

“How Firm a Foundation”

A Reflection on Stewardship from Carolyn Crutcher

The foundation for my stewardship began when I was a young child. Every Sunday morning, Daddy gathered my siblings and me and gave each of us two coins, one for our Sunday School offering and one for the service in the sanctuary. As children, my siblings and I understood the importance of our offerings because of what we learned at home and at church. Every night my daddy read us a Bible story. Then he knelt beside us as we said our prayers. Every Sunday, Daddy and Mama took us to Sunday School and church. At home and church, I learned about Jesus and his love for all people.

When Bryan and I moved to Blowing Rock six years ago, St. Mary of the Hills became our mountain church home. We had both learned from our parents, grandparents, and church families the importance of sharing our time, talents, and treasure. Giving through our new church was not a matter of if or when, but how. Once again, relationships brought us into the fellowship of the St. Mary family.

Dr. Loy Witherspoon, now deceased, and Dr. Bill Pfischner, both friends from Charlotte, were the first to invite us to worship at St. Mary of the Hills over ten years ago. When we moved to Blowing Rock and visited St. Mary's again, Meg and Frank Fary were the first to welcome us after a church service. Later, they invited us to join their ministry team at Hospitality House. What a blessing it was to serve with them. We miss them since they have moved to Arbor Acres, but Bryan and I continue to serve with our 4th Tuesday Hospitality House Team. In this time of pandemic, all the members of our team are donating some of their treasures to pay F.A.R.M Cafe to prepare and deliver our 4th Tuesday meal for us. It is a commitment we all wanted to make.

Another blessing to me has been serving on the Altar Guild. When Robert Kling invited me to join this ministry team, I said, “Well, Robert, my only experience in preparing for communion was when I was a child. I helped my daddy cut the crusts off white bread and then cut it into small cubes.” His response was, “Oh, don't worry, I will train you.” Little did I know how much more there was to preparing for the Eucharist in the Episcopal church! But Robert kept his word, patiently teaching me all the steps. For me, serving on the Altar Guild has meant being part of a dedicated fellowship. I have ministered side by side with so many who love St. Mary's. Together, we prepare the altar for Eucharists on Sundays and Wednesdays and for weddings, baptisms, and funerals. The time I devote to this ministry is a gentle reminder to me of God's love and blessings.

I give of my time, talents, and treasures because I learned as a child the message of the gospel. At St. Mary of the Hills, I have found a community of God's people who are also using their time, talents, and treasures to build that kingdom on earth for others.