**Your Stewardship Toolkit for June 2024!**

*May’s theme:* **Your Congregation’s Best Assets**

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*If you want the free Toolkit sent directly to your inbox every month,* *just drop me an email**.
Feel free to forward it to colleagues who might find it useful.*

Consistent communication, education and action can help your congregation develop a healthy culture of stewardship and generosity. This Toolkit can help get you there!

Here’s what you’ll find in the Toolkit:

[**-Snippets:**](#Snippets) Cut and paste a monthly themed “Stewardship Snippet” in every Sunday bulletin! It’s a verse or two from the week’s Revised Common Lectionary lessons, followed by a brief reflection.

[**-Newsletter Article:**](#Newsletter_Article) Cut and paste a fresh article on stewardship every month in your newsletter.

[**-General Resource Websites**:](#websites) – These are places you can go for great ideas to jump start your stewardship ministry!

**Stewardship Snippets**

*Copy and paste into your bulletin!
Source: Rob Blezard.*

**June 2: Proper 4, Second Sunday after Pentecost, Year B**

**Deuteronomy 5:12 –** Observe the Sabbath day and keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you.
*Do you need a break? In today’s nonstop, 24/7 world, we need Deuteronomy’s reminder that God actually commands us to stop working one day a week. Sabbath literally means “stop.” Good stewards maintain a good work/life balance. What would a “Holy stoppage” look like for you?*

**June 9: Proper 5, Third Sunday after Pentecost, Year B**

**Mark 3:21 –** When his [Jesus’] family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, ‘He has gone out of his mind.’
*Do people always understand your passionate decision to follow Jesus -- to turn your back on the world’s hatred, greed, lust, warmongering? The holy path can seem downright crazy to others, but the path of steward/discipleship leads us into God’s Realm.*

**June 16: Proper 6, Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, Year B**

*“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new.” – 2 Corinthians 5:17*Embracing the holy things of God, we are all new creations, changed for the better in a wide variety of ways. We see the world anew, through spiritual eyes of love, and relate with a heart of generosity and mercy. How is God re-creating you?

**June 23: Proper 7, Fifth Sunday after Pentecost, Year B***We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you. There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours. In return—I speak as to children—open wide your hearts also.”* *–* 2 Corinthians 6:11-13
The give-and-take of relationships rarely stays continually in perfect 50/50 balance, but rather shifts constantly. Sometimes we give more, and sometimes we need more from others. But in healthy, holy relationships, it balances out in the long run.

**June 30: Proper 8, Sixth Sunday after Pentecost, Year B**

*“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”* – Lamentations 3:22-33
Think of a sunrise. There’s one every day, yet each is imbued with its own unique beauty and freshness. So it is with the holy blessings of God. They will never end, but we will always look on them with new appreciation, worship and gratitude.

**June 2021 newsletter article** (287 words)

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**Your Congregation’s Best Assets**

Some time ago, I met with leaders from struggling congregations who wanted insight on how they could grow. The main event was an “asset mapping” workshop to help them identify the resources their congregation already had to invigorate its mission.

So, I’ll put the question to you that I put to them: What assets does your congregation have, and why are they important to complete your work?

The teams from the congregations worked diligently and then presented lists that were remarkably similar:

* Money in the bank and investments
* Talented, motivated congregants
* Solid physical plant and/or property
* Good location
* Talented choir, band, or musicians
* Good pastor and/or lay leadership

Bravo! These are certainly assets that can be used to turn things around at every congregation.

More notable were the assets that all of the teams *neglected* to mention. They included:

* God the Father/Creator
* God the Son/Savior
* God the Holy Spirit/Sanctifier
* The Bible
* The Sacrament of Baptism
* The Sacrament of Eucharist
* The Word of God

What’s wrong? The teams were looking at their congregation from a business model. Their lists would probably compare with those of restaurants or social clubs.

Of course, all of the congregations actually did possess the elements of the second list. The problem was that none of the team members readily saw these sacred, holy assets as useful in accomplishing their mission and making their congregation strong again.

Is it any reason why they were struggling? What attitudes would they have to change in order to turn things around?

How is your congregation doing?

*--Rob Blezard*

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**General Stewardship Resource Websites**

[**Stewardship of Life Institute**](http://www.stewardshipoflife.org/)– Headquartered at United Lutheran Seminary, this site has a trove of resources in areas of congregational and personal stewardship. ([www.stewardshipoflife.org](http://www.stewardshipoflife.org))

[**ELCA Stewardship Resources**](http://elca.org/stewardship)– Our denomination’s deep well of materials. ([www.elca.org/stewardship](http://www.elca.org/stewardship))

[**Center for Stewardship Leaders**](http://faithlead.luthersem.edu/stewardship/) – Luther Seminary’s excellent website. ([faithlead.luthersem.edu/stewardship/](http://faithlead.luthersem.edu/stewardship/))

[**The ELCA Foundation**](https://www.elca.org/give/elca-foundation) a ministry of our denomination. ([www.elca.org/give/elca-foundation](http://www.elca.org/give/elca-foundation))

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