

Your Stewardship Toolkit for December 2021!

December's theme: *'It's the thought that counts'*

Rev. Rob Blezard, Web Editor

The Stewardship of Life Institute

editor@stewardshipoflife.org

Check out my website: 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

Stewardship Snippet

Dec. 5, 2021 (2nd Sunday of Advent, Year C)

Philippians 1:9-11 –And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Love is the theme for the Second Sunday in Advent. When we cultivate love in our lives as steward/disciples, it does overflow and guide our lives on the paths of strength and joy.

Stewardship Snippet

Dec. 12, 2021 (3rd Sunday of Advent, Year C)

Philippians 4:4 –Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, Rejoice.

Joy is the theme for the third Sunday of Advent. Philippians reminds us to rejoice – to find the joy – in God. Always! Though we live in a world that has many troubles, we can always find joy, in God’s love. Joy is a way of life for steward/disciples.

Stewardship Snippet

Dec. 19, 2021 (4th Sunday of Advent, Year C)

Micah 5:4—And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace.

Peace is the theme for the fourth Sunday of Advent. We remember that Jesus is, as Micah says, “the one of peace,” the shepherd who cares for us, his flock. Steward/disciples draw near to Jesus and find peace in him.

Stewardship Snippet

Dec. 24, 2021 (Nativity of Our Lord, Year C)

Titus 2:11, 12 —For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly.

It requires some readjustment to live fully as steward/disciples. Through Jesus we find strength. As we more fully turn to Jesus, our eyes clear, our minds brighten, and we find it easier to turn from worldly desires and values to the joy and simplicity of life in Christ.

Dec. 26, 2021 (1st Sunday after Christmas, Year C)

Colossians 3:12, 14 —As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

We all know that stewardship is about how we live so that we love God thoroughly and our neighbor as ourselves. This remarkable passage gives us a vivid image to help us get there. Wake each day and clothe ourselves in Christian character and love.

Newsletter article

Select the one below, or from the [Toolkit Newsletter Article Archive](#)

Reprint permission is granted for local congregational use. Just copy and paste into your newsletter!

Please include the copyright notice. Other uses please inquire: editor@thestewardshipoflife.org.

‘It’s the thought that counts’

Jesus said, “Give, and it will be given to you.” -Luke 6:38

Why is it so hard to find that all-too-elusive “perfect gift” for the loved ones in your life? For many of us, it’s because they already have everything they need and most of what they want.

It sometimes feels impossible to find a gift that won’t be banished to that closet for unwanted, unneeded, and unused presents -- alongside the loud ties, the strong perfumes, the unread books, and the garish sweaters.

When it comes to gift-giving, it’s often said, “It’s the thought that counts.” If that’s true, why do we still put so much emphasis on the gift?

This year focus on the thoughts behind your Christmas gifts. Thoughts in keeping with the season. Thoughts of meeting real needs and giving where it will be much appreciated. With so many disadvantaged people in the world, at least some of our Christmas budget would be well spent helping our needy neighbors.

If you are buying for a loved one who has everything, consider instead giving a monetary donation in their honor to a worthy charity that helps the poor. Some charities, such as Heifer International and ELCA Good Gifts, let you buy a specific item – such as a goat or pig for a family, or a water well for a village – to help people in the developing world.

Make the gift in your loved one’s name or honor, and then describe it in a card attached to a low-cost “token” gift, such as a small box of chocolates or a bottle of wine. The better part of your gift will go to someone who truly needs it, and your loved one will share the joy of loving and helping your neighbors in need.

Just remember, ‘It’s the thought that counts!’

Copyright © 2021, Rev. Robert Blezard. Pastor Blezard serves as pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, MD, and works as content editor for www.stewardshipoflife.org. He blogs at www.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)

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

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

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

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

-end-