

## Rachel Canavese – Capital Campaign Testimony – 5/10/2023

Hello, church!

I know as a **14**-year-old,  
and not even an official member of this church,

I may not be expected  
to contribute to the capital campaign.

But I just feel like I'm ready to **give back**  
after everything this church has **given me**.

My family spent time  
in many Catholic churches throughout my life.

We would...go to church every Sunday.

I would sit in those pews

and I would listen

and try –

but generally fail

to feel a strong connection to God.

And then I would go throughout my life

trying to make sure none of my peers found out that I was Catholic. (pause)

But that all changed when we came to First Church.

We discovered it during the pandemic.

But even as just glitching videos on a computer screen,

this church was something I could connect to

and regularly feel God's presence in.

Eventually, we were able to come in person  
and I discovered more and more wonderful things  
about our community every week,

and I feel like I still am!

But what I have discovered

is that these people and this **building**

is filled with amazing memories for me.

So I imagine our new building

—a replacement for a building I never experienced—

as a wonderful place full of life.

I picture me and other youth  
**running around** playing Capture the Flag.  
I imagine us **baking** cookies and serving them.  
I imagine us **talking**  
and laughing  
and singing  
and praying.

And I see it as a place  
for new people to come  
and maybe experience the same kind of transition I did.

I now look forward to Sundays.  
I sit in the pews and I take the sermons  
and the prayers into my heart  
and let them affect me.

I am proud to be Christian.  
This church has made me a happier and better person.

Which is why I am pledging  
\$200 dollars

towards this campaign.

I don't earn much money—  
just a little from  
cat sitting and  
babysitting,  
so this does feel like  
kind of a lot of money.

But I can't think of any other way I'd prefer to use it.

So...I know it may not be very much.

Maybe it'll buy us a 16th of a sink!

But I know that it *will* make a difference  
and I know that this little sacrifice  
is a start

towards giving something back to **this place**  
that has done so much for me.