

# Not Stewardship

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Recently, I looked up the word stewardship in the online thesaurus and was startled by what it said. The antonyms to stewardship as listed in the online thesaurus are: destruction, neglect, spending, squandering, and waste.

It has been said that it is sometimes easier to understand something by first defining what it is not. Wouldn't you agree that these 'not' stewardship words are eye opening and thought provoking? What is it that happens (or doesn't happen) when we ignore stewardship? There seems to be clear evidence in families, churches, businesses and nations that failing to address stewardship is destructive, wasteful and neglectful—just like the thesaurus says.

In other words, not paying attention to stewardship is wasteful. To cease to be good stewards is not just lazy, it is destructive! So stewardship is about how we live all of our lives in response to God's love. It's not a dirty word and it's not irrelevant. If anything, it needs a rebirth, and the church needs to lead the way.

Several weeks ago, I was told about a church council member in one of the congregations of the synod who made the statement, "We don't need stewardship here!" I must say that I couldn't disagree more. As baptized

children of God, we have all been commissioned in water and the word to live as God's own and as disciples of Jesus Christ. In order to respond to God's mercy and grace, we need to honor the role that stewardship plays in our lives. Oversight and management of all God's blessings is a crucial piece of our life of faith. "Do not neglect the gift that is in you..." 1 Timothy 4:14



We are once again invited to work to build up the Church for the sake of Jesus Christ, to attend to all the opportunities that abound around us to make Christ known in word and deed, and to grasp hold of all God's promises that God's glory and praise may be flung into the world.

*To download this article or for more stewardship and mission support resources, visit [www.neiasynod.org/synod\\_resources/Stewardship-MissionSupport.asp](http://www.neiasynod.org/synod_resources/Stewardship-MissionSupport.asp).*

## Share Ministry on Aging Ideas

The Northeastern Iowa Synod's Ministry on Aging Network wants to learn about good ideas and activities for seniors from all around the synod and share them with all synod churches and communities.

The Ministry on Aging Network values senior members as great assets to the Christian community, and encourages congregation members to ensure that every senior member is connected in a significant way with other church members on a regular basis. The Network is a resource for congregations that would like to be more involved in ministries with seniors, such as family caregiving, support for caregivers, creating advance directives and talking as a family about end-of-life issues, including presentations on "Five Wishes."

To contact the Network with your congregation's ideas or requests, email Rev. Bill Straka, [wrstraka@mchsi.com](mailto:wrstraka@mchsi.com), or Rev. Lauryl Ivers, [stocknls@ihs.org](mailto:stocknls@ihs.org), or call or email Rev. Mark Anderson, [AndersonM@neiasynod.org](mailto:AndersonM@neiasynod.org), 319-352-1414.

To learn more about the Ministry on Aging Network and available resources, visit [www.neiasynod.org/synod\\_resources/Aging.htm](http://www.neiasynod.org/synod_resources/Aging.htm). To learn about the educational programs offered through Wartburg College's Social Work Department, contact Lynn Peters, 319-352-8472, or visit [www.wartburg.edu/socwork/aging.html](http://www.wartburg.edu/socwork/aging.html).