**Your Stewardship Toolkit for May 2023!**

*January’s message:* **Thank God for our families**

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Check out my website: [thestewardshipguy.com](https://www.thestewardshipguy.com)

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*

**May 7, 2023** (Fifth Sunday of Easter, Year A)

**1 Peter 2:9 -** But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

*God pours blessings upon people of faith, and there are expectations. Peter reminds us that we belong to God and are called to proclaim the good news and work for justice, peace, and mercy.*

**May 14, 2023** (Sixth Sunday of Easter, Year A)

**John 14:15** - “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”

*Jesus connects love to action in today’s gospel. Loving Jesus means loving God and neighbor and following the way of Christ. And as we do, the Spirit of truth guides us and helps us be better stewards of God’s abundance.*

**May 21, 2023** (Seventh Sunday of Easter, Year A)

“When he had said this, as they were watching, Jesus was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven?’ " **–Acts 1:9-11**

*The men who watch Jesus ascend needed to be told to stop staring at heaven, to get busy in the world that needs Jesus’ gospel. Many today need to stop “staring at heaven” and focus on the work God has for us in the world, which still needs god’s love.*

**May 28, 2023** (Day of Pentecost, Year A)

**1 Corinthians 12:13** - For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

*Paul presents us with God’s vision for the people of God. As God’s church, how can we work toward one unified body, all people welcome and affirmed, with the Holy Spirit activating our faith and equipping us to be better stewards of all God’s gifts?*

**Newsletter article – May 2023** (230 words)

*Select the one below, or from the* [*Toolkit Newsletter Article Archive*](https://thestewardshipguy.com/newsletter-articles/)*.*

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***Thank God for our families***

*[Jesus was dying on the cross.] When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.” Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.”* **-John 19:26-27**

This month we celebrate the mothers and mother figures, and then in June we celebrate our fathers and father figures. What a wonderful opportunity to honor the strong bond between parents and children. How strong? The first use of the word “love” in the Bible, Genesis 22:2, describes the connection between Abraham and his son, Isaac.

Family is a cherished gift from God that we are entrusted to treasure, love and nourish. As parents, we are responsible for raising children to become healthy adults. And as children, we are responsible for caring for our aging parents.

As Jesus indicates in the passage above, there need not be a blood connection for a parent-child relationship. In Matthew 12:46-50, Jesus redefines family, saying that all who love and follow him are mothers, brothers, sisters, fathers. So, all of us are parent, child and sibling to one another. Now THAT’S some family!

As we honor the mother and father figures this spring, we can also challenge ourselves to be better stewards of the family bonds God has given us. We can explore how we can support families in our personal circles, our congregation and community – especially families that are troubled by great need, crises or dysfunction.

God ordained families to be the fundamental unit of human life. We can be good stewards of family relationships by caring for one another and helping everyone to grow into the faith family God intends.

*--Rob 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))

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

[**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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