



Kent Steinnagel

What Stewardship Means to Us

First in a series of parishioners' stories

My family was a real “wandering tribe” when I was growing up. Thanks to my father’s successful career growth, I went to two different elementary schools, two different Jr. Highs and three different High Schools – all totaled, five different states between the ages of 5 and 18. I often wonder how I made it through all the change, loss and grieving that accompanied each move.

Now my family was very close knit, and my parents were great “stewards” which helped a lot. But if birth-family was the only connection in my life, it would have been like taking a 15 year long road trip in our station wagon. Mom and Dad up front driving. My sister and me in the back seat. For a very long time. Not a happy thought.

Enter stewardship, in the form of Christian education and nurture. At the time, not mine to pledge, but mine to receive.

When I think of all the churches we belonged to and all the ministers, church school teachers and youth directors who connected to me via God’s mission of Christian education and nurture, I’m in awe. People I had never met before pledged to create a safe, fun, welcoming place to go, to help me develop my own connection with God. Their connection to a mission they believed in funded the expert talent, crayons and books, warm and well lit meeting rooms, that were necessary for fulfillment – God’s, theirs and mine.

Later, when I had young children of my own, this stewardship example set a successful template for the raising of my own family in Christ, and for years I either taught Church School or organized youth ministry trips.

Being a newcomer to Christ & Holy Trinity (Susan Abbott and I were married here in 2008), I am still discovering all the different ways this parish has to keep me connected. I started out with regular Sunday worship, Evensong and the occasional concert. When my job changed and I began working on Sundays, I discovered the Friday morning adult bible class, Kerygma. It’s a great connection and there’s no experience necessary. It’s my “spiritual health club” and keeps my mind and soul from getting as flabby as their mortal vessel. I invite you to all try it sometime.

So pick a mission that inspires you, that connects you to God and others. And pledge to support it.