

Stewardship is a faith response.

Our giving is always motivated by faith, not by resources. Waldo J. Werning in his book, *Supply-Side Stewardship* reminds us:

Better incomes never have and never will produce better givers. Faith determines what we will give: The stronger the faith, the higher the percentage; the weaker the faith, the lower the percentage. Our prayer is, “Lord, increase my faith,” not, “Lord, increase my income so I can give more.”

How much money a person has does not determine how good of a steward that person is. Remember the story of the widow’s mite. While all the other “rich” people were giving their huge amounts, she gave only two mites, the smallest coins minted, and yet Jesus says she gave the most.

Our objective, then, is not to raise money, but to grow spiritually. Thus, again quoting Werning:

Money-raising campaigns and drives are not the solution to the church’s financial needs. Raise people spiritually, and you will raise money too. *Giving is a byproduct of spiritual growth.* (Emphasis added.)

The encouragement we hear coming from the pastor is to be in the Word. It is through Word (Bible) and Sacrament (Holy Baptism, Lord’s Supper) ministry (the means of grace) that we grow spiritually. And the byproduct of our spiritual growth is the physical growth of our congregation, in numbers of people, in attendance, in amount and upkeep of facilities, in all aspects. With the emphasis always on strengthening our own members, extending God’s Kingdom and giving praise and glory to His Holy Name.