

Stewardship

LITURGICAL AIDS

COMPILED BY

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Commissioning of the Stewardship Ministry Team

Pentecost

Celebrant: You have been called to be leaders at *[name of church]* as we all seek to be stewards of God's gifts to us. Your commitment to this calling flows from your awareness that all things come from God and return to God. Will you commit yourself to respond to God's generosity through modeling generosity and inspiring openness to God's love and the work of the Holy Spirit in this community?

Leaders: I will

Celebrant (to the Congregation): And will you, the community of *[name of church]*, support the stewardship ministry with open hearts and fervent prayer as they seek to help all of us live lives of gratitude and generosity?

Response: We will

Celebrant: Let us pray
On this day your Spirit descended upon the first church overcoming barriers of language and culture and expanding the hearts and minds of those seeking your leading. Send your Spirit upon these leaders that they might challenge us to open our hearts to our true identity, our deepest calling and our ultimate concern. We offer these people to you that you might offer them back to us as sources of comfort and challenge as we seek to know who we are and what we are called to be and become.
Amen.

In the name of the Giver and representing *[name of church]* community, I commission each of you as a minister of stewardship.

Catechism Theme

Celebrant:

Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus, we are called by our Lord into the new covenant in his blood and promised fullness of life in God's kingdom. Our duty as Christians is to follow Christ; to come together week by week for corporate worship; and to work, pray and give for the spread of the kingdom of God. In joyful obedience we now bring before God these tokens of our covenant commitments for the year ahead.

The pledge/commitment cards are presented with these words:

Accept these pledges of support for the mission of the church, that all people may be restored to unity with God and each other in Christ.

V:

Through Christ let us continually offer to God the sacrifice of praise;

Reader:

That is, the fruit of lips that acknowledges his Name.

We acclaim you, Lord, source of all goodness, giver of life. It is no longer we who live but Christ in us. We dedicate our selves and our substance to you.

We ask that you use us to spread the good news of your kingdom, We are no longer our own, but yours.

All:

I am no longer my own, but yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you, exalted for you or brought low for you; let me be full, let me be empty; let me have all things, let me have nothing; I freely and wholeheartedly yield an things to your pleasure and disposal.

Celebrant:

Let the covenant which we affirm here on earth be ratified in heaven and sealed in the sharing of this Holy Eucharist.

Dedication of Pledges

This service is designed for use at the time of the offering at the Eucharist. Pledge / commitment cards may be placed in offering baskets as the congregation assembles, or a separate plate may be passed for them during the offertory. Alternatively, members of the congregation may file past the altar to place their cards upon it individually (see rubrical note for this option). Provision should be made for the presentation of cards from those unable to be at the liturgy that day. It is appropriate that the cards be presented by representatives of the congregation to the rector / vicar, wardens and / or stewardship chairperson.

(Several options are provided using different thematic emphases.)

Individual Spirituality

Celebrant: Dear Friends in Christ, we are formed by God, each one unique and precious, and called to be fully ourselves as God's children, reflecting the image of Christ in our individual lives and ministries. We are to develop and share the particular gifts God has given us with gratitude and generosity. Moved by the Spirit who dwells in our hearts, we now make our personal commitments of gift, talent, and treasure, symbolized these cards.

The pledges are presented with these words:

Accept these pledges as an expression of our life and faith, offered to the glory of God and in fulfillment of our call to be stewards of God's bounty.

V: Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion;

Reader: For God loves a cheerful giver.

Celebrant: We come with joy before our Lord, asking him to take and receive our offering of self and substance which is our willing tribute to his love and grace.

All: Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding- and my entire will - all that I have and possess. You have given it all to me; to you, Lord, I will return it. Everything: yours; dispose of it according to your will. Give me only your love and your grace. That is enough for me.

Celebrant: Let the offering we make here on earth be accepted in heaven and sealed in the sharing of this Holy Eucharist.

Christian Community

Celebrant: My Sisters and Brothers, we are members together of Christ's family or faith in this place. Bound together by our Lord's command to love one another as he has loved us, we give and receive nurture and support and are enabled to respond to God's call in our lives. Thanking God for the blessings we have through this community, we give of ourselves and our substance to uphold the life of this congregation and assist its growth in mission and ministry.

The pledge cards are presented with these words:

Accept these pledges as tokens of the life, labor and love of this congregation, offered to the glory of God and for the work of his church in the world.

Celebrant: But do not neglect to do good and to share what you have,

All: For such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Celebrant: Lord Jesus, you have taught us that whoever does the will of God is your brother and sister. Help us now to dedicate our whole lives to God's glory and service even as you gave yourself completely to fulfill God's gracious will.

All: Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated to you; and then use us we pray as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Celebrant: Let the offering we make here on earth be accepted in heaven and sealed in the sharing of this Holy Eucharist.

Creation Theme

Celebrant:

Dear Friends in Christ we are formed in the image of God who created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them. Even as we are God's creatures and children, we are called to be God's partners in the care of all creation, ruling and serving with love and discernment as a reflection of God's bountiful grace. As faithful stewards, knowing the account we must one day give, we bring before God these symbols of our commitment to use all that we have and all that we are to God's glory and for the good of the church and the world.

The pledge/commitment cards are presented with the following words:

Accept these pledges of our intent to share the gifts which God has given us and to grow into the likeness of Christ.

V:

All things come of thee, O Lord;

R:

And of thine own have we given thee.

Celebrant:

Blessed are you O Lord our God, for you bring forth all good things for our use and delight and honor us with the stewardship of all creation. Let us ever be your instruments in this world.

All:

Lord make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, 'light;' where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Let the covenant which we affirm here on earth be ratified in heaven and sealed in the sharing of this Holy Eucharist.

Baptism Theme

Dear People of God, we are baptized into the body of Christ turning to him in trust and obedience and renouncing all that would lead us in the way of sin and death. We have promised to grow into the likeness of Christ, and to continue his work in the world. In fulfillment of our baptismal covenant we here recommit our selves to Christ and signify our intent to use our lives and resources in his service

The Pledge cards are presented with these words:

Accept these pledges as symbols of our vow to follow Christ as Lord and share in his ministry through the work of this congregation.

V.: Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving

R.: And make good your vows to the Most High.

Celebrant: O Lord, you have made us your children through the sacrament of new birth and marked us as Christ's own for ever. It is no longer we who live, but Christ in us. We dedicate our selves and our substance to you, We ask that you use us to fulfill your gracious will. We are no longer our own, but yours.

All: I am no longer my own, but yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for you or laid aside for you, exalted for you or brought low for you; let me be full, let me be empty; let me have all things, let me have nothing; I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal.

Celebrant: Let the covenant which we affirm here on earth be ratified in heaven and sealed in the sharing of this Holy Eucharist.

A Litany for Stewardship

(Prayers of the People)

Let us pray for the mission of the Church, for our Presiding Bishop, Katherine; for our bishop, _____, our clergy and staff at _____, and all bishops, priests, and deacons; for all our ministries and the Christian stewardship to use God's resources wisely.

God the father, who created us, affirm our faith in you that we may fulfill our Baptismal vows.

With all that we are and all that we have, may we honor God.

God the Son, who redeemed us, keep us in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, in prayer and remembrance of those who have died, especially _____.

With all that we are and all that we have, may we honor God.

God the Holy Spirit who empowers us, preserve us in resisting evil, and whenever we fall into sin, help us to repent and return to the Lord.

With all that we are and all that we have, may we honor God.

Lord Jesus Christ, be known to us as Risen Lord as we proclaim by word and example the good news of God made manifest in you.

With all that we are and all that we have, may we honor God.

Lord Jesus Christ, reveal your presence in those persons we seek and service in your name, Especially, _____, loving our unknown neighbors as we love our families and ourselves.

With all that we are and all that we have, may we honor God.

Lord Jesus Christ, be with us as we strive for justice and peace among all people, respecting the dignity God places in every human being.

With all that we are and all that we have, may we honor God.

God the Holy Spirit, deliver us from sin and death, open our hearts to grace and truth, and fill us with your holy and life-giving grace.

With all that we are and all that we have, may we honor God.

God the Holy Spirit, keep us in the faith and communion of your holy Church as we remember those who celebrate birthdays, and those who celebrate anniversaries, especially . Teach us to love others in your power.

With all that we are and all that we have, may we honor God.

God the Holy Spirit, send us into the world to witness to your love and bring us to the fullness of your peace and glory.

With all that we are and all that we have, may we honor God.

The Celebrate concludes with a prayer.

Stewardship Prayers

O God, in whose every creation we discover a gift freely given: help us to understand that all we have comes from the outpouring of your generosity, inspire in our hearts a deep sense of gratitude, and move us to share what we have received with the same immensity of spirit in which it was given. May our gifts of substance and service be an example of Christ's enduring presence and outreach to this community and all beings. Amen.

O Lord, Giver of Life and Source of Freedom
We know that all we have is received from your hand

Gracious and loving God
You call us to be stewards of your
Abundance, the caretakers of all you
have entrusted to us

Help us always to use your gifts wisely
And teach us to share them generously

Send the Holy Spirit to work through us
Bringing your message to those we serve

May our faithful stewardship bear
Witness to the love of Jesus Christ in our lives

We pray with grateful hearts
in Jesus names.

Amen.

Abundant God, you made us in your image
and breathed in us a spirit of generosity that is both gift and response.
Move us, we pray, to give as we have received-abundantly, generously, and joyfully-
that our common ministry may ever bear witness to your unfailing grace.
In the name of the Three in whom we are One, Amen.

A Collect for Stewardship

Gracious God, giver of all we have and hold as stewards; grant the people of this church a deep and abiding awareness that all things come from you – our health, our incomes, our jobs, our talents and our generous impulse. Send your Holy Spirit to help us as we swim against the rising tides of materialism, envy, individualism and greed in our culture. When we are tempted to think of money as a private matter, remind us that you have asked for part of what we are given, to be returned to you as a symbol of our awareness that you give all we have. And further, help us to help each other in this grace of giving, for you are the lover of our souls and call us to nothing less than transformation in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(see Appendix III.J.v for more collections of prayers)
(For possible secondary use in October and November)

Appendix III.J.v Stewardship of Finances

Stewardship Resource Manual, Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire, © 2011

Prayer for the Provision of Finances

Blessed are you, Lord God of the Universe, for you create out of the cosmos this fragile earth and give life to it. You maintain our lives with the spark of our heartbeat and the growth of food from the earth. How can we do anything but respond by giving back a portion of our blessings to the life and ministry of the Church, your body on earth? Help us to be less afraid of vulnerability and thereby to loosen our death-grip on our money. Help us to see clearly the inequality in our world and to respond by giving through your body, the Church. Amen.

Prayer for the Provision of Time and Talent

Father, you breathed life into humanity and gave us various gifts and talents by which to live and move and have our being. Forgive us when we fall into the temptation of thinking that time and talent are made by us. Help us to see that our salaries and our hard work come only because of your provision of life and health and creativity. Help us as we struggle against a culture in which “time is money.” Help us to give ourselves as you did, even unto the cross. May your self-offering be our model and may your love be our encouragement. Amen.

Prayer for the Provision of Funds for a Capital Campaign

Lord Christ, you built the Church by joining Mary and John at the cross as you began to give up your earthly life. Ever since you have encouraged the Church as your body on earth to flourish and grow. From a mud hut in an ancient Celtic village to a cathedral in a bustling city you have fed the Church with energy to build and grow. Help us as we grow. As we build our (parish, church, parish hall,...) help us to see this building as a symbol and tool for preaching the good news and living the joy of community together. Provide, through your Holy Spirit, the resources and wisdom we will need. Then, when the last stone is laid and the last board nailed, dwell with us that we might be with you and through you to each other as you are within and among the Trinity, world without end. Amen.

Prayer for Those Leading Stewardship Ministries

Lord Christ, you held your ground as you communicated a message amidst support and amidst the rejection of your message. Give to us who lead stewardship ministries the strength to help our church to discuss that which it would rather ignore. Help us to speak openly about money, time and land as gift. Help us to respond to a culture for whom greed is nothing more than a scream of fear; so that our work is not merely fundraising, but is rather a pastoral ministry to a people weighed down by a spiritually deadly combination of abundance and fear. Amen.

Prayer for Use by a Vestry regarding Stewardship

Heavenly Father and Creator of all we enjoy, we give you thanks for the countless people who have gone before us in the leadership of this church. We know that the Holy Spirit inspired some as they longed for this church, others as they built this church and still others as they lovingly and boldly led this church through times of abundance and times of scarcity. Help us to be bold as we model giving of time and money to this parish. Make our bold and generous pledge a symbol of both our integrity and our gratitude. Then help us to encourage giving with one sixth of what we do and say, just as you did while physically teaching among your disciples. Amen.

Prayer for Use by Children Regarding Stewardship

Jesus, we love you and we know you love us. Everything we have is a gift from you. Thank you for play time and for our growing bodies. Thank you for our laughter and our joy. Help us to give some of our time and some of our money back to you. When we think of giving something away to someone who needs it, help us to give two and not just one. Amen.

PRAYERS FROM THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

PRAYERS FOR USE IN DISCERNEMENT

A Prayer of Self-Dedication page 832

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to thee, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly thine, utterly dedicated unto thee; and then use us, we pray thee, as thou wilt, and always to thy glory and the welfare of thy people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

A Prayer attributed to St. Francis page 833

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Prayer For Guidance page 832

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings with thy most gracious favor, and further us with thy continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may

glorify thy holy Name, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer For Guidance page 832

O God, by whom the meek are guided in judgment, and light riseth up in darkness for the godly: Grant us, in all our doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what thou wouldest have us to do, that the Spirit of wisdom may save us from all false choices, and that in thy light we may see light, and in thy straight path may not stumble; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer For Quiet Confidence page 832

O God of peace, who hast taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and in confidence shall be our strength: By the might of thy Spirit lift us, we pray thee, to thy presence, where we may be still and know that thou art God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer For the Right Use of God's Gifts page 827

Almighty God, whose loving hand hath given us all that we possess: Grant us grace that we may honor thee with our substance, and, remembering the account which we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of thy bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS FOR USE IN BUILDING UP THE CHURCH
WITH RESOURCES OF GOOD STEWARDSHIP

Prayer For the Church page 816

Gracious Father, we pray for thy holy Catholic Church. Fill it with all truth, in all truth with all peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in any thing it is amiss, reform it. Where it is right, strengthen it; where it is in want, provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it; for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son our Savior. Amen.

Prayer For the Mission of the Church page 816

Everliving God, whose will it is that all should come to you through your Son Jesus Christ: Inspire our witness to him, that all may know the power of his forgiveness and the hope of his resurrection; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Prayer For Clergy and People page 817

Almighty and everlasting God, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift: Send down upon our bishops, and other clergy, and upon the congregations committed to their charge, the healthful Spirit of thy grace; and, that they may truly please thee, pour upon them the continual dew of thy blessing. Grant this, O Lord, for the honor of our Advocate and Mediator, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer For the Diocese page 817

O God, by your grace you have called us in this Diocese to a goodly fellowship of faith.

Bless our Bishop(s) N. [and N.], and other clergy, and all our people. Grant that your Word may be truly preached and truly heard, your Sacraments faithfully administered and faithfully received. By your Spirit, fashion our lives according to the example of your Son, and grant that we may show the power of your love to all among whom we live; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer For the Parish page 817

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS FOR THE BENEFICIARIES OF OUR STEWARDSHIP

Prayer For the Poor and the Neglected page 826

Almighty and most merciful God, we remember before you all poor and neglected persons whom it would be easy for us to forget: the homeless and the destitute, the old and the sick, and all who have none to care for them. Help us to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy. Grant this, Father, for the love of your Son, who for our sake became poor, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer For the Oppressed page 826

Look with pity, O heavenly Father, upon the people in this land who live with injustice, terror, disease, and death as their constant companions. Have mercy upon us. Help us to eliminate our cruelty to these our neighbors. Strengthen those who spend their lives establishing equal protection of the law and equal opportunities for all. And grant that every one of us may enjoy a fair portion of the riches of this land; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS FOR THE STEWARDSHIP OF THE LAND

Prayer For Knowledge of God's Creation page 827

Almighty and everlasting God, you made the universe with all its marvelous order, its atoms, worlds, and galaxies, and the infinite complexity of living creatures: Grant that, as we probe the mysteries of your creation, we may come to know you more truly, and more surely fulfill our role in your eternal purpose; in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer For the Conservation of Natural Resources page 827

Almighty God, in giving us dominion over things on earth, you made us fellow workers in your creation: Give us wisdom and reverence so to use the resources of nature, that no one may suffer from our abuse of them, and that generations yet to come may continue to praise you for your bounty; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
Other Prayers for Rogation Days are on pages 207-208 or 258-259.

Prayer For the Harvest of Lands and Waters page 828

O gracious Father, who openest thine hand and fillest all things living with plenteousness: Bless the lands and waters, and multiply the harvests of the world; let thy Spirit go forth, that it may renew the face of the earth; show thy loving-kindness, that our land may give her increase; and save us from selfish use of what thou givest, that men and women everywhere may give thee thanks; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer For Rain page 828

O God, heavenly Father, who by thy Son Jesus Christ hast promised to all those who seek thy kingdom and its righteousness all things necessary to sustain their life: Send us, we entreat thee, in this time of need, such moderate rain and showers, that we may receive the fruits of the earth, to our comfort and to thy honor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer For the Future of the Human Race page 828

O God our heavenly Father, you have blessed us and given us dominion over all the earth: Increase our reverence before the mystery of life; and give us new insight into your purposes for the human race, and new wisdom and determination in making provision for its future in accordance with your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS FOR THE GOOD STEWARDSHIP OF FAMILIES, FAMILY LIFE AND COMMUNITY

Prayer For Families page 828

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who settest the solitary in families: We commend to thy continual care the homes in which thy people dwell. Put far from them, we beseech thee, every root of bitterness, the desire of vainglory, and the pride of life. Fill them with faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness. Knit together in constant affection those who, in holy wedlock, have been made one flesh. Turn the hearts of the parents to the children, and the hearts of the children to the parents; and so enkindle fervent charity among us all, that we may evermore be kindly affectioned one to another; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer For the Care of Children page 829

Almighty God, heavenly Father, you have blessed us with the joy and care of children: Give us calm strength and patient wisdom as we bring them up, that we may teach them to love whatever is just and true and good, following the example of our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer For Young Persons page 829

God our Father, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world: Show them that your ways give more life than the ways of the world, and that following you is better than chasing after selfish goals. Help them to take failure, not as a measure of their worth, but as a chance for a new start. Give them strength to hold their faith in you, and to keep alive their joy in your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer Over Pledge Cards *from The R. Rev. Greg Rickel, Diocesan Bishop, Diocese of Olympia*

Gracious and loving God, giver of all that is good and true and beautiful and life-giving. These cards represent our sweat, they represent our lives, they represent our dreams. The pledges which we make on them are but tokens of the awesome gifts that have been given to us and they are pledged in thanksgiving for all we have received, for all we have been inspired to be, for all we are challenged to become, in this place.

May they be the first fruits of all we have and not what we have left over, so that we may live out as closely as possible how you give to us. May we see them as our offering to you, sacred, holy, yet earthy, filled with possibilities. May we hold this image in our hearts and minds so as we watch our offerings each week come to your table, we can see our very selves being part of this offering, it is us on the table, living sacrifices to you. Amen.