



CRESCENT SPRINGS
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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God loves a cheerful giver...in every good work.

The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. — II Corinthians 9:6-8 NRSV

It is stewardship season in the Family of God, and it seems to me that it is a season most congregations would rather simply avoid. Leaders would rather do most anything other than preparing budgets for the coming year. It means talking about giving money, and there never seems to be enough available. Hard times just aggravate the situation.

I receive a fair number of newsletters from other churches – some of which I have served in the past and others that various folks share. Most usually, they tell of the agony of stewardship time or the necessity of coming up with increased giving or cutting programs in the face of hard times. Once in a while, I read something that doesn't sound so dreary – something that seems more faithful to the advice Paul gave to the Corinthians.

There was such a piece in a newsletter from Eastminster Presbyterian Church in Columbus, and I want to share part of it. I don't know if it tells a story about actual people or not. But, it is a story about actual people I have known in another part of the world and in another time when finances were tight. So, I identify with the story, and I can replace the names with the names of real people I know who could be characters in such a story; let's call it A Stewardship Tale:

Dorothy stood in the kitchen window

of her family's farmhouse and watched as representatives of their lending institution took away every piece of farm equipment they owned. It would be sold at auction to pay down their debt, and though Dorothy and her husband still owned their land, they no longer had a tractor, disc, plow or planter with which to work it ... This happened often in the mid-1980s in rural America, and it was more painful than words can describe ...

But Dorothy was an amazing woman. The year they took the machinery, she happened to be the head of the deacons' organization at her church. And when it came time, at the end of the year, for the group to disperse its treasury to the various local and global missions it supported, there were some in the group that advocated holding on to their money, since times were tough, in case the congregation needed it to pay its bills.

But Dorothy, with quiet dignity, said to the fearful group, "You can't just stop giving," and encouraged them to give it all away as they had always done. Dorothy knew we were still called to give to others in response to God's gracious gifts to us. She knew God would sustain us through those very dark days. And she was right. God did!

A couple of weeks ago, I drove past the church in western Kansas where I served during the farm crisis of the 1980's. I met several Dorothys back then who understood stewardship. They acted out their faith, and I saw God at work among people who were cheerful and faithful in their giving, even when they had to stretch to do it.

Like the folks in Kansas, this part of the Family of God here in Crescent Springs has the opportunity to experience God's grace-- if we choose to be faithful and joyful givers ...

Between the Times.

--FHS



Fall Harvest Party Promises Fun For All!

Saturday, October 31, CSPC will sponsor a Fall Harvest Party for our church family and our community. Hours are 2:30 to 5:30 and the party is for all ages.

The event features games, costumes, prizes, crafts, chili, hotdogs, candy and fun. Plan on attending and on bringing a friend or neighbor. If guests are interested and need more information, guide them to our web site, www.cspreby.com.

A New View of Stewardship

This fall, as we do each year, we will gather our pledges—offerings of money, time and talent. We will be placing pledge cards in the offering plate each Sunday until November 22. These offerings will help us meet the obligations we need to fulfill in order to carry out the purpose of our church.

During the past year, we have seen how our gifts of time and talents can substitute for goods and services we used to purchase. Church members now serve as church secretary and take turns cleaning our church building. From our need we found a new way to meet our challenges.

Session is taking a new look at next year's budget for CSCP. There are some expenses that are mandatory and those will have the first claim on our monetary resources.

Other resources have been placed on a prioritized list. Once mandatory expenses are met, other projects will be undertaken according to the priorities on the list.

Soon you will receive a letter with more information about the stewardship campaign.

There will also be a chart posted in the Gathering Room showing our progress toward the goals in the budget. As soon as pledges are made, they will be posted, so we as a congregation can see the progress we've made toward our mandatory and prioritized budgets.

If you have questions, please contact an elder or member of the finance committee.

The "Mug Shot" tests knowledge of CSCP

When you're filling your mug with coffee in the Gathering Room, take a glance at the "mug shot," a photo of one of CSCP's coffee mugs. Each photo shows the mug in a different location in or around CSCP. If you can correctly identify the mug's location, you will win a prize.

Why a mug shot? It's fun to look at our church in a new way and the photos help attract attention to the fairly traded coffee being served during Sunday School.

Congratulations to Andrew and Evan Dunn who were winners in the first week of the Mug Shot contest. They identified the mug's location (on the base of the sanctuary candlestick) within minutes.

The Mug Shot will be next to the coffee pots in the Gathering Room, as well as on CSCP's web site. Watch for a new photo each week.

What's in your mug? . . . Enjoy fairly-traded coffee at home.

If you like the fairly-traded coffee served at CSCP, it is available for sale at CSCP. We have a few one-pound bags of the Fellowship Blend on hand, and you can also order through the sign-up sheet.

The coffee served during Sunday School is self-sustaining—coffee is purchased with the money donated, so remember to make a donation when you fill your cup.

CSPC Family Banner

Plans are underway for a new version of the CSCP Family Banner. If you would like to make a square to add to the banner, you may pick up a kit that contains a square of fabric and follow the instructions included. Please include your family name and the year you became a member, or the year you began attending CSCP. Not sure of the date? Contact Janet Stadtmiller: email jrstadt@fuse.net. Questions about making a square? Contact Martha Ann Thrasher, 341-0468. Squares are requested by Nov. 15

Gathering Prayer Requests

CSPC is using a new system to gather prayer requests during worship. If you wish to add a joy or concern, please write it on one of the prayer request cards in the center of each pew rack and place the card in the offering plate as it is passed. The liturgist and pastor will gather these for the pastoral prayer. The pew racks also have cards with information for visitors. Both cards include CSCP's new logo.

Thanks in Advance

If you are working or meeting in the church building alone or in a small group, please remember to keep the outside doors locked while you are inside. This practice is good for personal safety and the safety of our property, as well as church liability. It's simply not a good idea to have unauthorized people in the building if we're unaware of their presence.

Visitors, delivery people, etc. can ring the door bell if they need to be let into the building.

And, thanks in advance for signing up to clean, staff the office, etc.

Let's all work together safely.

Session Notes

At its most recent stated meeting, the Session of CSCP:

- Planned a special stewardship program for Nov. 1-- theme: "CSCP's Best";
- Agreed to be part of a new program sponsored by PCUSA, called "Transformation Discernment." The program offers monthly Session events and could become a leadership development tool for the national church.
- Heard a report on a congregational survey to be organized by the Church Growth and Development Committee, which will help with preparation of the church information form used in the pastor search.
- Received the news that Scott Stewart, an elder at Mt. Washington church will be assigned to help CSCP's PNC.

Calendar

Oct. 31 Fall Harvest Party at CSCP

Nov. 1 Change to Eastern Standard Time--Set clocks back one hour

Nov. 8 Informational meeting immediately after worship, about PCUSA Notes, the investment process that will help refinance CSCP's mortgage.