



Living a Legacy

What Will Remain?

A Stewardship Journey

for Sugar River United Methodist Church

October 2026

What Will Remain?

Stewardship is about much more than money. It is about how we use the life God has given us—our time, abilities, relationships, resources, and influence—to love God and our neighbors.

During these four weeks, we invite you to spend a few moments reflecting on the life you are living, what you value, the community we are building together, and the legacy we will leave for those who come after us.

Four weeks of reflection

Week of October 5

Living a Legacy

Week of October 12

Where Your Treasure Is

Week of October 19

Living Saints

Week of October 26

What Will Remain?

Living A Legacy

What does it mean to live a legacy?

Legacy Is Happening Now

Matthew 5:14-16

“You are the light of the world.... Let your light shine before others.”

When we hear the word legacy, we may think about what people will remember about us someday. But Jesus reminds us that the way we live matters right now.

Every act of kindness, every word of encouragement, every hour spent serving, every gift offered generously, and every time we choose love over indifference leaves a mark.

Most of us can probably name people who shaped our faith without ever intending to create a “legacy.” They simply lived faithfully. They taught a class, prepared a meal, welcomed someone new, gave generously, prayed for us, or showed us what following Jesus looked like.

We are doing the same thing for others.

The question isn't simply, “What will people remember about me?” It is, “What am I putting into the world today that is worth carrying forward?”

Consider

- Who has helped shape your faith or your understanding of generosity?
- What did that person do that made a lasting difference?
- What might someone learn about following Jesus by watching the way you live today?

Living A Legacy

What does it mean to live a legacy?

More Than We Leave Behind

Matthew 5:14-16

“You are the light of the world.... Let your light shine before others.”

A Christian legacy is not primarily about having our name remembered. It is about participating in something larger than ourselves.

A teacher may never know which lesson a child remembers twenty years later. A person who gives to the church may never meet the family helped by a ministry their generosity supported. Someone who helped build or maintain a church decades ago could never have known the people worshipping there today.

Yet their faithfulness continues to bear fruit.

That is one of the beautiful things about stewardship: God can use what we offer today in ways we may never see.

We don't have to accomplish something extraordinary. We are simply invited to faithfully use what God has placed in our hands.

Consider

- Where have you benefited from the generosity or faithfulness of people who came before you?
- What are you doing today that may bless someone you will never meet?
- What resources—time, abilities, relationships, or finances—might God be inviting you to use differently?

Where Your Treasure Is

What do I value?

Following the Treasure

Matthew 6:19-21

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Jesus doesn't say, “Where your heart is, your treasure will follow.” He says the opposite: where your treasure is, your heart will follow.

What we do with our resources helps shape what matters to us.

That includes money, but it also includes our time and attention. Calendars and bank statements can sometimes tell us things about our priorities that our words cannot.

This isn't meant to make us feel guilty. It is an invitation to pay attention.

Where are we already investing ourselves in things that give life, strengthen relationships, serve others, or help God's love become visible? And where might there be a disconnect between what we say matters to us and where our resources actually go?

Stewardship gives us an opportunity to bring those things closer together.

Consider

- If someone looked only at how you spend your time and resources, what might they conclude is important to you?
- Where do your current priorities reflect the person you want to be?
- Is there an area where you would like your priorities and your practices to align more closely?

Where Your Treasure Is

What do I value?

Giving as an Act of Trust

Matthew 6:19-21

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Generosity is ultimately an act of trust.

When we give something away—money, time, attention, expertise—we loosen our grip on something we could have kept for ourselves. We trust that there can still be enough.

That isn't always easy. We live in a culture that constantly reminds us of what we might lack and encourages us to accumulate more.

The Christian story invites us into a different way of living: recognizing that what we have is a gift from God and asking how those gifts can become blessings for others.

Generosity doesn't begin with an amount. It begins with gratitude and trust.

Consider

- What makes generosity easy for you? What makes it difficult?
- Where have you experienced “enough” in your life?
- How might giving be an expression of your trust in God?

Living Saints

What are we building together?

We Don't Do This Alone

Acts 2:44-47

"All who believed were together and had all things in common."

The first Christians discovered something important: following Jesus was never meant to be a solo project.

They worshiped together. Ate together. Prayed together. Shared what they had. Cared for people in need. And through that shared life, others caught a glimpse of God's kingdom.

Church still works that way.

No single person creates Sugar River's ministry. Every prayer, volunteer, musician, teacher, greeter, caregiver, financial gift, cup of coffee, committee meeting, act of service, and quiet kindness becomes part of something larger.

Much of it happens without fanfare. But together, those acts of faithfulness create a community where people can encounter God's love.

We aren't simply supporting a church organization. We are building ministry together.

Consider

- Where have you experienced God's love through the people of Sugar River?
- What ministry or part of our church's life are you especially grateful for?
- What do you contribute that helps make this community what it is?

Living Saints

What are we building together?

Saints Are Ordinary People

Acts 2:44–47

“All who believed were together and had all things in common.”

Sometimes the word saint makes us picture an extraordinary holy person.

The New Testament uses the word much more broadly. Saints are God's people—ordinary people seeking to live faithfully.

Saints show up.

They make casseroles and teach children. They sing and pray. They fix things. They give rides. They advocate for others. They welcome strangers. They give financially so ministry can happen. They make mistakes, try again, and keep following Jesus.

In other words, saints look a lot like the people sitting around us on Sunday morning.

And here's the remarkable part: God uses the ordinary faithfulness of those people to change lives.

That means God can use ours, too.

Consider

- Who are some of the “living saints” in your life?
- What ordinary act of faithfulness have you seen make an extraordinary difference?
- Where might God be inviting you to participate more fully in our shared ministry?

What Will Remain?

What will we leave for those who follow?

Surrounded by Witnesses

Hebrews 12:1-2

“Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses... let us run with perseverance the race that lies before us.”

On All Saints Sunday, we remember people who are no longer with us but whose lives continue to shape ours.

Some names may be known by an entire congregation. Others may be known only to a family or a few friends. But their love, generosity, faith, and service continue to echo in the lives of others.

Every congregation is surrounded by such a “cloud of witnesses.”

We worship in spaces others helped provide. We participate in ministries others dreamed about. We inherit traditions people carefully nurtured. We benefit from sacrifices we may never know about.

And now the baton is in our hands.

The church we leave for those who follow will be shaped by the choices we make today.

Consider

- Whose faith or generosity are you remembering with gratitude?
- What did previous generations make possible for you?
- What would you most want the next generation to inherit from our church?

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What Will Remain?

Hebrews 12:1-2

“Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses... let us run with perseverance the race that lies before us.”

At the end of our lives, very few of the things we spent our days worrying about will matter.

But love will.

Lives touched will.

Faith shared will.

People welcomed, children nurtured, neighbors served, injustices challenged, relationships healed, and communities strengthened—those things endure.

This is why stewardship matters. Our giving is one way we decide what we want to help remain.

As you consider your Estimate of Giving for the coming year, don't begin only with the question, “What can I afford?”

Begin with deeper questions:

What has God entrusted to me?

What kind of person is God calling me to become?

What kind of church are we called to build together?

And finally:

What do I want to help remain?

Consider

- What ministry of Sugar River do you especially hope will remain strong for future generations?
- Has anything changed in the way you think about generosity during these four weeks?
- As you prayerfully consider your giving for the coming year, what might God be inviting you to do?

What do I want to help remain?



Living a Legacy

“God can use what we offer today
in ways we may never see.”

Sugar River United Methodist Church

Stewardship 2026