

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

JANUARY: OUR STEWARDSHIP OF OUR SPIRITUALITY

“...we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God’s will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God.”

--Colossians 1:9-10

Prayer, meditation, Bible and devotional reading, worship, nature, art, and music are gifts that God gives to us in order that we may deepen our sense of awareness of God’s presence in our lives. Through these gifts, God communicates with us and reveals to us God’s intentions for our lives. These are the means through which God helps us to center our lives, so that we can more clearly focus on our relationship to God and our relationship to others.

Reflection Questions:

- What do you do to nurture and develop your own sense of spirituality?
- What kinds of things would be most helpful to you, so that you could become a better steward of your gift of spirituality?

Stewardship Possibilities:

To nurture your gift of spirituality, you are welcome to try any of the following ideas: (You do not have to do all of them; do those things that work best for you).

- Set aside a specific amount of time each day for prayer.
- Make a commitment to read a portion of the Bible on a daily basis.
- Go on a nature walk and admire the beauty of God’s creation.
- Tell someone about the most moving worship service that you have ever experienced.
- Take time and go on a spiritual retreat.
- Describe how religious art helps you to connect with God.
- What is your favorite hymn? What makes it special to you?
- Contact those who have served as a role model of the Christian faith for you and thank them for the impact that they have had on your life.
- Start a Prayer Journal in which you record your prayers and the ways in which God has answered them.
- Forgive someone who has wronged you.
- Serve as a mentor to someone who is “new to the faith”.
- Explain to others how God has made a difference in your life.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places...”

--Ephesians 1:3

AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST CARE CALLERS' MINISTRY

“So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us...” II Cor. 5:20a

“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.” Hebrews 13:2

We give thanks to God that the Ambassador for Christ Care Callers' Ministry of First Lutheran Church is up and running. The **primary purpose** of the Care Calling Ministry is to build caring relationships with people; to pray for them; and to help them to find ways in which they can continue to stay connected with the Church during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are looking for **Care Callers**—people who are willing to make phone calls 2x a month to the people on their **Care Calling Circle of Friends** list. If you are interested in becoming a **Care Caller**, please contact me (my contact information is listed below) and I will get in touch with you as soon as possible. **Care Callers** may select the people that they call and it can be someone you already know. We want both the **Care Callers** and their **Circle of Friends** (the people they call) to be at ease and comfortable with each other.

There are 3 main things that **Care Callers** are asked to do:

- 1) **Listen:** Allow people to express their concerns, questions, fears without judging them. The purpose is to build a caring relationship.
- 2) **Love:** Your job is to show them the unconditional love that God has for them by showing them in words and deeds that you care about them and are concerned about their well-being.
- 3) **Pray:** After you have listened to them and heard them express their concerns, questions and fears, you will be able to pray with and for them.

This is an opportunity for you to become involved in a caring ministry of the congregation. We want you to be prepared for this ministry and to be the best that you can be. If you are asked a question for which you do not know the answer, say, “I don't really know the answer, but I will find out and get back to you as soon as I find the answer,” and then get back to them as soon as you have the answer for them.

We are also looking for people to become a part of a **Circle of Friends**. Not everyone wants to automatically be placed on a calling list, so we are asking congregational members if they would like to receive calls from the **Care Callers**. We have a number of **Care Callers**, who are already calling people who are in their **Circle of Friends**. The whole point of this ministry is to build caring relationships among people in the congregation.

If you would like to become involved in this ministry—either as a **Care Caller** or as a member of a **Circle of Friends**, please contact me by email at Rtdealey@sbcglobal.net or call me at (815) 999-2800. Thank you. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

*God's peace and blessings,
Pastor Bob Dealey, Coordinator of Stewardship & Outreach*

“We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers and sisters beloved of God, that he has chosen you...”

I Thessalonians 1:2-4