



Preserving Our Legacy
First Congregational Church

Dear Members and Friends of First Church,

It was a normal Sunday morning.

I was sitting in my usual seat and all of sudden I became aware that I was surrounded by beauty: the air was filled with organ music, I could smell the fragrance of Stargazer lilies in the floral arrangements, and sunlight was filtering through the East Rose Window. I saw the faces of friends and family joining together in song. I thought to myself, **“How are we so blessed to have such beauty?”**



As we prepare to open the *Preserving Our Legacy* campaign, the Campaign Committee has often paused to reflect on the true purpose of the preservation project. Our congregation has stood on the corner of Third and Cedar since 1888, a sign and symbol that the beauty of Christian tradition is open with hospitality to all. This project is about more than the physical beauty of the historic building, although that is important; it is incumbent upon us to care for this architectural treasure as saints before us have done. We have learned that this campaign is really about sharing the *experience of faith* with future generations and new populations.

So, to answer the question: any person, from any walk of life, can walk through the large, carved doors at the corner of Third and Cedar and enter into a time and space of beauty. From the guests at the Drop in Center, the children and youth of our education programs and DAYS: Downtown Associated Youth Services, to our seniors, Sacred Practitioners, and those who gather for worship Sunday morning, our landmark historic structure is a reminder that welcoming all is both our legacy and our future.

For this profound purpose, I invite you, prayerfully and generously, to participate in the campaign.

With greatest hope,

The Rev. Elena Larssen