

Stewardship Witness by Ged Youngman
St. Philip's Episcopal Church
Rochester Michigan
October 17, 2021

Good morning! Most of you know me, but for newcomers, I'm Ged Youngman & I'm married to my dear husband, Alan who is in the choir.

I've been asked to share my ideas on Stewardship.

Jesus has always been my best friend as long as I remember.

In post war England I grew up in a happy family of 5 kids, I was #4. We lived in a small village in Essex, called Bowers Gifford. It has an old Norman church- St. Margaret of Antioch, where I learnt to be a devout little Anglo Catholic with all the smells & bells! I went to the Parochial school til I was 11, then to William Palmer's Endowed Grammar School for Girls.

The Village was a close community, all centered around Parish events. The Church was a big part of my life- Sunday Mass at 11am and Evensong at 6:30pm. Receiving the Eucharist weekly was and is very important to me. I feel it gives me the strength & power to be an agent of God's love. We are God's hands & feet to reach out in our environments and make a difference.

At 18 I did my pediatric nursing training, then a post graduate training in midwifery. In those years I wasn't attending Church regularly, but the hospital with so many sick children became my community.

I've had my share of mountain top & valley experiences, both in the years I was nursing and in the rest of my life. There have been times when I have questioned, especially seeing very sick children suffer, but I've learnt to let go & let God, so have come to have faith in the presence of the Holy Spirit to support & encourage me.

Alan and I are grateful for this Parish family of St. Philips-this is our extended family where we can feel loved & accepted, as we come each week to break bread together. This empowers us to feel God's love.

Jesus told us He would always be with us, and we see Him in our congregation. We can be His hands and feet as we reach out to invite others to come worship with us.

Throughout the pandemic we have been faithful- that's true Stewardship.

When we realized we were unable to host the South Oakland Shelter during the pandemic, we still found a way to feed the needy - not 30 mouths, but 85! Now with the holiday season approaching we will fill baskets to distribute to those in need! We are agents of His love! That's our Action in outreach.

We are also called to action in Inreach, addressing the concerns of each other at St. Philips. We practice good stewardship when we take a meal to a deserving family, or pray for those who are sick, in grief or suffering in a broken relationship. The ECW has hosted many funeral lunches - a ministry that has been so appreciated.

By being a peacemaking, healing community, we are sharing the love of Christ.

As a lay minister, I feel called to be the Church & to celebrate God's presence, respecting creation & understanding the need to be vaccinated so that this Church community can be safe and quickly return to closer fellowship in our coffee hour.

As we love and serve others in need, we can be affirmed that we are good stewards in the Episcopal Church where we seek justice & know that God loves each of us -No exceptions!
For me, Stewardship means putting God first.

The Church needs my time, talent, and treasure.

Throughout my life in the USA where I have lived for 53 years, have raised 4 children & have 11 grandchildren. I'm a big advocate of lay ministry. I have been able to use my gifts of nurturing, both with my own family & in several families, some with autistic children.

Now, in my retirement, I feel that God has directed my journey to a ministry amongst the elderly. I can offer my gifts of time & nursing skills where needed.

For many years I was privileged to be part of the Cursillo community where I heard many witnesses of God's grace & love. My Cursillo cross is engraved with the words- God is counting on you- my response-And I on Him

St Teresa of Avila wrote:

Yours are the eyes with which He looks compassion on this world.

Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

May this year's Stewardship campaign inspire each of us to be grateful and offer our time, talent, and treasure to our church so that together we can grow in Christ's love.