

EVERYDAY SAINTS

Stewardship Emphasis



In recent weeks, Good Soil has had the great good fortune of recognizing generous gifts from the estates of Sylvia Rosenbush and Gary Dennison. Thanks be to God for inspiring these Everyday Saints to financially support Christ's ministry in and through this faith community!

Over the course of the pandemic, giving levels at Good Soil have also been stronger than might have been expected—thank you! Even so, we are all called to examine our hearts and our resources, and to consider what we are capable of as we grow in faith. All of us are everyday saints, and all of us are on a generosity journey.

One recent study found that the median protestant (person in the middle if lined up smallest percentage to largest) only gave **0.62%** of their income to the church. *For most people the reason for this has less to do with their wealth or income and more to do with intentionality and regular systematic giving.* Good Soil's council co-presidents have already started thinking about how they will grow in generosity, and there are some concrete ideas on the back page of this insert to consider as well:

RECENT THOUGHTS FROM GOOD SOIL'S COUNCIL CO-PRESIDENTS:

As Jenna and I contemplate our level of giving for the coming year, we are thinking of ways to try to sustain and grow our support to Good Soil. We are inspired by the things taking place here, and the congregation's desire to dream bigger and to lay a framework for growth within Good Soil's immediate community and beyond.

Eric Carlson

I recall years not that long ago where the church's financial future appeared bleak. Yet as a congregation we were faithful even when we had little. More recently, there is so much to be excited for and to be imaginative about! We are challenged to find creative and meaningful ways to use recent estate gifts and all the blessings that God has brought here in the past few years.

Pam and I intend to continue our support going forward, in particular by adding Good Soil to our estate plan. What Good Soil has on the horizon is extraordinary!

Joe Lanter

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PLACE GOD FIRST IN YOUR BUDGETING AND SPENDING

The Ten Commandments stress that God must be first in our lives. And Jesus said, “Seek first God’s kingdom and righteousness and all these things shall be yours as well.” (*Matthew 6:33*)

Many people experience difficulty giving generously despite the desire and pledge to do so because they attempt to give from what is left over at the end of the week or month rather than from “first fruits” – from all they have received.

Regular, systematic giving can help all of us become more generous. We get overwhelmed when we think about larger numbers like \$1,000. However, most of us can find a few dollars per day, which becomes a significant amount over the course of a year.

Just \$1 per day comes to a gift of \$365, which for about 35-40% of Americans would be significant growth in their giving to the church. As you think and pray about your generosity this year, consider how “first fruits” giving and systematic giving may help you become more generous.

The simple practice of placing God and the Church first in budgeting and spending has helped many to experience joy in their giving. When you do this, you are giving from all that a good and loving God has provided. And you are truly practicing “stewardship” – understanding that you are but a temporary trustee of what God has entrusted to you.

Building a Culture of Generosity Materials
Good Soil Lutheran Ministries