

Weekly Stewardship Note

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. – **Romans 14:26-27** What is the common good? For Christians, it is expressed in the reign, or way, of Christ. We are accountable to God for how we treat one another; how we reflect the love of Christ through both our words and our actions.

These are the women and men of faith the church remembers this coming week:

September 14 Holy Cross Day Helena, the mother of Constantine, made a pilgrimage to Israel to look for Christian holy sites. She found what she believed were the sites of the crucifixion and burial of Jesus, sites that modern archaeologists believe may be correct. Here Constantine built two churches. The celebration of Holy Cross Day originated with the dedication of the Church of the Resurrection in 335.

September 16 Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, martyr – 258 Cyprian worked for the unity of the church and cared for his flock in North Africa during a time of great persecution. During Cyprian's time as bishop many people had denied the faith under duress. In contrast to some who held the belief that the church should not receive these people back, Cyprian believed they should be welcomed into full communion after a period of penance. Cyprian was also concerned for the physical well-being of the people under his care. He organized a program of medical care for the sick during a severe epidemic in Carthage.

September 17 Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen – 1179 Hildegard lived virtually her entire life in convents, yet was widely influential within the church. After an uneventful time as a nun, she was chosen as abbess of her community. She reformed her community as well as other convents. Around the same time, she began having visions and compiled them, as instructed, in a book she called *Scivias*. Hildegard's importance went beyond mysticism. She advised and reproved kings and popes, wrote poems and hymns, and produced treatises in medicine, theology, and natural history. She was also a musician and an artist.

September 18 Dag Hammarskjöld, renewer of society – 1961 Dag Hammarskjöld (HAH-mar-sheld) was a Swedish diplomat and humanitarian who served as secretary general of the United Nations. He was killed in a plane crash on this day in 1961, in what is now Zambia, while on his way to negotiate a cease-fire between the United Nations and the Katanga forces. For years Hammarskjöld had kept a private journal, and it was not until that journal was published as *Markings* that the depth of his Christian faith was known. The book revealed that his life was a combination of diplomatic service and personal spirituality, and of contemplation on the meaning of Christ in his life and action in the world.

Today's Hymns:

We Plow the Fields and Scatter ELW #680

**We plow the fields and scatter, the good seed on the land,
But it is fed and watered, by God's almighty hand,
Who sends the snow in winter, the warmth to swell the grain,
The breezes and the sunshine, and soft refreshing rain.**

**You only are the maker, of all things near and far.
You paint the wayside flower, you light the evening star.
The winds and waves obey you, by you the birds are fed;
Much more to us your children, you give our daily bread.**

**We thank you our creator, for all things bright and good,
The seed-time and the harvest; our life, our health, our food;
No gifts have we to offer, for all your love imparts
But what you most would treasure – our humble, thankful hearts.**

Public Domain Text: Matthias Cladius, 1740-1815; English translation Jane M. Campbell, 1817-1878 Music: Swedish Folk Tune

I'm So Glad, Jesus Lifted Me ELW #860

I'm so glad, Jesus lifted me.

I'm so glad, Jesus lifted me.

I'm so glad, Jesus lifted me, singing glory, hallelujah!

Jesus lifted me.

Satan had me bound, Jesus lifted me.

Satan had me bound, Jesus lifted me.

Satan had me bound, Jesus lifted me, singing glory, hallelujah!

Jesus lifted me.

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When I was in trouble, Jesus lifted me.

When I was in trouble, Jesus lifted me.

When I was in trouble, Jesus lifted me, singing glory, hallelujah!

Jesus lifted me.

Public Domain Text: African American spiritual

Music: African American Spiritual

Psalms and other readings:

Psalm 103:8-13

The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever.

He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love towards those who fear him;

as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us.

As a father has compassion for his children, so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him.

Genesis 50:15-21: Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, 'What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?' So they approached Joseph, saying, 'Your father gave this instruction before he died, "Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you." Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father.' Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, 'We are here as your slaves.' But Joseph said to them, 'Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.' In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Romans 14:1-12

Matthew 18:21-35: Then Peter came and said to him, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. 'For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything." And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, "Pay what you owe." Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you." But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until

he should pay the debt. When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?" And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

***Here are some questions for you to ponder around today's theme:
"Stewardship as An Act of Worship"***

1. Think about the "offering" collected during services at worship. Do you experience this moment in service as an act of worship or does it just seem like an occasion for taking care of business?
2. Have you ever experienced giving as an expression of love in your life – either as the giver or receiver of gifts? How might this work in your relationship with God?
3. What would the congregation be like if everyone who gathered for worship, have not gathered *did not gather* to have their needs met but to praise and worship God? What would be different and how would that make you feel?
4. What is your main motivation for attending worship? Has this changed over the years?

Announcements

- Be sure to check Aurora's Facebook and web page for any weekly updates. AND reminder each day at 6 PM, pause and pray knowing your brothers and sisters in faith are doing the same!
- Opportunity to Check In Tuesday's, 9 and 7. Watch for zoom invite or contact Pastor Dale for a different time.