

Dear Members and Friends of Eliot Church of Newton:

In this month of thanks giving, I am writing to ask you to join me in offering thanks for our wonderful community of faith and in praying to ask God for wisdom in our deliberations and decisions during this pivotal year for our church.

In the brief time we have been together again this fall we have welcomed the Reverend Debbi Carter and Earl Rogers into our fold, worshipped together, worked as one for a very successful Fall Fair, begun fruitful discussions about church participation and structure and future leadership needs, offered support and gifts to a Veteran single mother for her new baby, once again participated in a worship and fellowship service On the Common, inaugurated a vibrant Sunday school season, celebrated two 100th birthdays, collected more than 1,200 food items for the hungry, been cheered by our awesome confirmation class, heard glorious music during worship and additional concerts in our sanctuary, and so much more. Please remember all this with me as we count ourselves blessed.

We are adopting our stewardship theme for this year from the national UCC: Count Yourself Blessed. It feels very appropriate for our church as we deliberate thoughtfully about our many blessings as a church and use that understanding to inform renewed and better stewardship of our personal time, energy, and commitment to the missions and ministries that are most important to us. When the time comes in the spring to think about our financial contributions to support these wonderful ministries, I hope you will join me again in praying for guidance to inform your personal investments in the church we love. Beginning in January you will be hearing from individuals in our community about the ways they feel blessed in their lives and their spiritual connections to God and the Eliot community. If you would like to share your story, please contact the pastors or anyone on the Finance commission.

I have attached a modified version of a prayer by Jan Monsma from Old South Church and distributed by their Moderator, Vard Johnson, as a guide for their stewardship campaign. I invite you to use it as you pray for your own lives and those in it, for the community and world, and for Eliot Church. May thanksgiving and joy accompany your prayers as you discover all the ways that you can count yourself blessed.

With fond regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elizabeth".

Elizabeth Baker, Finance Chair