



Genesis 1:1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

2 Cor. 9:7-8 Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

1 John 3:16-18 By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

The Stewardship Life Campaign “**Building On The Cornerstone**” is underway at St. Peter! During this exciting time in our history, it seems right to dive a little deeper into what exactly stewardship means. To some, the mention of the word causes anxiety as it is sometimes misunderstood to be limited to giving more or fundraising, and that can be an uncomfortable topic within the church. However, the following definition of Christian stewardship has been used in our church body for decades:

“Christian stewardship is the free and joyous activity of the child of God and God’s family, the church, in managing all of life and life’s resources for God’s purposes.”

So, calling this a “Stewardship Life” campaign is very appropriate, as we focus on all areas of our lives and just how true Christian stewardship fits into everything we do, everything we have, and how we use those gifts to the benefit of our Lord’s ministry, our family, our neighbors and society at large.

While it has been a while since we had a dedicated effort to raise awareness of stewardship, it is not difficult to find many references to it in the Divine Service and Lutheran hymnody. For many years at St. Peter, we used the first two verses of the hymn “We Give Thee But Thine Own” (LSB 781) (LW 405) (TLH 441) as the Offertory. For many, the words came so automatically each week, we might not realize how well it defines true Christian stewardship.

*1 We give Thee but Thine own, Whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is Thine alone, A trust, O Lord, from Thee.*

*2 May we Thy bounties thus, As stewards true receive
And gladly, as Thou blessest us, To Thee our first-fruits give!*

Everything was created by God (*Gen 1:1*), and thus God is the owner of everything. All things are His; we have nothing. He created us, and we are His. He gives us everything we have as a trust, making us stewards of His blessings. He gives us these gifts to meet our every need and those of our family and neighbor, as well as to further His kingdom. As thanks for His gracious bounty, we should gladly share. The first portion, even before meeting our own needs, should be given back as a thank offering. This should be done gladly, not out of a sense of duty or compulsion (*2 Cor. 9:7-8*) Two simple hymn verses so wonderfully define our role as stewards!

In the coming weeks, we will explore how stewardship fits into every aspect of our lives and how much benefit there is to gain from not just “giving” but **living** as true Christian stewards. As God’s children, we have the privilege of hearing the Word, receiving the Sacrament and sharing this good news with the rest of the world. We also have a loving Father in heaven to whom we can bring our petitions, as well as raise our voices in thanks and praise. During this campaign, one of our strongest tools is prayer, and we would ask that you continue to pray for our church to strengthen and grow the ministry that began at St. Peter in 1880 and continues today, building on the vision and faith of the generations who came before us.

To God be the Glory!

Prayer: Almighty God, all that we possess is from Your loving hand. Give us grace that we may honor you with all we own, always remembering the account we must one day give to Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen