



# The Hillside Messenger

## A Message from the Rector: Stewardship: The Use of Our God-given Gifts

**In** the first two articles of this series, I discussed the offering of our time and the offering of our financial resources to God. In this final article, I will discuss the offering of our gifts and abilities and the use of them in the service of God's kingdom, both in the extension of His kingdom and the edification of the Church.

The offering of our gifts and abilities to God is part of the offering of ourselves to God and stems from the Holy Spirit's appeal through St. Paul in *Romans 12:1-2* (KJV):

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is

your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

come one with Him in His death and resurrection (*Romans 6*). For this reason, this presentation of their bodies as "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" is their reasonable (literally "logical") service, or worship. Christians' offering of themselves to God follows logically



from the Lord Jesus Christ's offering of Himself on the cross to redeem the world. But the offering of our bodies, ourselves, to God must be a holy offering, acceptable to God. In one sense, our offering of ourselves is made acceptable

In the context of having received God's mercy in the forgiveness of their sins through their repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Christians offer themselves to God. This living sacrifice of their bodies can only be offered because they have been baptized into union with Christ and have be-

through the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit; in another sense, we are called by the same Spirit purposefully to lead righteous lives acceptable to God, lives set apart for the Lord and dedicated to Him in love. It was well known in the tradition of

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## *Stewardship: The Use of Our God-given Gifts*

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ancient Israel's animal sacrifice that every animal had to be unblemished and healthy to be acceptable for sacrifice. Here, as Christians offering ourselves as a living sacrifice, we must offer

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*Heavenly Father,  
I thank You for graciously giving  
each of Your children  
gifts and graces that can be used  
to edify and encourage  
our brothers and sisters  
in the Body of Christ.*

*Lord I dedicate  
the spiritual gifts and graces  
which You have seen fit to give me to You.*

*I dedicate what I am to You  
and pray that I may be used by You  
in a ministry to other saints of God—  
so that I may minister  
to my brothers and sisters in whatever way*

*You choose to use me—  
so that we may be  
mutually edified and encouraged  
and bring glory to Your Name.*

*Fill me, I pray,  
with the fullness of the Holy Spirit;  
take my life as a living sacrifice,  
holy and acceptable in Your sight;  
and use me to forward the gospel of grace  
in whatever way You choose.*

*I ask this in Jesus' Name.*

*Amen.*

---

the Lord holy lives that please Him. The repentance from sin and renunciation of the Devil that we first embraced in Holy Baptism, we must continually show in the course of our lives.

A central part of human life is the mind, and it is to the mind that St. Paul directs his readers' attention next. The mind decides what course of action, what career, what relationships, what activities, a person will pursue. As a major factor in the offering of ourselves to God, we must set our mind not to be conformed to this world. In other words, we must not give in to the many temptations of the world and the many insidious, evil ideas that are current in this day and age. Rather we must continually focus on God by reading the Bible and being obedient to it and, through daily prayer, exposing ourselves widely and deeply to the word of God so that we may perceive His good and perfect will. Only when we are transformed by the renewal of our mind and thinking, so that we think according to God's word, can we perceive God's perfect will clearly. For example, the ordinary church member might not believe it important to attend church services frequently, but the more he studies the Bible, the more his mind will be renewed, and he will gain a new understanding of the value of regular fellowship with his fellow-believers and the importance of worshiping together with them at church services. He will realize that frequent Sunday worship is God's perfect will, since Christians

are not just individuals, each in his own microcosm of life, but that together they are the Church of God. The presence of each edifies and benefits the others as they worship God together. In fact, as St. Paul writes in **Romans 12:5** (NIV), all Christians, "though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others." Because we are members of the Church, the Body of Christ, we are members of one another—that is, we are interconnected and linked up to one another. This means that no one of us is more or less important than any other, for we each have our own God-given purpose and function in the Church.

We are the family of God. Together we have been adopted by God the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ as God's children. Now it is sad when children of a family never e-mail or call their parents or their siblings, never visit, and never say why they refrain from these necessary periods of fellowship with one another. In families, such behavior, if long continued, is simply unacceptable. Yet some members of local congregations feel it quite acceptable hardly ever to come to church, or to call, or to e-mail, not realizing either the distress that their apparently inexplicable and prolonged absence may

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## *Stewardship: The Use of Our God-given Gifts*

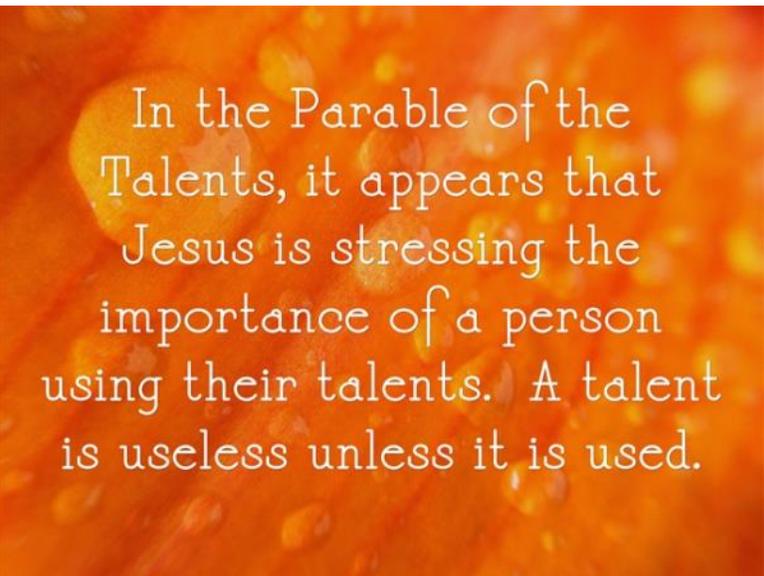
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be causing other members of the local church or the encouragement that their presence would give to others in the congregation. Each of us must realize he is a gift of God to the Church, and everyone else in the Church is God's gift to him. Therefore, one of the important ways in which we use our gifts and abilities is by coming to church services and being there for one another, staying in touch with one another, as we all should do as members of a local congregation. This, after all, is what it means to be a Chapel Family.

Once we have realized the importance of fellow worship and fellowship, we can move on to consider the gifts and abilities the Holy Spirit has given each one of us to bring glory to Him and to serve one another in Christ. Each one of us has natural or learned skills and abilities, but the Holy Spirit has given each of us a spiritual gift. Lists of spiritual gifts are found in *1 Corinthians 12* and in *Romans 12*. To these passages could be added *Isaiah 11:2-3*, *Ephesians 4:7-16*, and *1 St. Peter 4:10-11*. Examples of spiritual gifts are prophecy, wisdom, knowledge, faith, giving, encouragement, and gifts of healing. All these gifts are given by God, so that they may be used to build up the Church, or edify it.

If you have wisdom,

share it, for unless you do, none of us will know (unless he is gifted with prophetic knowledge) that you have it! If you have the gift of encouragement, please use it! It is sorely needed in the Church today. If you have gifts of healing, the Church needs you today! So many are in need of some form of healing. We can even start small groups focusing on healing and praying for it regularly. If you have a ministry of evangelism and of sharing the Gospel with young people, this, too, is a ministry which needs to be active in the world around us today. Our Lord and Savior has given each of us a responsibility to share the Gospel in ways matching our gifts and abilities (*St. Matthew 28:18-20*), but some will be especially effective in doing so and will have a ministry of evangelism. Besides this, the local congregation will always need individuals who have the skills to carry out small repairs. It will always need hospitable and loving people who make others feel at home. It will always need generous givers who can help it extend ministry to new areas or start new initiatives in the congregation or local neighborhood. None of us should think he has no spiritual gift or no role to play in the ministry of the local church. The Holy Spirit distributes spiritual gifts as He pleases (*1 Corinthians 12:11*), but He leaves no one out.

Each of us has a responsibility to discern his own gifts and abilities prayerfully and to use them well in the service of God's kingdom and the extension of it. No one should say, "I am not going to use my gift, because I don't know if it will benefit the Church or anyone." The Parable of the Talents shows us the value of using gifts given by God—it is like investing in God's kingdom and receiving a return—



In the Parable of the Talents, it appears that Jesus is stressing the importance of a person using their talents. A talent is useless unless it is used.

but the parable also warns us not to bury a God-given gift instead of using it, for then we show how little we appreciate its value (see *St. Matthew 25:14-30*). What shall we do with the gifts God has given us for ministry and service? How shall we use them? Let us use them for God's glory and for the edification of the Church!

— *The Reverend Christopher Parrish*

*Annual Parish Meeting Announced*

# Annual Parish Meeting

Sunday,  
February 5, 2017

immediately following the 10:00 AM  
Holy Communion service



The Annual Parish Meeting is an important meeting of the entire parish wherein members review and vote on the proposed budget for the coming year, elect Vestry members, and hear reports from the Rector and officers of the Vestry.

Please note that, although all are welcome and encouraged to attend, only parish members in good standing may cast votes. If you are uncertain of your membership status, please check with the Reverend Christopher Parrish. If you are unable to attend this meeting, please assign your proxy to a member in good standing by using the form which will be mailed to you.

## Our Chapel Family Prayer List

**O** God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech Thee for all sorts and conditions of men; that Thou wouldest be pleased to make Thy ways known unto them, Thy saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for Thy holy Church universal; that it may be so guided and governed by Thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we commend to Thy fatherly goodness:

Archbishop Beach;  
Bishop Ilgenfritz;  
Dean Penfield,  
our Vicar-General;  
Father Parrish;  
Deacon Vogel; and  
Deacon Bracken;

as well as all those who are any ways afflicted, or distressed, in mind, body, or estate; especially those for whom our prayers are desired:

the soldiers, sailors,  
marines, airmen,  
police officers,  
firefighters, and pilots  
who protect us every day;  
our persecuted Christian  
brothers and sisters  
throughout the world;  
Estelle Wilson;  
Julia McNeely;  
Joya de Rossett;

Louise Xavier;  
Sharon De Souza;  
Debbie;  
Scott;  
Brittany;  
Don Cottam;  
Joy Ware;  
Tanya Theiler;  
Christian McKagan  
and his parents;  
Lois Martins;  
Dale Quinn;  
Lisa;  
Ben;  
Marion;  
Max;  
Samar and her family;  
Bishop Richard Boyce;  
Dorian;  
Kate Ward;  
Kendra Pack;  
Tim Slattery;  
Ernst Hernandez;  
Helen Vanderberg;  
Father Bob Jordan;  
Father Tim and Anna  
Doubblestein;  
Deacon Chuck and Cay  
Arturo  
in their bereavement;  
Father Terry Troyer  
and his family  
in their bereavement;  
and for all those  
who are in our hearts,  
that it may please Thee to  
comfort and relieve them,  
according to their several  
necessities; giving them  
patience under their sufferings,  
and a happy issue  
out of all their afflictions.

We pray also for the repose in peace of the souls of:

Julie Arturo; and  
Walter Troyer.

And this we beg for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

*Please note:* This prayer list was current as of January 5th. Please contact Father Parrish to make corrections



**And pray in the Spirit  
on all occasions  
with all kinds of prayers and requests.  
With this in mind,  
be alert and always keep on praying  
for all the Lord's people.**

***Ephesians 6:18***

## Martha's List of Parish Ministries

The Christian life requires service to God, service to the family of faith, and service to the wider community. This list features some of the ways in which our parish currently offers opportunities for service.

Please prayerfully consider how God is calling you to serve in 2017. If you are interested in serving in one or two of these ministries, please let Julia McNeely and Kim Vogel know. Note that every ministry needs a chairperson. Chairpersons are asked to serve for a term of one year (from Annual Meeting to Annual Meeting) and to maintain a folder of activities and tips for the next chairperson. Chairpersons serve as the go-to person for their ministries. They are **not** expected to do all the work of the ministry



themselves but to lead others. Many hands make light work!

If you are currently a ministry chairperson, please update your ministry folder for the year. Kindly also inform Julia and Kim whether or not you will continue as chairperson after your term ends on February 5, 2017.

As St. Luke's grows, so, too, must our ministries. If you see the need for additional ministries that can make use of your talents, please speak to Father Parrish.

Altar Guild  
Bulletin Boards  
Children's Loose Change Ministry  
Cupboard Keeper  
Emergency Food Pantry  
Facebook Fan Page  
Faith in Action Days  
Gardening

Greeting Cards  
Historian  
Hospitality – Potluck  
Hospitality – Sunday Fellowship  
Housekeeping  
Joanna's Circle  
Lay Readers  
Mailing List/Parish Directory  
Martha's List  
Mary's Gold  
Parish Newsletter  
Pew Minders  
Photographers  
Resurrection Sunday Egg Hunt  
Special Committees

- Advertising
- Aesthetics
- Finance
- Parishioner Outreach

Ushers



## Parish Postings

There will be a **Work Party on Saturday, January 7th**, to take down the Christmas decorations and do other necessary work. We will meet at 11:00 AM in the Chapel. Please plan to join us!



**Sunday Morning Bible Study** will resume on **Sunday, January 8th**, at 9:15 AM with the study of *Joel*.



The **Vestry** will meet on **Sunday, January 15th**, immediately following the worship service.



**Joanna's Circle** will hold its first meeting of the new year at

Le Boulanger Café  
301 Main Street  
Los Altos

on **Saturday January 21st**, at 9:30 AM. All women are welcome!



**Our Annual Parish Meeting** will take place on **Sunday, February 5th**, immediately following the worship service. (Please see page 4 for additional information.)

## *Upcoming Events*

### **Sunday, January 1st**

Feast of the Circumcision of Christ

The Sunday after Christmas Day

New Year's Day

Emergency Food Pantry Collection Day

*Holy Communion with Healing Service*

10:00 AM

### **Sunday, January 8th**

The First Sunday after the Epiphany

*Bible Study: Joel*

9:15 AM

*Office of Daily Morning Prayer*

10:00 AM

*Holy Communion*

noon

### **Sunday, January 15th**

The Second Sunday after the Epiphany

*Bible Study: Joel*

9:15 AM

*Holy Communion*

10:00 AM

*Vestry Meeting*

immediately following the worship service

### **Sunday, January 22nd**

The Third Sunday after the Epiphany

*Bible Study: Joel*

9:15 AM

*Office of Daily Morning Prayer*

10:00 AM

*Holy Communion*

noon

### **Sunday, January 29th**

The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

*Bible Study: Joel*

9:15 AM

*Holy Communion*

10:00 AM





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A PUBLICATION OF  
ST. LUKE'S CHAPEL IN THE HILLS  
ANGLICAN CHURCH

A PARISH OF  
THE CONVOCATION OF THE WEST,  
PART OF THE  
MISSIONARY DIOCESE OF  
ALL SAINTS IN  
THE ANGLICAN CHURCH  
IN NORTH AMERICA

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## Worship Schedule

# St.

Luke's Chapel in the Hills is a traditional Anglican parish which uses the 1928 edition *Book of Common Prayer*. We invite you to join us for worship soon!

*"A place  
where the Bible is taught."*



Biblical in teaching.  
Liturgical in worship.  
Loving in practice.

### First Sunday of each month

Holy Communion with Healing Service  
10:00 AM

### Second and fourth Sundays each month

Office of Daily Morning Prayer  
10:00 AM

Said Holy Communion  
noon

Please note that both services on Feast Days occurring on these Sundays will be Holy Communion.

### Third and fifth Sunday each month and Feast Days

Holy Communion  
10:00 AM