

Tidings and Treasures - October, 2021

Yes, It's Stewardship Time – time to assess our current missions and ministries, and plan for next year! As we think about giving...Here's what has inspired me: Jesus taught, "Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." **Luke 12:32. This statement describes our PVEC congregation perfectly.**

Yes, we've got the kingdom, Now what do we do with it? The Bible makes it clear that God has given us all that we have and all that we are. This includes not just our money and possessions, but also our relationships, our character strengths, our time, our intelligence, the special talents and skills we may possess. As Panther Valley Ecumenical Church prepares for the new fiscal year, it is important to know what support we can depend on from our congregation members. By knowing what you are willing to commit financially, we are able to better plan for the future.

Don't be like this guy....
We all want to be church BUILDERS!



So let's see what Panther Valley Ecumenical Church is doing right now:

- 1. Are we studying his word?** Yes, currently we have two Bible Studies and one book study: **Love is the Way** in person after Sunday worship and via zoom, and Wednesday morning at 10:00 am, a Faith Formation Study **"If you want to walk on water, you've got to get out of the boat."** The other is a Book Study Monday Evenings at 7 pm Via Zoom entitled **"Taste & See"** by Margaret Feinberg – Discovering God among Butchers, Bakers and Fresh Food Makers.
- 2. Are we teaching our children to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ?** Yes, we have Sunday School classes for Pre-K, and Kindergarten through 6th grade with two dedicated Christian teachers in Sarah & Dan planning the curriculum. We also have a youth group for pre-teens and teens, where we discuss social and economic needs – this season the group is working to donate Kits for Flood Victims in the south of our country via UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief).
- 3. Are we reaching out to our local community to help those in need?** Yes, we have an active food pantry providing food for older adults as well as younger families in need. We are a part of the 211 New Jersey emergency phone system to allow hungry people contact us for food. We donate our building for local organizations to hold meetings (Allamuchy Friends and Neighbors, Al-Anon, AA and others.)
- 4. What are we doing in the larger world?** Yes, we currently support two children in Guatemala through World Vision, a Christian humanitarian organization helping children, families, and their communities overcome poverty and injustice.

Here's what God instructs regarding Stewardship: *When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the LORD your God.* – Leviticus 19:9-10

"What I earn is mine, ALL mine, to do with what I want." That's the message our culture tells us again and again. Yet the Leviticus 19:9-10 clearly tells us that the "mine, all mine" attitude existed some 2,500 years ago as well. It's hard-wired into us. Our sinful human nature leads us to claim all we can for ourselves, which is why for thousands of years and up to the present God has called faithful people to live a better way. In this passage, "the Lord your God" instructs farmers and vintners to harvest only once, and not to the very edges of their land, and to leave the remnants of the harvest to the poor and the foreigner – people on the margins scavenging for their daily bread. The teaching encourages landowners to find sufficiency in their first harvest, to be content that their needs are met, and then be generous with what is left over. Today, Leviticus 19:9-10 challenges us whose "harvests" of income are more than sufficient to satisfy our immediate needs. Do we *have* to take it all? What can we give for the needy?

What more can we do? That's up to you! Please fill out your pledge to PVEC and mail your card back to the church in the enclosed stamped envelope. Be sure to flip over the card, as you will be able to let us know what you would like to add, or change regarding our current priorities.

If you have questions, please call or email me:

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