



Planted by Streams of Water

by *Rev. Alex Shea Will*

The Psalms often compare us to animals in search of water. In the 23rd, we are the sheep who drink from calm waters. In the 42nd, we are the deer, longing for God as the deer longs for the stream. But in the 1st Psalm, something is different. We are not the animals passing from stream to stream. We are the tree, fixed in the riverside. Our roots running deep and wide, nourished by the waters of God’s mercy and love, and the collective ecosystem.

While I love the beauty of the 23rd and 42nd Psalms, the imagery of the 1st Psalm is the most moving because it is the image of life in Christian community. We do not come and go from the stream, taking only what we need, when we need it. Our roots are firmly planted, and growing deeper and stronger by the day. We not only take from the ecosystem, but we also contribute to it. We’re committed to this spot, this ecosystem - no matter the changing of the seasons.

In a culture where it is easy to pick up and look for a new stream, covenant calls us to plant something lasting. My financial generosity to the church is one way I declare that I am not merely passing by; I’m planting roots. It’s how I proclaim that I am invested in the flourishing of our riverside. It’s how I communicate that my thriving depends on our thriving.

Let us pray:

Gracious God, inspire my generosity so that my roots grow deeper and stronger. Amen.

CONSIDER YOUR PLEDGE AS A PERCENT OF YOUR MONTHLY INCOME.

Annual Income	Monthly Income	2%	3%	4%	5%	10%
16,000	1,333	27	40	53	67	133
20,000	1,667	33	50	67	83	167
25,000	2,083	42	62	83	104	208
30,000	2,500	50	75	100	125	250
35,000	2,917	58	88	117	146	292
40,000	3,333	67	100	133	167	333
45,000	3,750	75	113	150	188	375
50,000	4,167	83	125	167	208	417
60,000	5,000	100	150	200	250	500
75,000	6,250	125	188	250	313	625
100,000	8,333	167	250	333	417	833
125,000	10,417	208	313	417	521	1042

On average, Americans give 2% of their income to charity. Giving even 1% more of annual income to charity would be transformative for our congregation and other organizations doing good in our community.