

## A View from the Pews: Reflections on Stewardship



Be on the look out for new approaches to Stewardship imposed by social restrictions in the time of COVID. The themes coming out of our first brainstorming session focused on three G's: **Gather, Gratitude, and Grow.**

We may not be able to physically **Gather**, so we will bring the sanctuary to you! (Like this picture? We have more!) We want to say thank you (**Gratitude**) for

your support of Incarnate Word and its ministries. And we want to continue to **Grow** – grow in faith, grow in community, grow as a church that continues to strive to confront the injustice in the world. Over the next few months, members of the Stewardship team will reflect on the meaning of Stewardship in a feature we're calling 'A View From the Pews'. Yes, we see the irony of that title during this time when we can't sit in the pews, but it conveys our looking forward in anticipation of the time when we can gather together again. Thank you for reading our reflections!



In her wonderful book *'An Altar in the World – A Geography of Faith'*, Barbara Brown Taylor writes about finding God outside church walls. This book, written well before the pandemic, helps us grapple with the social isolation imposed by the pandemic. In the chapter 'The Practice of Living with Purpose', Stewardship is defined beautifully, without even a mention of the word 'Stewardship'. Barbara Brown Taylor says we all have a common vocation - the vocation of loving God and loving neighbor. She goes on to say she has begun to think of this as the vocation of being fully human, following Jesus' example of being fully human. She explains *'to become fully human means learning to turn gratitude for being alive into some concrete common good'*. This is Stewardship – turning our gratitude for God's unfathomable love into the *concrete common good* of giving our time, our talents, and treasures to support something outside ourselves. Remember that a *concrete common good* does not require money! It can be as simple as acknowledging a store clerk with a smile or as big as standing up for justice.

During this time when we cannot gather together, strive daily to look for God outside the walls of Incarnate Word. If you look closely, you'll see God everywhere – in the people you encounter in a trip to the grocery store or in the beauty of a sunset. By thinking creatively and courageously about how to reach out to others during this period of social isolation, you will share God's love and create *concrete common good*!

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