

From Pastor Eric's Desk ...

We are getting into that busy season of the year – assuming of course that things aren't already busy for you. It seems that Reformation Day (or what most celebrate as Halloween) begins the craziness and high-pace of holiday life. We ran out at the last minute to get enough candy for the kids who come to our door yelling "trick-or-treat". We rush from store to store to be sure we have all the trimmings for our Thanksgiving Dinner, we decorate the house, we invite friends and family, we eat way too much and then say "we are not doing it like this next year." Then we discover that Christmas is coming and we start the chaos of planning and the bustle of getting "just one more thing" all over again. We often get stressed out over who is coming (or not coming) to our house for our celebration. Then the New Year comes and we make a bunch of promises to "do it differently."

Well, in some ways it is no different here at Gloria Dei. As the church calendar draws to a close with the last of the "Sundays after Pentecost" on November 21, we find ourselves reflecting on Stewardship and our giving to God. During this month of busyness we are going to be intentional about slowing down a bit and thinking about what God would have us doing in our lives. In his book, "Giving to God" Mark Allan Powell has this to say about stewardship:

Stewardship is not just a way of life; it is a good way of life. In fact, for many, it is a way to a better life. Think of it this way: stewardship means belonging to God. It means allowing God to rule our lives, putting God in charge of everything, including our time and our money. I can understand why that might sound threatening – surrendering control does not come easily to any of us. But God is good at ruling people's lives. If we really do belong to God and if we really do put God in charge of everything, we will not be the worse for it.

Our timing could not be better. Before we kick into the high gear of holiday planning and hustle and bustle, let's stop and consider what God is calling us to be about. How will we budget our money in the coming months and year? How will we spend our free time? Who will we spend time with? Where is God challenging us to take a leap of faith and trust that God's hand is guiding us and that even if we stumble God will not leave us alone? These are questions that we MUST wrestle with if we are to call ourselves Christian or disciple or follower of God.

During the month of November you will be given many opportunities for how you will trust God with your resources – your time, your talents, your finances. Some of these will be ways that you can use these resources at Gloria Dei. Some of these will be ways that you can use these resources with your family and friends. Some of these will be ways that you can use these resources with strangers. All of these are ways that you can put God in charge of everything.

Blessed to be a Blessing,

Pastor Eric