

STEWARDSHIP GIVING FROM THE HEART

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”
-Matthew 6:21

As summer’s long, light filled radiance shifts to autumn’s deep colors of burgundy and gold and the silvery skies of an earlier dusk, we are invited by nature to look inward, to contemplate our direction anew, and to recommit to honoring the messages our open hearts deliver when we pay attention.

Our material treasure may allow us to find comfort and security in acquiring and getting what we need to survive, but identifying our heart’s treasure -- what we cherish -- leads us to direct our material treasure to support the things that feed our soul. What we truly treasure in life -- family, friendships, experiences, connections -- are fulfilled in our church community which helps reveal to us what our hearts truly desire.

Immanuel as a church community offers a wealth of opportunities for developing the deeper opening of our hearts through service and outreach, educational programs that inspire us to question and develop deeper understandings of the Bible, and fellowship between us that sustains us in times of challenge.

Whether it is the emotion we may feel from Brian’s original music that draws us deeper into our hearts, the messages each week from Aaron, Katie and Susan that stimulate us to examine our thoughts and beliefs, or the connections between us that reflect God’s love for us—Immanuel is rich in treasures of the heart. During the Stewardship season of re-commitment we have the opportunity to take our material treasure and support the longings of our collective hearts.

As author Anne Lamott says in her usual colorful way: “God is not a banker or a bean counter. God gives us even more, which is so subversive. God just gives, to us, to you and me. I mean, look at us! Yikes. God keeps giving, forgiving, and inviting us back.”

Our offering to and stewardship of our faith commitments reflect our desires to put God first in our lives and hearts, not material things. As Aaron wrote in one of his beautiful prayers of approach and confession: “In our hearts and in our minds we want to be more loving, more like Jesus. That is why we gather in this community. To remind ourselves of what truly matters when all is said and done, to take heart when the work of compassion seems hard and the life of faith gets difficult, to center ourselves again in You—our Maker, Redeemer, Sustainer and Friend.”

Annual Fund pledge cards will be received in worship services on Sunday, November 12th. Consider how your gift commitment can bring you closer to the things you cherish in our church community. And please contact anyone on the Stewardship Committee with thoughts, questions, or comments.

Stewardship Committee:

Kim Pacala, *Co-Chair*, Dick Curry, *Co-Chair*, Kathy Bagden, Elizabeth Hefferon, Bill Huyler, Mike Mackensen, Hal Van Gieson, Ann Winston



SPECIAL FORUM!

**Sunday, November 19
with
Rev. Dan McNerney
of Frontier Fellowship**

Rev. Dan McNerney of *Frontier Fellowship* (formerly known as Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship) will be returning to Immanuel and leading a forum on **Sunday, November 19 at 11:20 a.m.** in the Meeting House. Over the past 30 years Dan has been actively leading and connecting U.S. churches in mission trips to numerous countries in South and Central America, the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

During the past 15 years, Dan’s focus has shifted to learning and teaching on Islamic and Christian beliefs. He has become a leading educator in this critical area through his expertise gained in leading vision trips to the Middle East as well as coordinating the special church-to-mosque relationship he established 9 years ago in north suburban Chicago where 50 members from these two faith communities meet monthly and freely share their faith without inhibition. Dan is now helping other interested churches build awareness by forming similar relationships throughout the United States.

During the forum Dan will share his experiences and fresh insights developed from his very recent journey to the Middle East as well as the unique church-to-mosque relationships he is helping to establish. Please join us for what should be a fascinating forum on this timely topic, with lunch provided.



Photo by Peggy Raymond