

Good morning and thank you for allowing me to take a few moments to reflect on stewardship. Before I begin, though, I had asked Daniel Ingram if I could make a few announcements of my own concerning musical events during the next couple of weeks.

Next Sunday afternoon at 4 p.m., I will have the privilege of presenting the many sounds and colors of this expertly restored pipe organ in a recital that will include in our audience more than 100 members of the American Institute of Organbuilders. The successful renovation of our beautiful pipe organ has actually quite caused quite a stir - in a positive way - among organists at organ builders in the United States. You would enjoy attending this recital since it is designed to display as many different sounds as possible on this instrument within the context of a one-hour recital program.

Also, the music committee and I take great pride in being able to host a concert by the Grammy award winning all male choral group, Chanticleer, on October 12 at 7:30 p.m. Although the title of their program "Trade Winds" would lead you to think that their concert might be somewhat limited in scope, it is actually a highly varied and entertaining program - very "Chanticleer." We hope you can attend, and we hope that you will bring your music loving friends to hear one of the world's most famous singing ensembles.

Finally, a brief announcement concerning the reason we were all sitting right here in this magnificent Sanctuary. On October 13, At our 11 o'clock worship service, we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the dedication of this grand and beautiful space. You can look forward to a service that will include the wonderful aspects of worship that River Road is all about. Our Chancel Choir and our Chancel Bell Choir are preparing inspiring worship offerings, and the accompaniments of the hymns and anthems will include brass. We look forward to seeing you as we celebrate the fulfillment of a great vision 50 years ago.

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So - here we are in this awe-inspiring Sanctuary. I still remember driving west on River Road more than 8 years ago and seeing that tall impressive spire and those welcoming church doors. I remember entering this vast room and being astounded by its grandeur and beauty. On that same afternoon, I took a tour of the entire building and stood in amazement at the size and scope of our facilities. Then, after coming to River Road as your Minister of Music, I came to appreciate the more important part of the very special church: the involvement, dedication, and commitment of the people who worshiped here - the people who study the scripture, the people who enjoy being together, the people who go to distant places (and nearby places) to help others. Over the years, I have been grateful for the opportunity to be part of a team that brings meaningful worship to those who attend and participate. I am changed by the preaching, and I hope that by noon each Sunday - you feel changed by your experience of worship.

Three years ago, shortly before Dr. Daniel Glaze began his ministry here, I asked you to make a financial commitment that would allow River Road to fulfill its staffing needs. Thankfully, we now have a superb staff of experienced, thoughtful, inspired, hard-working ministers. I feel very fortunate to work among them.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to those who made River Road Church possible. There are so many fine experiences on which to look back. Now - - it is time to look ahead. It is time to fulfill a continuing vision. Please consider making a financial commitment that will help River Road to fulfill and enhance its ministry into the future.