



Hickory Neck Nuggets

June 2013

The Balance of Being a Faithful Steward

By The Reverend Michael L. Delk

There are things about stewardship I've not been telling you, not out of any desire to mislead you or conceal important information, but because I am growing in faith, just like you, and God's grace keeps leading me to wisdom, new ideas and understandings about this discipline we call stewardship.

Much of our focus on this topic revolves around giving a portion of what we receive, in terms of our time and spiritual gifts, and through financial contributions, which are a representation of our time and gifts, because that is what we exchange for money – our time and abilities. I think we focus so intensely on these aspects of stewardship because of their very real practical necessity for our mission and ministry as a community.

However, we also devote much attention to these pieces of stewardship out

of fear, the anxiety bred by an attitude of scarcity, a patently false concept, considering God's unfathomable abundance. These elements of a healthy stewardship, what we do with our time and money, cannot be neglected, but they are not the sole constituents of a robust, Christ-centered practice of stewardship.



For instance, increasingly our thoughts have turned toward the environment when we speak of stewardship, as we become more aware of the responsibility and privilege God granted humanity at beginning of creation in Genesis 1.

We take what we need from the environment, careful to take only what we require, and in return we give creation our care by trying not to harm it and by doing things, like nurturing living things, that enhance and strengthen our earthly home.

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Sign-up sheets for the weekly **House Church** gatherings during Pentecost are posted in the Narthex.

Drivers are needed occasionally to transport parishioners to church or to doctors' appointments.

This particular ministry is vital to those who are unable to drive, and it is a great opportunity to show God's love to those who need it most. Please let Sue Edwards know if you are willing to be a driver. Email suedwards@cox.net or call **(757) 206-1029**.

At Hickory Neck, we welcome everyone to participate in everything freely, member or non-member. However, if you would like to become an official member of Hickory Neck, we want to make that happen for you. Simply call our office, 566-0276, or speak to Father Michael or Father Henry. There are several ways to join. If you have not yet been baptized, we would be overjoyed to speak with you about receiving the Sacrament of Baptism. If you are already baptized, we can transfer you in as a baptized member, and if your letter of membership resides in another congregation, we can write them and effect the transfer. Official membership entitles a person to vote and stand as a candidate in parish elections, but making the commitment of membership is also a good way to affirm your commitment to the mission of Jesus Christ in this place.

Vestry Highlights

The vestry met on May 14, 2013 in the Wilkinson Center. Fred Boelt gave the treasurer's report. Our April income was under budget by \$213.00. Pledges were behind, but non-pledges and loose plate were ahead. Year to date, income is over budget by \$5,552.90. An extra payment of \$500.00 was applied to the mortgage principal.

In the last month, HNC has had one marriage, one funeral, and one family transfer in.

In May we will start our House Church home communion services. Look for the sign-up sheets in the Narthex. We are hoping for good participation.

Children's Ministry is going well, but could definitely use more volunteers. These volunteers are needed in the Nursery, Children's Chapel, and the Sunday School.

The next vestry meeting will take place on June 11, 2013 at 7:00 pm in the Wilkinson Center.

Jean Jundt, Register

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Deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month. Items received after this date will be considered for publication in a future issue.

“A Cast of Thousands”

By The Reverend Henry P. McQueen

Some ministries can be accomplished with only a few people, and the Holy Spirit. Others, like Children’s Ministry, require a “cast of thousands.” We can be thankful that so many are willing to commit and contribute to seeing that our children are able to grow in the knowledge and love of Christ.

Each Sunday the nursery is open and waiting to welcome our youngest. The space may be quiet one week and overwhelmed the next, but volunteers are always ready.

It is always a delight to watch the children process during the sequence hymn of the 9 am service, so that they can attend Children’s Chapel in the Narthex. Once the children are there, the leaders will often share the same Gospel reading that is being explored as part of the main service. The leaders of Children’s Chapel have flexibility so that the learning and the experience may be different each week, yet the smiles and enthusiasm remain the same.

Following the 9 am service, we can see the procession of children and adults to the Parish Hall. All the children gather together for music, and then proceed to one of three classrooms based upon age. The teachers are ready with their lesson plans and their adaptability. We have two classrooms of “Godly Play” and one for the older kids, using the “Weaving God’s Promises” curriculum.

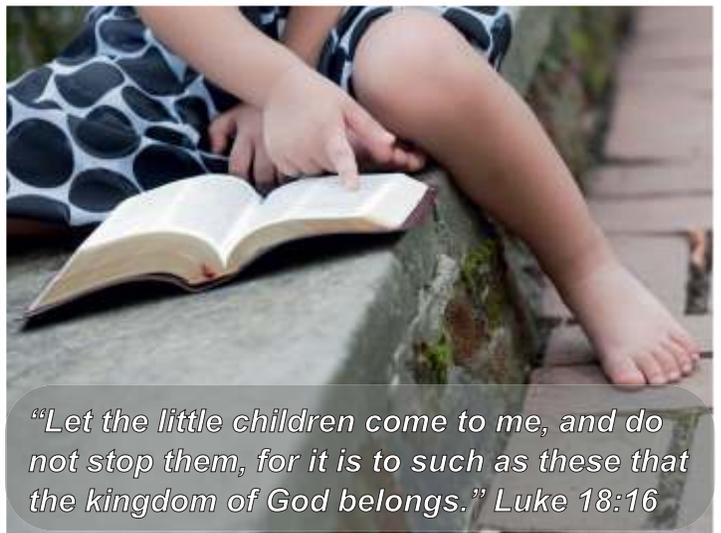
Most Sundays you can find Alan Zoellner sitting on the floor with the Pre-K and Kindergarten age children. He will be telling a Bible story using the wooden pieces of Godly Play, and he will be exuding a quiet presence that teaches more about the Bible than words can convey. Alan has been teaching our children for 20 years! It is with mixed feelings that we re-

cognize his retirement from Sunday School; it is also with overwhelming joy that we think about the countless children whose lives he has blessed.

When the school year ends, the Children’s Ministry continues. Each summer Saint Martin’s, Bruton, and Hickory Neck join forces to offer Vacation Bible School to all the children of the three parishes.

Over three dozen parishioners work hard to provide these opportunities for our children. On Sunday June 9 we will honor these ministers between the 9 am and 11:15 am services. We will also honor the children who participate in Sunday school, as well as the four graduating seniors who are a part of our Youth Group.

This “cast of thousands” contributes countless hours so that our children will be well grounded in faith and love as they grow and mature. Please help us honor those who contribute so much to this ministry, and please be open to the Holy Spirit, who may be calling you to honor the children by becoming part of it.



“Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.” Luke 18:16

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Our parish garden is a marvelous example of environmental stewardship, as people work land that would otherwise lie fallow, bringing forth useful beauty, while gently eschewing the use of chemicals like herbicides and pesticides. We also started recycling at Hickory Neck several years ago, and I cannot imagine how many trees stand today, because our recycled bulletins and sermons and class notes and memos have taken their place.

Stewardship includes all of these things – time, money, and environment – yet goes beyond them. To be generous with our resources, whatever form they may take, involves seeking out a balance, much as we strive to do with our environment, but with the entirety of who we are. And as we seek this balance, which brings great joy and peace, we need also be aware that this balance seeks us. We cannot earn, deserve, or grasp the blessing of balance in our lives. It comes to us as a grace freely offered, ready for our acceptance, though our intention toward this balance – our vigilant quest to notice and experience it – remains a vital part of the process.

Viewed from this perspective, stewardship is an all-encompassing element of a faithful life, a discipline that transcends the narrow bounds we often place upon it. Many words could be substituted for stewardship to describe this, but serving as a steward entrusted with God's goodness is a solid biblical concept, deeply spiritual yet eminently practical.

Every moment yields an opportunity for stewardship, and how we respond starts internally and moves outward. Consider, for example,

those episodes when someone gives you the cold shoulder and you feel excluded, or a sentence escapes your mouth before your brain got into gear and you obsess endlessly over how it was received and how people felt about what you said.

To be generous with our resources, whatever form they may take, involves seeking out a balance...with the entirety of who we are.

Are those moments spent with toiling over emotions of angst, worry, frustration, and insecurity really the best use of your time, or might being a good steward in that situation mean letting go, reveling in the steady love of God, and forgiving the offender (even if the offender was you)?

How we handle our emotions and channel that energy, instead of allowing our feelings to dominate us - that is an act of stewardship -and it affects our equanimity, our relationship with other people, and our relationship with God. I could conjure an endless list of examples, but so can you.

This steady sequence of being called to exercise faithful stewardship can feel overwhelming, especially if we believe that it all depends on us. That is why we rely on God's guidance

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and grace. That is why our persistent attention to God’s presence proves so essential. At the heart of any faithful effort of stewardship lies prayer, a stewardship of time we devote simply to being, in a world that insists we constantly do, do, do. Being with God in prayer empowers us to do what is needful. It is a source of inexhaustible energy and wisdom.

When we identify our lives, not with transient things like where we live and our occupation, but with the balancing practice of persistent stewardship, we connect with deeper experience of who we are as children of God. In that holy experience, we find freedom. When we look at ourselves chiefly as stewards, we waste less and experience life as a gift offered and received, unafraid of there not being enough, because we worship an Almighty God, eager to share with us his immeasurable abundance.

Nearly five centuries ago, the Protestant reformer Martin Luther, beset by opposition and mortal danger, awoke every morning,

and when his feet hit the floor, he whispered, “I am baptized.” I encourage you, tomorrow morning when you get out of bed to whisper or shout, “I am a steward,” and focus your intention that day on living into this God-given identity. You might find by day’s end the stirring of a transformation that over time will lead you to a more centered, balanced life, at peace in the glory of God. ✠



Marriages: William Bryce Corlett & Rebecca Leigh Smith –April 6
 Carl Ryan Franklin Robins & Ana Giansy Silva Ulloa – April 20

Burials: Arthur F. Johansen, Jr. – died April 21, Requiem May 4

Transfers In: Doug and Lisa Cash with their children, Sadie and Brody



Birthdays

| | | | |
|----|------------------|----|-----------------|
| 2 | Ellie Pruitt | 14 | Ginny Daughtrey |
| 3 | Sandy Harvey | 15 | Eve Gee |
| 3 | Melissa Casheros | 15 | Alyssa Deal |
| 6 | Georgia Irby | 18 | Shirley Forde |
| 7 | David Baum | 19 | Ryan Byrd |
| 7 | Joe Orth | 22 | Michael Delk |
| 7 | Elizabeth Baum | 24 | Paula Simmons |
| 10 | Mark Kintner | 24 | Evan Casheros |
| 10 | Bob Williams | 25 | Stuart Hughes |
| 10 | Linda Matthews | 26 | Chris Ellmers |
| 12 | Janet Blair | 26 | Bill Forloine |
| 13 | Jesse Hodges | 26 | Kelli Dugan |

Anniversaries

| | |
|----|---------------------------|
| 5 | Lauris & Tom Zeni |
| 6 | Stephanie & Michael Delk |
| 9 | Sandy & Gary Harvey |
| 13 | Nancy & Steve Snyder |
| 16 | Rebecca & Alan Zoellner |
| 17 | Betty & Bill Harrison |
| 18 | Jennie & Jeffrey Seiler |
| 21 | Ashley & Waverly Ferguson |
| 24 | Donna & Paul Casanave |
| 26 | Louanne & Tom Martin |
| 27 | Bunky & Rick Garfield |
| 29 | Linda & Jim McGee |
| 29 | Linda Wever and Jim Ball |

Did we miss your big day? If your birthday or anniversary is this month and you are not listed above, please send the information to Nuggets@hickoryneck.org



04/30/13

| | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| YTD Budget Income | \$138,914.00 |
| YTD Actual Income | \$144,466.90 |
| YTD Budget Expense | \$142,643.26 |
| YTD Actual Expense | \$141,494.77 |

Overall, April was an acceptable month, financially. Income was under budget by \$213 for the month, but over budget by \$5,553 for the year. While pledges are running a little behind, non-pledge and loose plate continue to be over budget. Expenses for April were over budget by \$868, largely due to timing on some of our payroll accounts. Year-to-date expenses were under budget by \$1,148, allowing us to finish in the black by \$2,972. Additionally, we made a \$500 extra payment on the principal of our loan. As of May 1st, the loan balance is \$289,127.

We have just experienced Blackberry Winter, a cool, wet period that happens every May as the blackberry bushes start to bloom. This is usually followed by a warming trend that helps the newly set berries to ripen and become sustenance for mankind. Just as nature is renewed each spring, may our own faith be renewed and nurtured on our Holy Hill as we spread the good news far and wide!

Fred Boelt





Our Prologue

by Martha W. McCartney

A Very Early Iranian Christian

John Martin (Marten), who arrived in Virginia in August of 1618 on the Neptune, was present when the late Thomas West, Lord Delaware, was buried at Jamestown. He was one of Lord Delaware's indentured servants or contract workers and in time, he became one of Governor George Yeardley's most trusted employees. In fact, court testimony Martin gave on two occasions reveals that he lived in Yeardley's home at Jamestown and often visited foreign ports and conducted business on his employer's behalf.

In 1622, when Martin testified before an English court, he stated that he was age 29 and was a gentleman, that is, a man of elevated social status. He also indicated that he had been aboard the Neptune at the time of Lord Delaware's death. Martin added that in 1619 he and some of Delaware's other men had been sent to the West Indies on the ship Treasurer, which captured an Angola vessel on which some of the very first Africans were brought to Virginia.

In 1622 John Martin, who was planning to establish a plantation in Virginia, asked Virginia Company officials not to consider him a "foreigner," a category which would have required him to pay increased customs rates.



In presenting his case, he pointed out that he was a stockholder in the Virginia Company, but more importantly, that he was a Christian. To underscore his claim, he said that although he had been born in Persia, he had been baptized and catechized and could recite the Lord's Prayer.

In April of 1630, when Martin again testified in court, two other witnesses said that he was commonly known as "the Persian," although some people thought that he was Armenian. John Martin was still alive in 1637. It's unlikely that we'll ever know when or where he became a Christian. ✚



HNC

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Seeing Red at Hickory Neck



These redcoats were more than welcome at our historic colonial church in April for the wedding of Rebecca Smith and Bryce Corlett (an alumnus of the Colonial Williamsburg Fifes and Drums).

The congregation got into the spirit of the Feast of Pentecost on May 19 by turning the chapel into a sea of red.

