



**Redeemer Lutheran Church of Leisure World and
St. Theodore of Canterbury Episcopal Church**
13564 St. Andrews Drive; Seal Beach, CA 90740
Phone (562) 598-8697; FAX (562) 598-8697
e-mail: redeemer_lutheran@verizon.net

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Message from the Interim Pastor:

Saint Paul wrote: *“Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver”*
2 Corinthians 9:7

Christian stewardship is a calling from God to faithfully manage all that God entrusts to us—our time, talents, resources, relationships, and the environment. Biblical stewardship begins with the understanding that everything we have belongs to God. We humans are not owners of all that God has made. We are caretakers. In the opening pages of the Book of Genesis, after God created the world, God then appointed humanity to be the “stewards” of God’s creation. That stewardship was then and still is today an act of worship and gratitude as we acknowledge God’s sovereignty over all that exist. As we believe that God’s generosity has blessed us with everything in creation and then given us the privilege to faithfully manage those blessings, we are filled with thanksgiving and gratitude.

Stewardship is not a single activity of giving. It is more a lifestyle, involving daily decisions how we use our time, our energy, our possessions, and our financial resources. People of faith are able to view every aspect of our lives—our work, our family, our church, and our leisure—as opportunities to honor God through responsible management of all we have. We also have the privilege of giving generously in ways that reflect the abundance of God’s love for us.

Biblical stewardship is rooted in trust. Believing that God gave us all that we are and have, believing that God gave us even God’s own Son, knowing Jesus then gave his life for us, our response is worship and thanksgiving. We respond to God’s grace, not as a duty performed out of obligation or fear. We worship God because we love God and are so very thankful. We sing, we pray, we gather as a Christian community, we put our offerings in the plate, not because we are trying to “pay God back,” but because we love the One who has loved us so much more and has been so good to us.

Our Christian stewardship then flows from hearts transformed by God’s love. Filled with thanksgiving to God, the people of God have been led to generous sharing with others—especially caring for those in need. Jesus said, *“just as you have cared for the least of these,*

your sisters and brothers, you have cared for me.” (Matthew 25) Biblical scholars tell us that one-sixth of the passages of the Bible address our calling to be good stewards of all that we have received from God.

By living as faithful stewards, by giving back to God a portion of what God has given to us, we Christians participate in God’s mission to love the world, we support the work and ministry of the church and congregation, we care for creation, we help to feed and shelter the hungry, the homeless, the poor, and we reflect Christ’s love to our neighbors, our family, our friends, and the world.

Filled with thanksgiving and gratitude,

+Pastor Murray D. Finck

The Rev Murray D. Finck, Bishop Emeritus