

Contemplating Stewardship¹ for RLC

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Source: EaND Stewardship Team

Put "Contemplating Stewardship" in your Sunday bulletin every week! A brief reflection on stewardship following the Revised Common Lectionary readings will keep the stewardship conversation vibrant. Just cut and paste!

Contemplating Stewardship: Choose Wisely

August 5th, 2018 (Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost)

"Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures eternal life." - John 6:27

Choices are value statements. How we choose to spend our time, energy, and money is a reflection of our values. We choose, as best we are able, the things that are important to us and prioritize them over things which have less value to us. In the above verse, Jesus instructs us choose wisely, to choose that which is enduring over that which is perishing.

To choose wisely is to put God at the center of your life. To choose anything else is to choose poorly. May each of us choose wisely. May we choose life.

Contemplating Stewardship: Giving as Thanks

August 12th, 2018 (Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost)

"I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth." - Psalm 34:1

As disciples we are called to give thanks to God in all things. This is a pillar of stewardship and often where our giving to God begins. As children we learn to give through prayers of thanksgiving. These are our first offerings. As we grow we learn to give, to offer, more of ourselves. We learn to offer our energy, our passions, our resources to help share the good news with others. We know giving all we have to the Lord would pale in comparison to the gifts God has entrusted to us. This truth inspires us to thankfully and joyously give that which God has given to us.

Contemplating Stewardship: Wisdom or Folly

August 19th, 2018 (Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost)

"Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise." - Ephesians 5:15

During the first week of internship a young seminarian was told by his supervisor that she expected him to tithe. The intern laughed in response. The prospect of giving 10% seemed foolish at best, reckless at worst. "It would be far wiser to hold on to the little I have than to give so much up," he thought. The supervisor pressed upon him the wisdom of giving first to God but the intern resisted her words. As time passed, he discovered his resistance stemmed not from wisdom but a lack of trust. He did not trust God would provide and feared he would not have

¹Inspired by the "Stewardship Snippet" written by Rev. Rob Blezard, Assistant to the Bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod. Further resources available at <http://www.lss-elca.org/resources/stewardship/>

enough. This he realized was foolishness. The wise trust in the Lord and live in confidence. Fools lack trust and live in fear.

Contemplating Stewardship: Who will you serve?

August 26th, 2018 (Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost)

“Choose this day whom you will serve.” - Joshua 24:15b

Near the end of his days Joshua presented Israel with a choice; serve the Lord or the false gods of the past. It is a choice echoed in Jesus’ teaching on mammon in the Sermon on the Mount.

“No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” (Mt 6:24) It is a relevant choice for today. There is much in this world that competes for our attention and devotion, much that offers promises of wellbeing, security, and hope. The fiercest competition is from mammon. It calls the loudest. Its presence is the most pervasive and the most dominant. Those who answer its siren call will find its promises to be empty, incapable of giving the life it claims to offer. The Lord’s promises are good and true. Serve the Lord.