**Your Stewardship Toolkit for January 2022!**

*January’s theme:* ***‘2022: Your year for generosity’***

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Good, thoughtful, consistent communication, education and action will help your congregation develop a healthy culture of stewardship and generosity. This kit is designed to help get you there!

You can use the resources of this kit by themselves to educate and encourage stewardship, but they would be more effective as a monthly emphasis that lifted up a different aspect of stewardship. You could plan bible studies, temple talks, a preaching series, and other activities.

Here’s what you’ll find below:

**-Stewardship Snippets:** Put a “Stewardship Snippet” every week in your Sunday bulletin! It’s a quote from the week’s Revised Common Lectionary lessons, followed by a brief reflection. Just cut and paste!

**-Newsletter Article:** Publish something in your newsletter every month on stewardship and faith or post it on your website. Keep your people thinking about stewardship. Just cut and paste!

**-General Resource Websites:** These are places you can go for inspiration and great ideas!

**Stewardship Snippets**

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

***Stewardship Snippet***

**January 2, 2022** (2nd Sunday After Christmas, Year C)

**Genesis 1:1-2:** “In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.”

*Where do we come from? Where did anything come from? These first two verses of the whole Bible remind us that God created all that was, all that is, and all that will be. God made it all, even us, and everything belongs to God. That’s the first rule of stewardship.*

**January 9, 2022** (Baptism of the Lord, Year C)

**Isaiah 43:1-7:** 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 16, 2021** (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 23, 2021** (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 30, 2021** (4th Sunday after the Epiphany)

**1 Corinthians 13:4-7:** Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

*This passage provides a good roadmap of how to be generous stewards of our loving relationships. Read this over again, memorize it, print it out. Live it!*

***January 2022 Newsletter article*** (271 words)

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2022: Your year for generosity

*“You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity!”* **-2 Corinthians 9:11**

As you make resolutions and set goals for the New Year, be sure to include this one: “I will be more generous in 2022.” It will bless you – and your community and neighbor!

The Bible makes clear that generosity leads to a more abundant life. Generous people experience one of those paradoxes of the Kingdom of God, where the last are first, the greatest is servant to all, and whoever loses her life for Christ will gain it.

The paradox? Generous people get back far more they give.

First, a clarification: The paradox is NOT a financial strategy to maximize return on investment. That would be missing the point. Besides, there are more important things to give than money, such as time, service, kindness, forgiveness, compassion, love, and joy. And what we get back may not be quantifiable. How do you measure wellbeing and happiness?

Generosity’s real “payback” is what and who we become when we cultivate a habit of giving. Giving transforms us into generous-hearted people, and generous-hearted people tend to experience a real abundance of joy, peace, love, and security.

The old saying is most certainly true: The open palm holds more than the closed fist.

For 2022, set a goal to be more generous. Start by increasing your charitable giving above last year’s offering, but also aim to give away your time, to serve your neighbor, to be lavish in compassion, extravagant in love.

Pray that God will guide you and help you experience the paradox: Givers get back more than they give away.

*--Rob Blezard*

*Copyright © 2022, Rev. Robert Blezard. Pastor Blezard serves as pastor of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, MD, and works as content editor for* [*www.stewardshipoflife.org*](http://www.stewardshipoflife.org)*. He blogs at* [*www.thestewardshipguy.com*](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Crblezard%5CAppData%5CSharron%5CDownloads%5Cwww.thestewardshipguy.com).

**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 Network for Stewardship**](https://www.tens.org/) – Solid resources! ([www.tens.org/](http://www.tens.org/)).

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