

Your Stewardship Toolkit for May 2022!

This month's theme: **Get rid of 'all the crap'**

Rev. Rob Blezard, Web Content Editor

Stewardship of Life Institute

Rob@stewardshipoflife.org



Good, thoughtful, consistent communication, education and action can help develop a healthy culture of stewardship and generosity in your congregation. 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 about a different aspect of stewardship. You could plan bible studies, temple talks, a preaching series, and other activities.

This month's emphasis is **Getting rid of 'all the crap'**

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 great ideas!

Stewardship Snippets

Copy and paste into your bulletin!

Source: Rob Blezard

Stewardship Snippet

May 1, 2022 (Third Sunday of Easter, Year C)

John 21:12a – Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast."

There's nothing like gathering for a meal to build community. Jesus hosted meals to reassure his disciples of his love and presence. Notice that Jesus' meals are always relational, not transactional. Fostering community through table fellowship and conversation helps us see the Christ in one another's faces. Who are you inviting to the table?

Stewardship Snippet

May 8, 2022 (Fourth Sunday of Easter, Year C)

Acts 9:36 – Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity.

Never underestimate the power of one person to make a difference in our church and the world. Tabitha

touched people with good works, including making clothes for others. How are you using your God-given talents for the sake of others?

Stewardship Snippet

May 15, 2022 (Fifth Sunday of Easter, Year C)

John 13:34-35 – I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.

Cultivating safe space where love is the language and there's room at the table for everyone should be a guiding principle for steward-disciples. After all, Jesus commands it. What would it take for our congregation to become known as "the love church"?

Stewardship Snippet

May 22, 2022 (Sixth Sunday of Easter, Year C)

Acts 16:15 – When Lydia and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home."

Hospitality and community go hand in hand. God opens Lydia's heart, and she opens her home to Paul and his companions. How can we show a wide welcome in our worshiping communities and to the neighborhoods around us?

Stewardship Snippet

May 29, 2022 (Seventh Sunday of Easter, Year C)

John 17:26—I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.

The foundation of generosity is the abundant love of God in Christ Jesus. It has the power to inspire and inform every aspect of our lives, including decisions about the most faithful use of our time, talent, and resources.

Newsletter article

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Getting rid of 'all the crap'

And Jesus said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." -Luke 12:

The father of small children was commiserating about how hard it is to keep the house clean with energetic, active, creative kids at home.

“What really gets to me about cleaning the house,” he said, “is all the crap.”

Crap. Not just the toys and stuffed animals that overflow from toy bins, under beds and closets. The adult stuff, too – the gadgets crowding the kitchen, the cleaning products jammed under the sink, the stuff crammed in the medicine cabinet, the yard junk all over the lawn, and on and on.

The crap factor comes to mind in Jesus' parable of “the rich fool” in Luke 12:17-20. The fool has so much stuff, he wants bigger barns to hold it all. The parable should strike a chord with us in America, where accumulation is such a big problem that self-storage (our “bigger barns”) is booming business.

A man of few possessions, Jesus kept everything simple. He must have known how hard it is to focus on godly living when our lives are cluttered with stuff. Of course, Jesus' parable talks about possessions, but the same principle applies to the mind and heart's clutter of ideas, loyalties and desires that distract us from God.

How cluttered is your house? Your mind? Your soul?

For the month of May, consider a house cleaning to get rid of unneeded, unnecessary stuff. And prayerfully consider what “clutter” may be in your mind, heart and soul as well. What needs to be tossed out, recycled or donated in order that your house and your spirit can focus on what's truly important? That is, the things of God.

--*Rob Blezard*

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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/).

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