



Bethany Stewardship News

December 2015

Being God's Steward

We were created to be free. Yet, as fallen beings we all seem to insist on yoking ourselves to something. We say with our words that we value our freedom. Our intellect insists that we are beholden to none – we are our own person. We say and think these things all the while committing our hearts and our minds to the things of this world. We play pretend that our lives are ours; that our belongings or our land or our money is ours; that we somehow hold a real claim to the nice things that surround our lives. This is the intent of the enemy. If the things I have are mine, if I earned them through my own superior intellect, cunning, or work ethic, then I can choose to do with them what I want.

However, if I am simply stewarding these things for my master, well, that changes everything. Now I must consider his wishes in what I do with the things I have gathered on his behalf. Because if I use my master's gifts foolishly, I will be ashamed when I am called to account. Because if I have been commanded in how to take care of his kingdom, but act according to my will and not his, what will I say to him when he returns? Stewardship means thinking about our master's wishes above our own and using the good things he has given us to fulfill his purposes.

This year the Stewardship Committee reflected on the idea of freedom. When we realize that we are stewarding God's gifts and not our own, it changes the way we think about "stewardship". It's not just figuring out how big of a check to write to the church. It's about doing God's work with our hands. How freeing to know that it's not up to us to figure everything out. We were created to be free, but we seem to insist on yoking ourselves to something. Jesus tells us that his "yoke is easy" and his "burden is light" (Matthew 11:30). Let us choose his yoke instead of yoking ourselves to the things of this world.

Greg Lipps

Our Ministries

Hope Chest
Food Pantry
Quilters
Domestic Violence Intervention program
Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI)
Good Samaritan Fund
UI Lutheran Campus Ministry
UI Hospital Chaplaincy
Riverside Bible Camp
Shelter House
Angel Tree
Mbakweni, Tanzania
WBARC
Wartburg Seminary
Vacation Bible School
4th Sunday Free Meal
Eyeglasses Recycling
Printer Cartridge Recycling
Sunday School

Ongoing Needs

Hope Chest
Now accepting: **Fall and Winter Clothes**, especially children's; monetary donations to purchase clothes.

Food Pantry
Please pick up the latest list as you come in the door from the parking lot

*God's Work,
Our Hands!*

Thank You!

To Scott and Amber Marsh for leading the Children's Christmas Program, and for everyone who assisted in any way. Also to the children who did such a great job!

To Jeni Schiele for coordinating the Angel Tree Gift Ministry.

To everyone that donated gifts and/or money to the Angel Tree Ministry. Also to everyone that helped wrap the gifts for the five families.

To everyone that helped set, serve, and clean-up for the Cookie Walk and Quilt sale. Thank you to the Confirmation Class for setting up the tables.

To everyone that baked cookies and other goodies for the Cookie Walk.

To everyone that filled out a Pledge Card and/or a Time and Talent sheet for 2016.

To everyone that faithfully continues to donate clothing to the Hope Chest, and food for the Food Pantry.

Did You Know...

In the past three months:

- we've delivered 49 bags of food to the Food Pantry.
- the Hope Chest has helped 47 people.
- the Community Free Meal has served 69 people from our community. In addition to a "regular" group of people that come every month, this ministry continues to bring new people into our midst to enjoy food and fellowship.

Stewardship Meditation

Habakkuk 3:17-18

"Yet, I will rejoice in the Lord"

Stewardship is more than just an activity, it is an attitude and this attitude is not conditional. Even in times of material scarcity, good stewards remember God's abundant gift of salvation that is unconditional.

Ministry Highlight

WARTBURG THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY (WTS)

Wartburg Theological Seminary serves Christ's church through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by being a worship-centered community of critical theological reflection. The community embodies God's mission by engaging, equipping, and sending collaborative leaders who interpret, proclaim, and live the gospel of Jesus Christ for a world created for communion with God and in need of personal and social healing.

Wartburg Theological Seminary offers three graduate-level degrees, Master of Arts, Master of Arts Diaconal Ministry, and Master of Divinity; TEEM (Theological Education for Emerging Ministries) Certificate; and Diploma in Anglican Studies.

Wartburg Seminary has an average student population of 180 students in all degrees and programs. The average student age is 37 years old. Wartburg Theological Seminary is located in Dubuque, IA.

Stewardship Committee

Chair:

Greg Lipes

Members:

Nancy Bruns
Jon Twing
Laura Twing
Kent Kaufman
Neil Korsmo
Chris Korsmo