



St. Peter's Together

IN PRAYER AND WORSHIP

A SEASON OF STEWARDSHIP

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Autumn 2020

Our lives of faith continue to grow in newness of life in Jesus Christ as we move from summer into fall. We have become a people of adaptation and courage in the face of a changing world, like many of our Biblical ancestors before us.

Some of us are emerging from many months of restrictions eager to rebuild connections and routines. Others of us remain physically apart, cautious in returning to old ways, but still present in the spiritual life of St. Peter's. Together, we are a faith community united in Jesus Christ in worship and prayer, fellowship and service.

As a family of faith, we are called to consider our stewardship of our many resources: creation care and community care; care of ourselves and our neighbors; and proper use of our many gifts, financial and vocational, all to the Glory of God.

Many of you appreciated the spring booklet as a valued faith resource. We offer this booklet in the same spirit, for you to use in prayer and in reflection in your daily and weekly faith practices. This time, we focus on stewardship, with prayers, Scripture, and faith activities adaptable for all ages. We remain a family of faith, through faith in Jesus Christ.

[Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him.

Colossians 1:15-16

WEEK ONE: What is stewardship?

REFLECTION

Live as stewards of all that has been entrusted to you. Use what you have been given for God's glory and for the coming of God's kingdom on earth. Use it to bless the lives of others, to bring hope where there is despair, to create possibilities where all seems dead and lost.

Brother David Vryhof, SSJE

PRAYERS

*Glorify the Lord, all you works of the Lord,
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.
In the firmament of his power, glorify the Lord,
praise him and highly exalt him for ever.*

Book of Common Prayer, *A Song of Creation*

God of every aspect of our lives, help us to hear clearly what you are asking of us each day, whatever situation we find ourselves in. You are the God who calls us to stay where we are or to move at your bidding: to seek and speak courageously, sharing your love, defending the vulnerable and bringing dignity to those who have no voice. Help us to sense your presence, in perseverance and hope, in those everyday places which can be continuously renewed by your grace. Amen.

Church of Ireland, *Prayer for Vocation*

WEEK ONE: What is stewardship?

SCRIPTURE

*The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
the world, and those who live in it;*

Psalm 24:1

For deeper reflection: Colossians 1:15-20

FAITH ACTION

- ✠ Think about what “stewardship” means to you. How does it differ from “gratitude,” or “generosity,” two other words we use in this season?
- ✠ Identify the people and things for which you are a steward in your life. In other words, what do you take care of? And why?
- ✠ Consider setting aside a “giving jar” or other means of saving. Have everyone contribute—pennies add up to dollars! Discuss how you will spend this money as stewards.
- ✠ After reflecting on this topic, how do you feel called to act? What do you feel called to learn more about? How can St. Peter’s help you grow as a steward?

WEEK TWO: Stewardship of Creation

REFLECTION

We do not live in isolation. We are part of something much bigger, and our quest for God must go hand in hand with our quest to live in a right relationship with creation; a relationship not of estrangement, but of union, communion, and harmony. May we open our eyes to see the beauty of the world around us, and to see in nature traces of the mind and love of God.

Brother James Koester, SSJE

PRAYERS

O heavenly Father, who has filled the world with beauty: Open our eyes to behold your gracious hand in all your works; that, rejoicing in your whole creation, we may learn to serve you with gladness; for the sake of him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Book of Common Prayer, *Prayer for Joy in God's Creation*

Loving God, we thank you for the gift of life in all its diversity and beauty. Lord Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, we praise you that you came to redeem all of creation. Holy Spirit, we rejoice that you breathe in the life of the world. Grant us faith and courage to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Jesus as caretakers of, and justice-seekers for, your beautiful and bountiful creation. For the blessing of your people, the sustaining of the earth and the glory of your name. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Season of Creation 2020

WEEK TWO: Stewardship of Creation

SCRIPTURE

In his hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his also. The sea is his, for he made it, and the dry land, which his hands have formed.

Psalm 95 4-5

For deeper reflection: Genesis 1:1-2:4a

FAITH ACTION

- ✚ Prayerfully consider your buying habits. Do you use what you purchase? Can you choose products that are made and packaged with respect to the earth? Where can you simplify?
- ✚ Try a backyard scavenger hunt to get outside and appreciate creation: <https://buildfaith.org/backyard-scavenger-hunt-for-earth-day/>
- ✚ After reflecting on this topic, how do you feel called to act? What do you feel called to learn more about? How can St. Peter's help you grow as a steward of creation?

WEEK THREE: Stewardship of Community

REFLECTION

Our identity as a community, and anything good or gracious that has come into the world through us, lives not in the sum total of our personal talents, our eccentricities, our courage, or our compassion, but in our seeking to understand what God has done for us, and in seeking to do likewise to one another, in humility and in hope.

Brother Keith Nelson, SSJE

PRAYERS

Lord God, give me the wisdom, gentleness, and strength to help bear the burdens of my brothers and sisters in community. Teach me what it means to restore a fellow Christian in a way that is best for the entire family of faith. Above all, I ask that you give me the love necessary to pray for and care for my fellow Christian in the same way you care for me. In your name I pray. Amen.

A Year with God, Prayer for Fellowship

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Book of Common Prayer, Prayer for the Parish

WEEK THREE: Stewardship of Community

SCRIPTURE

For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.

Romans 12:4-5

For deeper reflection: Ephesians 4:1-6, 15-16

FAITH ACTION

- ✚ What do you think it means to live in right relationship? What would it look like in your home? In St. Peter's? In this nation? As you begin a practice of recognizing Christ in others, think about whether it makes you feel more united with your fellow Christians.
- ✚ Have you ever been tempted to try to travel the path of faith alone? If so, what caused those feelings? Consider making a list, with other members of your household, of all the ways church community has helped or could help you to grow closer to God.
- ✚ After reflecting on this topic, how do you feel called to act? What do you feel called to learn more about? How can St. Peter's help you grow as a steward of our community?

WEEK FOUR: Stewardship of the Person

REFLECTION

Jesus gave us a gift when he told us to give to God the things that are God's. He reminded us that we belong to God and in God we live and move and have our being. It is there where we find our true identity as persons loved and made by God.

Brother James Koester, SSJE

PRAYERS

*Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.*

from the breastplate of St. Patrick

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: Increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Book of Common Prayer, Collect for Proper 12

WEEK FOUR: Stewardship of the Person

SCRIPTURE

*Do you not know that you are God's temple and that
God's Spirit dwells in you?*

1 Corinthians 3:16

For deeper reflection: Luke 10:38-41

FAITH ACTION

- ✚ Martin Luther wrote: “This life, therefore, is not godliness but the process of becoming godly, not health but getting well, not being but becoming, not rest but exercise. We are not now what we shall be, but we are on the way. The process is not yet finished, but it is actively going on. This is not the goal but it is the right road. At present, everything does not gleam and sparkle, but everything is being cleansed.” How does this reflection speak to you today?
- ✚ What does good health look like to you? How do you honor your creation in God's image by tending to your health?
- ✚ When we consider the health of our minds, bodies, and souls as a way to be a good steward of the blessings that God has given us, it can be easier to work towards the goal of maintaining our health. What can you do this week to be a steward of these blessings?

WEEK FIVE: Stewardship of Finances

REFLECTION

We don't possess our own lives. We are stewards of the life that God has given us, and for however long God continues to give us breath. Our life is not about hoarding or about conserving life for its own sake but its opposite: about giving. Our life is about our willingly giving up our life and our life's energies following the example we see in Christ's own self-emptying.

Brother Curtis Almquist, SSJE

PRAYERS

*Lord, take as your right, and receive as my gift,
all my freedom, my memory,
my understanding and my will.*

*Whatever I am and whatever I possess,
you have given it to me;*

*I restore it all to you again, to be at your disposal,
according to your will.*

*Give me only a love for you, and the gift of your grace;
then I am rich enough, and ask for nothing more.*

St. Ignatius of Loyola

*Lord God, you deserve my best. Forgive me for the times I
have offered you only the dregs, whether it be half-
heartedly muttered prayers or only the money I know I can
do without. Help me to remember that there is no better
resting place for my heart and indeed all my possessions
than with you. Help me to trust and obey you more each
day. In your name I pray. Amen.*

A Year with God, *Prayer for Sacrifice*

WEEK FIVE: Stewardship of Finances

SCRIPTURE

We brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out.

1 Timothy 6:7

For deeper reflection: Luke 12:22-34

FAITH ACTION

- ✠ How do we steward all of our money? Do the places where your household's money is going match with your faith values? What steps can you take so that your spending matches your faith?
- ✠ List ways that wealth can work against living a life of faith, both inwardly and outwardly. Choose one problem in this area of your life, for example, trusting in money more than God for security. Hold it before God and quietly give it to God in prayer.
- ✠ How is your family using its money to love God and our neighbor? How is St. Peter's using its money to love God and our neighbor?
- ✠ After reflecting on this topic, how do you feel called to act? What do you feel called to learn more about? How can St. Peter's help you grow as a steward of your finances?

WEEK SIX: Stewardship of Vocation

REFLECTION

Vocation is not a goal to be achieved but a gift to be received. Every life experience becomes a vehicle for God's call to be realized in vocation. In learning our limits and embracing failures, we can begin to recognize God's particular gifts for us, which infuse our very being and form in us our unique vocation.

Brother Jonathan Maury, SSJE

PRAYERS

Lord, help us to believe that we are all ordinary people made extraordinary through your vision and your power. Take our insecurities and feelings of inadequacy and give us the courage to see ourselves and others as you see us, with gifts and potential to transform your world and build your Kingdom. Amen.

Church of Ireland, *Prayer for Vocation*

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified:

Receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Book of Common Prayer, *Collect for all Christians in their vocation*

WEEK SIX: Stewardship of Vocation

SCRIPTURE

I therefore...beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:1-3

For deeper reflection: 1 Corinthians 12:1-31

FAITH ACTION

- ✠ Give thanks for your gifts of vocation and talent from God. If you are not sure what they are, pray for discernment! If you see gifts in others, point them out—sometimes we need to hear the affirmation of our vocation from others.
- ✠ Meditate on the phrase, “as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” (Joshua 24:15b). What does it mean for a family to “serve the Lord”? How can you and your family use your vocations or callings to serve the Lord?
- ✠ After reflecting on this topic, how do you feel called to act? What do you feel called to learn more about? How can St. Peter’s help you grow as a steward of your vocation?

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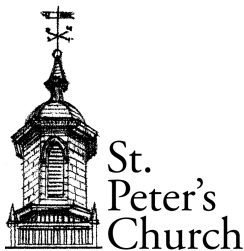
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