



## What is Stewardship?

Dear Trinity Family,

On October 14<sup>th</sup> we will once again be kicking off our Stewardship campaign here at Trinity Episcopal Church of Belleville. So what is stewardship? Hmmmm. I know every year some member or members of our congregation come to speak to us about it and then we are asked to make our annual monetary pledge to support our Church. In asking myself this question, I researched and found an essay by Bill Peel of the High Calling in which he suggests stewardship is based on 4 principles:

1. Ownership: God owns everything.

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." Psalm 24

2. Responsibility: We are called to manage that which is God's.

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy." 1 Timothy 6:17

3. Accountability: We will be held accountable.

We will be held accountable to God for how well we have managed the things he has entrusted to us, including our time, money, abilities, information, wisdom, authority and relationships. Matthew 25:14-30

4. Reward: We will be rewarded for being good stewards.

"Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" Matthew 25:21

In a nutshell, I see stewardship as a cyclical process of giving and receiving. I would like to share with you how I see the principles of stewardship present in my life and the lives of my family members...specifically a history of what the Hill family has received and how we try to give back to our Trinity home.

Around 2005, I contacted Reverend Stacy Salles as we were searching for a church home. Upon her gracious invitation we attended service that Sunday and were enthusiastically greeted by several members, who introduced us to many others. We received such a wonderful welcome and we knew our search was over. We signed our children, Joel and Jillian, up for Children's Worship where over the years they received the gifts of wisdom and mentorship from their many wonderful teachers and Secret Pals over the years. Our children received the sacrament of Baptism in 2006 at Trinity.

In 2011 Jeff was confirmed and I was received into the Episcopal Church. Jillian and Joel got involved in many aspects of worship, and when Joel's youth mission trip was looming, we started organizing Wild Game Dinners to fundraise. All of our Wild Game dinners have been a success. However the first Annual in 2015 is most memorable to me. My mother was in hospice and an hour before the dinner I received a call from the nurse saying Mom would be leaving us sometime in the next 24 hours. The emotional support, hugs and love I received from my Trinity friends that night was the only thing that got me through that evening, the death of my mom 36 hours later, and the grieving period that followed. I am truly blessed to have those Trinity friends in my life.

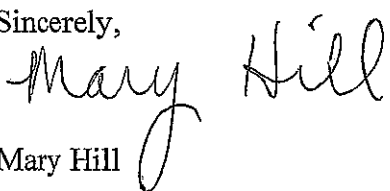
When the mission trip finally came, I ended up seriously ill and hospitalized during the first week. I had to put all of my faith in the adult leaders and received the peace of mind that allowed me to recuperate without worry. Since that time, Jeff, Joel and I have all served on Vestry. Jeff is still counting and is also Eucharistic Minister. We participated in the Youth Mentor program and host coffee hours. Since my retirement in June, I have also volunteered to help out Deacon Richard with the scheduling duties for Eucharistic Ministers and Acolytes.

Before Joel left for NMU in August, he gave a reflection to you about how this village raised him and how appreciative he is to all of you for all he has received. I want you to know that he is still receiving from Trinity even though he is 8 hours and some 470 miles away. Maggie Penhorwood introduced us to her nephew and his wife who live in Marquette. Joel has attended church with them, had Sunday dinner at their home, and gone fishing with Phillip. God has entrusted us with many blessings and gifts that we never would have received if we had not found our Trinity home.

Stewardship is so much more than merely putting an envelope in the basket on Sunday. My family has truly been blessed with the abilities, wisdom, authority, money, time, and relationships that God has entrusted to us. We are responsible for what we do with these things. We will be held accountable for how we manage these things and we trust we will be rewarded, incompletely in this life, but fully in the next.

I invite you all to join me in the fellowship hall after service on Sunday, October 14<sup>th</sup> for a Kick Off brunch and video presentation of all that we have undertaken and accomplished here at Trinity over the past year as stewards committed to God's service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Hill". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name "Mary Hill".

Mary Hill