

Speaking of Stewardship

Making Christ Known—May/June 2005



Rev. Len Dale, Bishop's
Associate for Outreach and
Stewardship — 816-861-6584
ldale@css-elca.org
Mr. Tim Ternes, Mission
Interpreter Coordinator, CSS
913-269-0889
tternes@kc.rr.com

Betsy Reese, Newsletter editor
E-mail: BetsyReese@att.net

[www.css-elca.org/
stewardship01.html](http://www.css-elca.org/stewardship01.html)

Mission Interpreter/ Stewardship Team

AM 1: Vacant
AM 2: Rev. George Campbell
785-625-2044
AM 3: Vacant
AM 4: Vacant
AM 5: Vacant
AM 6: Rev. Elwyn Luber
785-272-5302
AM 7: Mr. Keith Mundy
913-897-0793
Rev. Rod Nygren
816-331-5465
AM 8: Rev. Dan Friberg
417-881-2192
AM 9: Rev. John Davis
573-346-7300
AM 10: Rev. Dan Barwinski
314-739-3222
Rev. Keith Holste
314-962-6011

Any of these articles may be re-
produced all or in part for congre-
gational or stewardship team use.



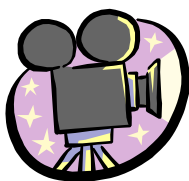
For lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth,
The time of singing has come.

-Song of Solomon 2:11-12



Looking With the Eyes of a Steward

We Christians know that we live in the world but are not of the world. We take Scripture, faith and Christian fellowship as guides in living lives committed to God. But that is not to say that we cannot get little tips from all kinds of things in our popular culture. Books, movies, television, and newspapers, among other things, can offer much food for thought to the committed Christian.



Pay It Forward: This movie from 2000 will connect with your heart and you'll learn that sometimes the simplest idea can make the biggest difference. We know that, but sometimes it doesn't hurt to be reminded.

A social studies assignment challenges young students to come up with some idea that will improve the world and then to put it into action. Trevor responds to the intriguing assignment by deciding to do three good deeds for others and then they in turn can "pay it forward." He explains:

"You see, I do something real good for three people. And then when they ask how they can pay it back, I say they have to Pay It Forward. To three more people. Each. So nine people get helped. Then those people have to do twenty-seven." He punches a few numbers on his calculator. *"Then it sort of spreads out, see. To eighty-one. Then two hundred forty-three. Then seven hundred twenty-nine. Then two thousand, one hundred eighty-seven. See how big it gets?"*

Is it possible for one idea to change the world? Rent the movie and be inspired. You will find yourself coming up with ways you can improve your corner of the world even before the movie is over.

The story comes from Catherine Ryan Hyde who wrote the book of the same title. Her foundation, the Pay It Forward Foundation, inspires teachers to use the concept with their students. You can find out more about it at: <http://www.payitforwardfoundation.org/>

Shopping with kids—read what Tom from Olathe has to say about money:

“When I turned 7, I received a \$5 bill from my grandmother. I told my mother I wanted to buy a big bag of candy. She asked if that was really how I wanted to spend my money. When I assured her it was, she gave me permission. I still remember buying every kind of candy I could imagine. A few weeks later my mother took us to a garage sale where I found a treasure! A box full of Hot Wheels racetrack equipment—enough to fill a basement. And they were only asking \$2! I asked my mother if she would buy it for me. She just looked at me and said, ‘Where is your birthday money?’ I did not buy the racetrack, but in the end I learned a hard lesson about getting real value for my money.”

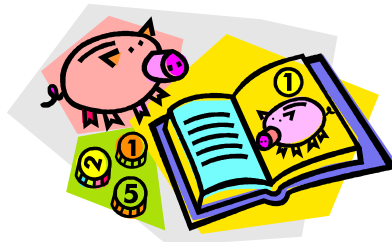


Nickel and Dimed : On (Not)

Getting By In America: In response to the welfare reform that pushed 12 million women into the labor market a few years back, writer Barbara Ehrenreich decided to find out just how they were going to survive on the wages of the unskilled, which at \$6 to \$7 an hour is only half of what is considered a living wage. She looked for a job that did not use the skills her various degrees and work experiences had given her. She looked for a place to live, supported by that job, and tried to make ends meet. She worked in Florida, Maine, and Minnesota as a waitress, a nursing home assistant, a Wal-Mart associate, and a cleaning woman. Her world was peopled by the borderline homeless, folks who worked two jobs, people who lived in hotels or their cars or with their relatives, and those who had no health care. She tells of the maximum number of croutons a waitress is allowed to put on a salad, the concept of “time theft,” having her purse searched by her boss, taking drug tests and “personality tests.” She went to a social service agency for food to tide her over one weekend and was sent home with a box of food filled with empty calories: Rice Krispies treats, candy and macaroni and cheese. She lived in hotels without refrigerators and ate her food out of paper sacks. The reader

will find that she doesn’t have much that is favorable to say about Christians. But we can admit that we speak about the gap between the rich and the poor a lot less than Jesus did. Most of us don’t even see the truly poor anymore. And we don’t recognize that the person who keeps the underwear tidy at the Wal-Mart may actually live in a car.

This book gives us a peek into a life that most of us do not live or at least remember very well. Not a policy plan for combating poverty or even an extensive narration of how the working poor make do throughout the country, it will however, put a human face on not making it in our society. Read the book. Borrow it from your local library or



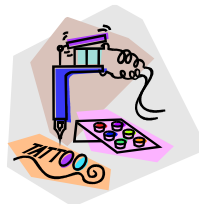
the book “on tape” to listen to while in your car or walking your treadmill. Consider faithful steward, what your response can be. Look for the reading guide at: <http://www.henryholt.com/readingguides/ehrenreich.htm>

Springtime and America’s favorite pastime go together.

Look for minor league games near your home or attend school or college games. Some churches even play in softball leagues. These games are just as much fun as the major league kind, you’ll be supporting young (and not so young) athletes with your attendance, and you won’t spend a fortune on tickets, parking and nachos.



Do you realize that in about 40 years, we’ll have thousands of old ladies running around with tattoos?



A characteristic of churches with high financial support:

These churches understand that stewardship is an inherent part of the Christian life. In fact, they see it as a metaphor of the Christian life, or one thing that is used to designate another. Recognizing that all people are summoned to be involved in the ministries of compassion and justice in both the congregation and the community, these churches make of financial stewardship a basic expression of the Gospel.

--from Patrick A. McNamara of The Alban Institute

Who is One of the Best Stewards You’ve Ever Known?

Using plastic margarine containers for leftovers, tying tomato plants to stakes with pantyhose, patching blue jeans, planting bushes and trees, canning green beans, saving quarters for Lenten offerings, making everything under the sun with zucchini: we have a lot to learn about stewardship from our mothers. When you send that Mother’s Day card, lift her up in prayer, and take some tips from a wonderful mentor.

What are you doing in your congregation in stewardship awareness? Don’t keep it a secret. We are looking for your stewardship stories and successful activities, events or programs for this newsletter. Please share them with Betsy Reese at BetsyReese@att.net.