

## **Contemplating Stewardship<sup>1</sup> for RCL**

Just copy and paste into your bulletin!

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: A Clean Heart**

September 2nd, 2018 (Proper 17: Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Year B)

*"For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come . . ." -Mark 7:21*

Our Lord Jesus states that nothing outside of a person can defile us. Our Lord, who touched lepers and others who were considered ritualistically unclean according to human tradition, clearly informs us that it is evil intentions from the heart that defile a person. Therefore, we must ask the Lord to 'create in us a clean heart' and to 'deliver us from evil' so we may be Christ-like stewards in our relations and ministry to others and to all of creation.

### **Contemplating Stewardship: More than Sympathy**

September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018 (Proper 18: Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Year B)

*"What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works?" - James 2:14*

James is saying what good is it if you see a person over there who is suffering and you only feel sorry for that person. Feeling sorry for that person is kindness and a genuine outpouring from your faith, but you are still distant. That person is over there suffering and you here feeling fine. James is saying good works is natural progression from faith because of our love for Jesus and our trust in the wisdom of God. Good works is faith in action and is part of our calling to stewardship to alleviate suffering where we can.

### **Contemplating Stewardship: God Gives in Abundance**

September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018 (Proper 19: Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost, Year B)

*"I walk before the Lord in the land of the living." -Psalm 116:9*

Life, in all its abundance and bountifulness, is a gift of God. Everything belongs to God. Therefore, the purpose of our lives is not to make a name for ourselves and to be successful apart from God. We all walk before the Lord. All of God's gifts are for the common good. Our calling

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<sup>1</sup>Inspired 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/>

is to follow our Lord Jesus Christ who presented himself as the authentic and preeminent steward. Our calling is to be a faithful steward.

### **Contemplating Stewardship: Living for and Serving Others**

September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 (Proper 20: Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Year B)

*"Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all." -Mark 9:35b*

As a follower of Christ we take up our cross daily. A cross is not just to carry; it is not just to endure a burden; a cross is meant to die on. Living within Luther's Theology of the Cross we follow Jesus to the cross and die to ourselves. We deny ourselves and live for others. In this sense, we are co-crucified with Christ. We serve others and perhaps even die for others because Christ died for us.

### **Contemplating Stewardship: Spirit-filled Stewards**

September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018 (Proper 21: Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Year B)

*"Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you restore its saltiness? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another." -Mark 9:50*

To be at peace with one another we rely on the Holy Spirit to be our guide and guardian of our ways. In our commitment to be stewards of God's kingdom we ask the Holy Spirit to fill us with the fruit of the Spirit. In this way, our salt will not lose its saltiness and we will steward all of God's gifts through love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.