

**ADULT CHRISTIAN ED  
THEOLOGY THROUGH  
ART**



**JUSTICE UNITED  
SPRING MEETING**



**STAYING LIT!**

# Work of the People

## The 2024 Operating Budget Campaign

I began attending the Advocate in the spring of 2021. After a full year of passively watching worship through my TV, I found the jumpy sound of dozens of unmuted Christians praying together on Zoom completely refreshing. In July, I received an email describing how a “friendly wild beehive” from the black walnut tree had swarmed one of our doorways. The email informed us that Grace Camblos was able to contact folks who carefully remove the bees and included a half-dozen pictures of the process taken by Ernie Bowen. That “bee email” was the moment I knew for certain The Advocate was a faith community I wanted to be part of.

I have, at times, appreciated slipping in and out of a back pew during worship without anyone realizing I was there. But in this season of my life, I long to be part of a community where I am known. Where I can contribute. And where I can receive the gifts that others have to offer. This is why I am a member of the Advocate.

At the Advocate, every aspect of our common life is shared work. Our liturgy is shared work: the particular voices and bodies that show up in the chapel and on Zoom any given Sunday co-create our worship. Care for our spaces is shared work: some of us trim hedges, some wash paten and chalice, others garden. Pastoral care is shared work: we offer rides to church, provide food after surgery, send gift cards to new parents, and call to check in. And, our budget is shared work.

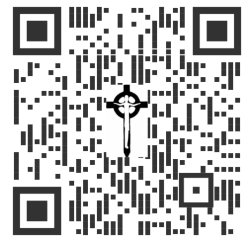
One of the most beautiful things about shared work within a faith community is that generous contribution is far more important than equal contribution. I am in a season of parenting a young child. The most generous contribution to worship I can offer right now is showing up. And I am so grateful for those who are able to offer the gifts of music, baking bread, lecturing, and preaching.

This summer, our Vicar, Marion, asked me to support the Vestry as they work to build a budget that reflects the mission and values of our church. That process is underway, and now we invite you to join in the shared work. The



**Church of the  
Advocate,  
Christmas 2022**

To make your 2024 pledge, use  
scan QR code below or go to  
[https://theadvocatechurch.org/  
support/pledge](https://theadvocatechurch.org/support/pledge)



**Pledges due by  
November 26, 2023**

yearly budget is built based on the pledges, or estimates of giving, received in October and November. We now invite you to consider how you might be called to generously contribute to the shared work of covering our expenses in 2024.

*Sarah Bentley Allred*

Dear People of the Advocate,

I write this letter on the actual day of our 20th anniversary, September 21, 2023. What an extreme privilege it is to be your vicar at this time in the life of the Advocate.

And what a time it is! Each Sunday morning when we gather for worship, formation, and fellowship, we participate in the work of the people: the liturgy. Sounds of voices together in song and prayer, sights of children running and dancing, smells of fresh communion bread and wine, the feeling of hugs and hands during the peace, the full embodiment of the body of Christ in word and sacrament, our work is of giving to God the glory that is our full selves alive.

As we reflect on the significance of liturgy, we also acknowledge the role of stewardship in sustaining the mission and ministry at the Church of the Advocate. Our financial contributions are a vital part of ensuring that the Work of the People continues to inspire, challenge, and transform lives. These contributions also support the clergy, the very limited and part-time staff, and our buildings and land.

Our time and talents are equally important in the stewardship of liturgy. By our participation, the liturgy, our work, comes into hearts, souls, and minds and becomes a living testament to our faith.

I invite you to prayerfully consider how you may be able to contribute to the Advocate's 2024 stewardship campaign. Your pledge, whether it be a one-time gift, a monthly contribution, or a commitment of your time and talents, plays a crucial role in ensuring that our work continues in Orange County, the Triangle region, and beyond.

Let us remember that our work does not end with the dismissal. The dismissal **sends us** into the world to love and serve God. Together, let us ensure that our work continues today and for the next 20 years.

Behold what you are. May we become what we receive.

*The Rev. Marion Sprott, Vicar*

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