



Stewardship Reflections

Abundance....Generosity....Gratitude

A Hampack mailing offering stewardship thoughts, reflections and actions in your personal lives and in your congregations.

March 2008

A GLIMPSE OF A DIFFERENT STEWARDSHIP – SOUL STEWARDSHIP

Lent: Living Simply in God's Grace

At this mid-point in Lent, perhaps you're yearning for things that you've "given up" for the season. It's easy to feel this yearning even if these "given-up things" are harmful to us or inhibit our enjoyment of "natural communion with God." In the absence of these things, Lent is - thank God - still very much a season to receive. **We can fill the void left by these given-up things with yearnings or other distractions, or we can view the void as holy space, wide open for receiving unexpected, un-earn-able Grace.** While it's easy to think of stewardship only in terms of money and "resources," let us not forget that it also has everything to do with our souls - specifically what we receive into our souls and what we share from them. May our empty, holy, Lenten places teach us better soul stewardship

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REFLECTIONS ON GIVING....A DISCUSSION STARTER

(A quote excerpted from Bill Clinton's book *Giving: How Each of Us Can Change the World*. C2007)

"Why do some people give so much while others give the bare minimum or not at all? I've thought about this a lot, and it seems to me we all give for a combination of reasons, rooted in what we think about the world in which we live and what we think about ourselves... When people don't give, I think the reasons are simply the reverse. They don't believe what they could do would make a difference..."

All religious faiths speak to our shared obligations to help one another...Believer or unbeliever, we all live in an interdependent world in which our survival depends upon an understanding that our common humanity is more important than our interesting and inevitable differences and that everyone matters...

So much of modern culture is characterized by stories of self-indulgence and self-destruction. So much of modern politics is focused not on honest differences of policy but on personal attacks. So much of modern media is dominated by people who earn fortunes by demeaning others, defining them by their worst moments, exploiting their agonies.

Who's happier?

The uniters or the dividers? The builders or the breakers? The givers or the takers?

I think you know the answer.

There's a whole world out there that needs you, down the street or across the ocean. Give."

Thought stimulus for discussion and reflection:

In my life, in our church, we live out an image of giving that is characterized by.....