

MANAGING GOD'S ABUNDANCE

GOD'S CREATION - OUR CARE - EVERY DAY

October - Step Up

*Some give freely, yet grow all the richer;
others withhold what is due, and only suffer want.*

Proverbs 11:24 -25

Every congregation needs members who are willing to step up and do their part in carrying on the work of the Lord in this place. They give of their time and abilities, as well as their financial support.

October is a good time to examine our contributions of time and resources. Have you fallen behind in your giving? There is still time to "catch up" before the year ends. Are you not doing a task for the church you'd like to do simply because you haven't been asked to do it? Seek out the person in charge and volunteer.

It seems like every time we turn around another charity is asking us to give. We obviously can't give to them all, so it's important to choose wisely. Make a limited number of meaningful gifts rather than trying to give a pittance to every organization that asks.

***How are you managing your charitable giving? What skills or areas of knowledge do you have that would help your congregation?
Where is God inviting you to step up?***



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November - Plan

Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.

Proverbs 16:3

"Five-year plans," "strategic plans," long-term plans." If you have a business background, these are familiar terms indeed. You may dread having to put them together, but you know they are essential for success.

Planning can be just as important to our personal lives as it is to a business. Do you have a budget? Having a household budget can help immensely in managing your finances during the year. Try to estimate your major and recurring expenses - including, of course, your church contributions – in relation to your income. Then allocate the remainder to things like entertainment, vacation, and other non-essentials. But always remember a budget is a roadmap - not a straight jacket. Be prepared to make adjustments as the year progresses.

Be sure to include in your budgeting a plan to reduce debt - especially credit card debt. Finances become much easier if we can pay credit card bills in full each month.

Do you have a will? Is it up-to-date? Good financial planning sometimes requires the help of professionals - either a lawyer or a financial planner. Choose one with care.



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December - Celebrate

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

Philippians 4:4

CELEBRATE - VERB

1. publicly acknowledge (a significant or happy day or event) with a social gathering or enjoyable activity:
"they were celebrating their wedding anniversary at a restaurant" ·
2. perform (a religious ceremony) publicly and duly, in particular officiate at (the Eucharist):
"He celebrated holy communion"
3. honor or praise publicly:
"a film celebrating the actor's career"

We who live in the United States have much to be thankful for and to celebrate. Compared to many parts of the world we are unimaginably wealthy. One way to celebrate these blessings is to share them joyfully.

Have you ever thought about tithing - giving ten percent of your income to church? If you ever thought about it, you may have concluded that you could never manage to do it. Here's an easy way to test your ability to tithe. Try tithing for the four Sundays of Advent. You might surprise yourself to find you can actually do it. Then pray about doing it regularly.

How might you celebrate your blessings this month – give gifts to the needy, visit shut-ins, give an animal gift through the ELCA Gifts Program? Celebrate God's greatest gift to us - Jesus Christ!



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