**Your Stewardship Toolkit for January 2025!**

*December’s theme:* **Commit to a tithe in 2025**

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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.*

**January 5, 2025** (2nd Sunday After Christmas, Year C)

**John 1:1-4 –** “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.”
*Paul reminds us that as steward/disciples of Jesus, we know that our most valuable assets don’t show up on our bank statements. We have treasure in heaven. This helps to break our attachment to worldly wealth and to be more generous.*

**January 6, 2025** (Epiphany of Our Lord, Year C)

**Matthew 2:11 –** On entering the house, the Magi saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

*After traveling far to visit Jesus, the Wise Men made an offering of precious gifts. Today we respond to Jesus’ love by giving our hearts and minds to him, but also offerings from our own treasure chests.*

**January 12, 2025** (Baptism of the Lord, Year C)

**Isaiah 43:1:** Thus says the LORD: … Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.
*When we think of generosity, we remember that God was first generous to us, redeeming and claiming us as God’s own children. We do not fear to be generous because we are God’s, and we trust in the Almighty One.*

**January 19, 2025** (2ndSunday after the Epiphany, Year C)

**1 Corinthians 12:4-6:** Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.

*God has blessed each of us with special gifts and talents for us to use for the benefit of our neighbor and community. What gift has God given you, and how can you be generous with it?*

**January 26, 2025** (3rd Sunday after the Epiphany, Year C)

**Psalm 19:9b, 10:** The ordinances of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey.

*Stewardship is all about priorities and values. What do we prize above all else? Generous steward/disciples value the teachings of God that guide us to fulfilled lives.*

**January 2025 newsletter article** (309 words)

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Commit to a tithe in 2025

*“Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing.”* **-Malachi 3:10**

Not everybody can tithe, and not everybody necessarily should tithe – that is, to give 10 percent of their income to God. But there are many who could and probably should. It would benefit them and God’s work.

For centuries, tithing has been a biblical benchmark for faithful giving. Through the prophet Malachi, God goes so far as to challenge faithful people to “put me to the test” by tithing, to then receive overflowing blessings.

Though any suggestion is to be avoided that tithing is a way to get rich, as the “prosperity gospel” preachers assert, longtime tithers say they have experienced God’s blessings as contentment, joy-in-giving, and sufficiency. I myself have been a tither for more than 20 years. It continues to be a source of strength.

For most people, tithing represents an impossible sudden jump in giving. If that’s your situation, you could commit to a tithe in 2025, then work up to it over the years. How? Here are some steps:

Calculate the percentage of your income that you gave to the church in 2024. (Start with after-tax income. Down the road you can always jump to tithing gross income.)

For 2025, increase giving by 1 percent, 2 percent … or whatever you’re comfortable with.

Then, every year increase by another 1 percent. Eventually, you’ll be at a tithe for your after-tax income. If it is a good experience, continue until you have tithed your gross income.

But the important step is the first one: Commit to tithing. You and your congregation will be blessed for it.

*--Robert Blezard*

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[Click here](https://thestewardshipguy.com/about-me/) for a complete and up-to-date bio for Pastor Blezard.

**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))

[The Episcopal Ministry for Stewardship](https://www.tens.org/) – Lots of good material. (<https://www.tens.org/>)

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