



## President's Office

### September Devotion

**“And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.” (2 Corinthians 9:8)**

Rev. Justin Panzer, District President

I have been a regular subscriber of the monthly LCMS *StewardCAST* e-newsletter for many years. The stewardship messages are always focused on Christ and in Christ. Everything that we do as “stewards or managers” of God’s gifts flows from our baptism as His children. **“Living as the Baptized” calls us to be good stewards of the gifts that God entrusts to us in this earthly life.**

The July 2023 newsletter really “hit home” with me. Read these words from the newsletter:

*Most, if not all, congregations have developed a mission statement, vision, values and goals. Some are better than others. Some are more detailed. Others are more generic. However they look, they serve as a skeletal structure which connects the work of the congregation to the work of the Gospel. The business meetings of committees, boards and even congregations are often relegated to the status of necessary evils. They are things that have to be done as the process of leading a congregation is carried out. But when this is allowed to happen, a disconnect takes place. When there is a disconnect between the work of ministry and the workings of the congregation, it gives the enemies of the Gospel a toe hold. The devil loves a toe hold!*

*Instead, everything that is done in the local congregation should flow from and be directed back to the glory of God and the benefit of our neighbor. There really should not be anything superfluous to the work of the Gospel. Even reporting back to the congregation should have an intentional connection to the work of the Gospel in that place. Facts and figures, new members and transfers, building and grounds, catechesis and education, should all flow from and return to the central work of the congregation: the stewardship of the greatest treasure in all creation that is the Gospel!*

*How can this be done? One possible option would be for the congregation to develop a report structure that flows from the congregational mission statement, values and vision. This kind of report would describe how completed events, finances and other activities flow from the mission. It might sound something like “Because the Lord has this congregation in this place, the board of stewardship did these events and activities this month. It allowed for God’s people in this place to make these connections and make this ministry possible.” This connects dry facts and figures to the central work of the congregation.*

[https://resources.lcms.org/newsletters/stewardship-ministry-newsletter-july-2023/?ct=t\(email-stewardship-newsletter-july-2023\)](https://resources.lcms.org/newsletters/stewardship-ministry-newsletter-july-2023/?ct=t(email-stewardship-newsletter-july-2023))

So, how does this impact our work as the congregations and schools of the Kansas District? Our messaging must always point to the crucified and risen Savior. Christ alone is “our focus.” He is the reflection of all that we do to proclaim the Savior in word and deed to this hurting and dying world.

Consider using our **“Narrative Budget Guide”** that we have developed if you haven’t already done so; <https://kslcms.org/kansas-district-stewardship/congregational-stewardship/>. Connect what you do with a purpose. **God abundantly bless your efforts to faithfully steward His gifts!**

~ President Panzer

*Devotions written by President Justin Panzer are the exclusive property of the LCMS Kansas District. Permission is granted to Kansas District congregations and schools to share these devotions with their members.*