



Taking Stewardship, a Step Further

In the last stewardship article, I wrote about owner's vs stewards and how we are called to be good stewards of everything that God has entrusted to us. This includes our time, talents, the Gospel, our bodies, money and all other fruits of His love that He freely gives.

Let's go a step further this month and think about OUR roles as good stewards. What does this mean for you and me, right here and right now at Trinity and in Sumter?

Stewardship is a way of life. It is much more than a conversation or campaign about money; it is a measure of our faith and the way we respond to a covenant between us and God. When we discover and follow God's plan for our lives and our church we will be rich in good works and not only resources and things that do not really belong to us.

To quote our Bishop, Jonathon Holston, at Annual Conference this year "the church is not here for our entertainment and pleasure, it exists for God's purpose". The purpose of the church is to worship and glorify God, to make disciples for the furthering of His kingdom and to care for one another in the power of His presence.

We all have different amounts of the various gifts we are given but we are ALL called to use what we do have for His purpose. Perhaps God has blessed us so richly because He will use us, through what He's entrusted to us and by our faith, to do something about suffering in our community or in the world.

Are we ready?

Are we growing in faith, listening for His call and praying constantly?

Do we trust Him completely to supply everything we need to do just that?

What can we do?

- Pray for God's direction for your life and in the lives of those around you and hold each other accountable.
- Pray for the long range planning that is taking place at Trinity in order to know God's will and purpose for our church.
- Be present and willing. Give freely and generously. Trust Him completely.

***Let us give ourselves and our resources to God and allow
His Spirit in us to give Himself to others!***

God's peace, Paula

Covenant Discipleship Small Group Ministry

Matthew 7:24-27 says: *Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew against the house and it fell - and great was its fall!*

In Christ-centered congregations members who hear the words of Jesus are equipped to act upon joyful obedience, and they in turn lead others to do the same. Covenant Discipleship groups provide the foundation needed for a congregation to live out its mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Discipleship is a journey. It is a deeply personal experience of self-discovery, struggle, service and growth. While it is personal, the journey of discipleship is not private. Disciples do not walk alone; nor do they walk with Christ alone. As disciples we walk with Christ as well as others who have chosen this spiritual journey.

Discipleship requires listening, discipline, accountability and support. Because we are created in the image of God and called to discipleship at our baptism, we are all given the same gift: the capacity to give and receive love. The goal of covenant discipleship is to develop this gift to its fullest capacity by weekly mutual accountability and support for following and witnessing to Christ Jesus in the world. Habitual practice of acts of compassion, justice, worship and devotion opens the heart and mind to Christ's love for the world.

Stay tuned for more information on how to become a member of a group that will start in the Fall.

If you are in a leadership position in the church, please strongly consider joining a small group as we set out to build on the foundation and spiritual formation of our church focused on the solid rock of Jesus Christ through discipleship with one another.

Please contact Paula Stover at pjstover.1121@gmail.com if you have input or questions. Both are welcomed.

