

Hi, I am Jim Johnson from the St. John's stewardship committee. I am not going to spend much time on asking for money, although even with the building closed to worship it is still being used. Loaves and Fishes continues to provide meals 5 days a week and the weekly total continues to climb in this time of uncertainty about the economy and the covid pandemic. Staff still need salaries, utilities need to be paid and the building must be cleaned and maintained.

However, what I wish to talk about is something Bishop DeDe called the stewardship of self. I was reminded of this by the daily epistle reading for Wednesday (Ephesians 4:1-16). *Those of you who know me from EfM probably remember that I have a love/hate relationship with the writings of Paul.* Yet today there is a special resonance. In verse 1 he says "I beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling to which you have been called" and in verses 11 through 12 he talks about the gifts we have been given. We are to use these gifts to help build up the body Of Christ. In verses 15b through 16 Paul says that since Christ is the head and in him the whole body depends. "Bonded and held together by every constituent joint, the whole frame grows through the proper functioning of each part, and builds itself up in love."

What this means to me is that I need to know and steward myself such that I can in love do the things that I am capable and called to do. This applies to all of us as Christians. We don't have to figure out or fix everything and we all know that we can't do life perfectly. What we can do is to search for and be open to that of God in ourselves and others. That is our vocation as Christians.

Thank you for listening to me and please stay well.