

Your Stewardship Toolkit for June 2021!

May's theme: **Stewarding Our Relationships: Rehab, Renew, Repair**

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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!

The resources of this Toolkit are most effective when used to support a monthly emphasis about a different aspect of stewardship. Exploring this month's theme, "Stewarding Our Relationships," your congregation might not only share the newsletter article but also plan Bible studies, temple talks, a preaching series, or other activities.

Here's what you'll find in the Toolkit:

- 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:** Cut and paste a fresh article on stewardship every month in your newsletter.
- General Resource 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.

Second Sunday after Pentecost, June 6, 2021

And looking at those who sat around him, [Jesus] said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.' – Mark 3:34-35

When God gives us opportunities to forge new relationships, whether within and outside of our church and family circles, take the time to cultivate and tend them. We can take the cue from Jesus, who was always expanding his circle of friends and family.

Third Sunday after Pentecost, June 13, 2021

"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new." – 2 Corinthians 5:17

As we emerge from our Covid cocoons, we are all new creations, changed in a variety of ways. In addition to renewing existing relationships, we can look for new ones that will help us deepen our faith walk, challenge our biases and prejudices, and love our neighbor.

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, June 20, 2021

“We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you. There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours. In return—I speak as to children—open wide your hearts also.” – 2 Corinthians 6:11-13

The give-and-take of relationships rarely stays in perfect 50/50 balance, but rather shifts constantly. Sometimes we give more, and sometimes we need more from others. How do you see your relationships playing out in this post-Covid world? Are you willing to be more flexible?

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost, June 27, 2021

“But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth.” – Mark 5:33

Jesus was walking through a crowd when a sick woman, without asking first, touched him to be healed. When she was discovered, instead of a rebuke Jesus offers her love. How wonderful when we, too, can find strength and love to meet the needs of others in our daily lives.

June 2021 newsletter article (287 words)

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Stewarding Our Relationships: Rehab, Renew and Repair

Doctors order rehabilitation – intensive exercises and therapy -- for patients to regain muscle strength and flexibility after a serious illness or injury.

The time is right for us to use the same approach for our friendships and family relationships after Covid-19. The worst seems over now that the vaccines are percolating through our nation, and we are entering the summer, when it is comfortable to gather in the relative safety of the outdoors.

It will take serious rehab to repair and renew the friendships and family relationships that Covid-19 forced us to neglect. Hunkered down in our homes for safety, we ceased gathering for friendship, fellowship and recreation – the very activities that keep relationships strong. Churches put worship and social gatherings on hold.

The pandemic's impact on relationships wielded a double whammy: It left us stressed and needing friends at the very time that Covid-19 prevented us from tending to our relationships. It has left us disconnected and hurting.

Keeping in mind that the Covid-19 risk is diminished but not gone, as summer unfolds, you can look for safe ways to rehab, renew and repair your relationships.

Reach out: Go through your list of friends and contact them by phone, email, text – whatever's best. Tell them you missed them and want to get together.

Make plans: Don't put it off. Be creative and find safe ways to get together. Outdoors is safer. Backyard barbecues, coffee at a sidewalk café, a walk, a game of bocce, iced tea on the porch. It's all good.

Every little step you take will help your relationship "muscles" to get stronger, and in the process you'll become healthier as the love, support and joy of friends and family flows into your heart.

--Rob Blezard

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General Stewardship Resource Websites

Stewardship of Life Institute– Headquartered at United Lutheran Seminary, this site has a trove of resources in areas of congregational and personal stewardship. (www.stewardshipoflife.org)

ELCA Stewardship Resources– Our denomination’s deep well of materials. (www.elca.org/stewardship)

Center for Stewardship Leaders – Luther Seminary’s excellent website. (faithlead.luthersem.edu/stewardship/)

The ELCA Foundation a ministry of our denomination. (www.elca.org/give/elca-foundation)

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