

Tithing Testimony

The synod stewardship committee has started a quarterly tithing testimony column. These stories will come from members of the Oregon Synod. Some authors wish to be anonymous and others hope stories will help others consider tithing themselves. Our first story is from a widow in the Portland area.

Paul assures us in Philippians 4:19 that “my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in Christ Jesus” and Jesus said, “Freely you have received, freely give” (Matt 10:8). These verses were uppermost in our minds as my husband and I discussed how much to give to the Lord through our church. When my husband died after a brief illness, I was faced with the decision of whether to continue giving the amount we had settled on or cut it down to what seemed more reasonable on my reduced income. I asked the Lord what to do and was given clear direction to continue giving the same amount and to believe that, since he fed 5,000 with only five loaves and two fish, He could and would provide for me. I have not changed our pledge and have experienced His loving care and the provision He promised in Matt 6: 26-34.

Oregon Synod Partner Ministries Supported

- ELCA- churchwide
- Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary
- Luther Seminary
- Pacific Lutheran University
- Campus Ministry - 8 sites
- Lutheran Community Services Northwest
- Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
- Consultation to Clergy
- Lutheran Educational Network & Support (LENS)

Oregon Synod Ministries

- Synod Mission Initiatives
- Mission Strategy
- Candidacy Committee
- Communication Committee
- Outreach Committee
- New Congregational Starts
- Latino Strategy
- Multicultural Committee
- Congregational Ministries
- Church and Environment
- Global Missions
- Education Committee
- Youth Committee
- Worship Committee
- Stewardship Committee
- Endowment Fund

We Are Gifted
is a stewardship publication
of the Oregon Synod.

WE ARE GIFTED...

OREGON SYNOD
Quarterly Stewardship Mailing
2008 Spring



Thanking Your Congregation for Its Gifts

By Becky Brown, Chair of the Oregon Synod Stewardship Committee



At the October 2007 Living Faithfully event, a group of people who enjoy giving joined together to work on a service project. We decided to put together a sample thank-you letter. On the following page is an outline that could be sent out with the quarterly or annual giving statements from your financial secretary.

Feel free to adapt this correspondence to suit the needs of your particular congregation. We wrote this communication from the viewpoint of a church's stewardship committee or a pastor. We sought to make sure that **our letter was written from a perspective of abundance rather than scarcity.**

continued on page two

Thanking Your Congregation for Its Gifts

continued from page one

Dear Saints at Holy Lutheran Church:
Thank you for your giving to HLC this past quarter/year. Because of your generous gifts, we have been able to share God's love among ourselves, with people in our community, and with God's people around the world.

We have done _____ ministries through our congregation this past quarter/year. (Examples could be food bank recipients, Sunday School attendance, VBS, Lutheran World Relief, World Hunger, scholarship support, senior assistance. Look through your church newsletters and bulletins.) Next year, we want to expand our giving to support _____.

Suggestions for additional paragraphs are given on the right.

Thank you again for your gifts to Holy Lutheran Church. Together, we are all stewards of God's amazing gifts and we appreciate your sharing of them with others.

Your fellow disciple of Christ,
Stewardship committee
and/or pastor(s) and/or church council

Optional Paragraphs for Your Thank You Letter

An optional paragraph in your thank-you letter could include a short Bible passage. Here are some suggestions:

✦ **Malachi 3: 8 – 10**

...bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house...

✦ **Acts 20:35**

... it is more blessed to give than to receive...

✦ **Deuteronomy 12:17 - 18**

Nor may you eat within your towns the tithe of your grain, your wine, and your oil, the firstlings of your herds and your flocks, any of your votive gifts that you vow, your freewill offerings, or your donations; these you shall eat in the presence of the Lord your God at the place that the Lord your God will choose, you together with your son and your daughter, your male and female slaves, and the Levites resident in your towns, rejoicing in the presence of the Lord your God in all your undertakings.

✦ **Exodus** (many verses)

Explain how one of these passages about stewardship can affect our daily lives.

Another paragraph could mention specifically the gifts of time and talent that congregational members have shared recently. Examples include quilt making for Lutheran World Relief, Sunday School teachers, gardening around the church property, serving meals at a senior center, etc.

(Again, look through your bulletins and newsletters for activities.)