

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

**An inviting, supporting community, reflecting
God's love and care for all God's creation.**

September 2015

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP ABOUT?

I cringe when someone answers, "Fundraising." Although the proceeds of financial stewardship programs usually go to support the activities or special projects of the church, Christian Stewardship goes much further. Christian Stewardship is **not** "charitable giving" even though the IRS allows it as a deduction. Think of stewardship as "**harvest giving**" as spelled out in Deuteronomy. We gather a harvest not of our making, from ground, seed and rain that we didn't create, and in gratitude we give a portion of that harvest back to God.

From the earliest time, our Judeo-Christian history gives us the idea that all that we have is the result of God's gifts to us, and we are called to care for (steward) these gifts and return a portion of them for God's work. "All things come of thee O' Lord, and of thine own have we given thee" (*1Chronicles 29:14*). Written or compiled in the 5th century before Christ, this quotes King David as he gives thanks for the collection to build the earliest temple. Even earlier, in Deuteronomy 8:17-18 Moses is quoted (although probably not written down until the 7th century): "Do not say to yourself, My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth, but remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the power to get wealth, so that he may confirm the covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today."

That is the only basis for responsible stewardship training. It is the answer to our funding problems, but far more than that, it is our Godly response to the false values and greediness of a broken world.

Please check this page frequently as I will be adding more of my thoughts and those of others as we go through the season of planning for a successful 2016.

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