE THE DOOR**  
Embracing All In Christ

Dear Community of Emmanuel,

It is with gratitude that I share the theme for our 2023 ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP and CAPITAL CAMPAIGN: ***Fling Wide the Door...Embracing All in Christ***. First and foremost, this is descriptive of Christ who was always flinging wide the doors by both inviting people and going to people. Christ is ***THE WELCOMING PRESENCE***, *inspiration from which our congregation draws. This good news must prevail for us to Fling Wide the Door to Embrace All in Christ!*

We live in a world where the good news of Jesus can feel closed off to people – inaccessible. As the strategic development team for this campaign reflected on our collective purpose and the goals for our communities, I found myself flipping through the hymnal. As I landed in the Advent section, the hymn, ***Fling Wide the Door*** struck me. We are in the advent of something new!

**Since 1999, when we hosted our first cottage gatherings after being called here, I have watched Emmanuel Fling Wide the Door. We are intentional. We aren't simply making room for people; we are embracing them...IN Christ... which is us living out the gospel.**

Our **ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP** sustains our worship, education, care, and outreach opportunities and needs to grow by about \$200,000 next year to keep up with salary increases, health insurance, property insurance and to add new programs.

To those without a church home, a church building can look like a fortress. But God's people are seeking belonging, healing, trust, and grace. Through our multiple worship services, faith formation, and hospitality efforts, we will grow our ability to reach and serve God's people where they are with a goal of 1,200 people in person and 1,000 people online by December 31, 2028.

To those without means, a place of means can feel unattainable. Through **Emmanuel Communities** we have started the work to ***Fling Wide the Door*** at the Park through worship and meals, but there is more to do. Through our efforts to organize and partner with other providers in the community, this Campaign will help us realize our goal of building a Mission Center that supports the basic needs of people in the community and brings them together.

Through **Emmanuel Academies** we have also started to ***Fling Wide the Door***. Our students, from around the world, who have been unable to answer God's call to ministry due to relocation and financial burdens are now being educated from within their own context to ***Fling Wide the Door*** in their own communities.

Friends of Emmanuel, as we embark together on this new Campaign, I invite you to consider the ways God has flung wide the door to embrace you through the ministry we share here. Thank you for being part of this community, this ministry, and this effort to embrace all in Christ!

With gratitude for God's grace,

Pastor Steven Wigdahl



**As we prepare for these campaigns, each week we will be sharing excerpts of *Six Steps to Joyful Giving*, written by Dr. Bob Gronlund, that remind us that generosity is a faith practice. Like prayer, study, and worship, it requires our attention.**

### **Step 1: Recognizing Your Need to Give**

It is a fundamental spiritual and psychological principle that life and its gifts are to be used and shared. Life cannot be hoarded, or it turns in upon itself and you lose it. "Whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it." (Matthew 16:25) We each have a deep inherent need to give. To give is to live!

But unfortunately, instead of focusing on our own need to give, all too often we center on the need of the church to receive. The church does seek our support, but we must remember it is God's Church and it will prosper and flourish in God's own good time whether we give to it or not. The wonder of it all is what God invites us to be a part of. God's church and to experience the joy and blessing of generosity supporting and extending its mission.

Just as a coin, Christian giving has two sides. For too long, we centered mostly on the side entitled The Need of the Church. We need to begin concentrating on the side headed My Need to Give for giving is an integral part of spiritual life and growth.