

Steward Builders

Information to help you grow as a steward.

The purpose of this article is to share God's Word so that our members will better understand who we are to be and what we are to do in the light of the Scriptures. It is our hope that this information will help you grow in your relationship with the Lord and as a Christian steward.

God's New Creations

As the spring season begins, we see signs of new life. Bushes and trees that were bare and brown begin to sprout leaves. We see the beauty of new flowers. Grass becomes a beautiful green. Every spring, God unfolds new life.

In the same way that God creates new life in nature around us, He makes us new creations through the power of His Word and Sacrament. Through these means of grace, He removes our old nature and transforms us into His likeness.

A story is told about Michelangelo. He was found chipping away at a block of marble. When he was asked what he was carving, Michelangelo answered, "I am not carving anything; I am releasing the angel from the stone." Just as Michelangelo removed layers of stone to release the angel, God removes the layers of our sin, releasing us from its bondage and changing us from self-centered greedy people in to God-centered giving people. *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"* (2 Corinthians 5:17). Because of God's love for us, we become people filled with His love that flows through us to others.

We show that love and gratitude for what God has done for us by sharing the life-

saving Gospel with others as well as the giving of our time, talents, and treasures. Through the proper use of our blessings, we put our faith into action. May God continue to bless you as you use the new life God has given you in His service.



God says, "Yes!"

We are only three chapters into Genesis when we come upon the sad story of the fall of man into sin. Because of their rebellion and disobedience, God said, "No, you can't stay in the Garden." But, because of His love, mercy, and compassion, He also said, "Yes, I will rescue you. I will send you a Savior." This was not a plan concocted at the spur of the moment; He had resolved from eternity to provide a way of escape from eternal death.

So, *"when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons"* (Galatians 4:4-5). Once again God was saying, "Yes!" in Christ.

The seasons have passed – Advent and Christmas, Epiphany and now we are in Lent. This month we celebrate the greatest "Yes!" that God spoke as Christ came out of

the tomb. “Yes! He is risen!” And because He is risen, we, too, will rise and live eternally. We agree with the Apostle Paul who declared, “*No matter how many promises God has made, they are ‘Yes’ in Christ*” (2 Corinthians 1:20).

Paul continues in that verse, “*And so through Him the ‘Amen’ is spoken by us to the glory of God!*” We speak that “Amen!” by determining again, by God’s grace given us through His Holy Word and Sacraments, to do those things that honor God and benefit those around us. With joyful and generous hearts, we celebrate the new life that Easter brings us by sharing the message of the Cross and the Empty Tomb with all who will listen.



Letting God’s Light Shine

In the beginning God said, “*‘Let there be light,’ and there was light. God saw that the light was good*” (Genesis 1:3-4). Light is so basic, so needed, and so wonderful. Light, like love, makes the world go round.

As great as the physical presence of light is, the spiritual light God has given us is significantly greater. As God changes night into daylight, so He brings us out of spiritual

darkness into His light. Psalm 18:28 says, “*You, O Lord, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light.*” We are

a “chosen people” who live a life that declares “*the praises of Him Who called [us] out of darkness into His wonderful light*” (1 Peter 2:9).

Jesus is the light. He is our power source. Without Him we live meaningless lives without purpose. With Him we do have power to change lives. In His light we can turn away from self-centered and self-indulgent lifestyles. He recreates us as selfless and generous people. As we live in His light, we have not “*a spirit of timidity,*” but one “*of power, of love, and self-discipline*” (2 Timothy 1:7).

God brings our hearts and minds out of darkness, and with His light He guides our steps. “*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path*” (Psalm 119:105). God uses His light for our protection. Romans 13:12 reads, “*The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.*” As God’s redeemed people we find courage in the words of Psalm 27:1, “*The Lord is my light and my salvation . . .*” God’s light outshines all other light. His light guides us, protects us, and saves us.

God’s light shining through us is a witness of what God can accomplish in and through His people. Being God’s lights does not mean that we need to be successful business people so our lights will shine with money and affluence. Our lights need not shine with great athletic, music, or oratory skills. The purpose of our light, Jesus said, is to point others to our heavenly Father so He may be glorified (Matthew 5:16). God wants lights of love that show the world His compassion, unselfishness, and forgiveness. We are to hold up His light so that others may see His love.

Blessings on Your Stewardship Journey!