

Good morning, I'm Kathleen Dennison, and I was asked to be a witnessing steward for this year's stewardship campaign. I agreed to do so, not because I like asking people for money (I don't), but because I believe in the values, vision, and mission of St. Croix United Church, and I want to encourage each of you to join me in thinking carefully, deeply, and prayerfully about what this church means to you and how we can all support the work of the church physically, emotionally, and financially.

Pastor Clare sent the witnessing stewards some questions to ponder as we thought about the things we wanted to say. It won't surprise some of you that after pondering the questions, I chose to go a little rogue in my remarks. So I'm going to mostly talk about why it is important to me that St. Croix United Church exists and continues to exist, and I'll try to work in the stewardship theme of "Imagine" at some point.

Of course it is important to me that there is an inclusive, progressive, truly welcoming church in the St. Croix Valley. The fellowship with other members and friends through formal and informal interactions is really important to me. The expanding role we are trying to play to make things better in our local community is important. There are plenty of other things I could mention but I'm already over my word limit.

Ultimately, it is important to me that St Croix United exists because I believe we are poised to look beyond ourselves and "imagine" how we can be a fierce force for good in our wider community, and then deliver on what we imagine. This isn't easy, and it will require a significant commitment of money, time, and energy on our part, but I believe the return on that investment could be truly incredible for each of us and for the other lives we touch. As I look at my decision to support St Croix United in 2025, I will be considering what commitment I can and should make to support that. I hope you will also.

Thanks for listening.