

**STEWARDSHIP PREACHING IDEA**  
**2017-2018**  
**NARRATIVE LECTIONARY: YEAR 4- John**

**Sunday September 10<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**      “Creation by the Word”

Focus Text: Genesis 1:1-2:4a

Gospel Verse: John 1:1-5

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: Stewardship is part of our identity as a Child of God who has been called, created, and is loved by God (Gen 1:27-28).

**Sunday September 17<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**      “Binding of Isaac”

Focus Text: Genesis 21:1-3; 22:1-14

Gospel Verse: John 1:29

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: The gift or challenge of the idea that “The Lord will provide” (Gen 22:14), or the understanding of what an “offering” means or might mean.

**Sunday September 24<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**      “Jacob’s Dream”

Focus Text: Genesis 27:1-4, 15-23; 28:10-17

Gospel Verse: John 1:50-51

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: God’s promises of all that God has done and promises to do (Gen 28:13-14), and what is our response to this?

**Sunday October 1<sup>st</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**      “God’s Name is Revealed”

Focus Text: Exodus 2:23-25; 3:1-15; 4:10-17

Gospel Verse: John 8:58

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: God’s name is revealed to us and through us, and we each have gifts and are called to share this news, as God calls and works through us (like Moses & Aaron).

**Sunday October 8<sup>th</sup>- 18<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**      “God Provides Manna”

Focus Text: Exodus 16:1-18

Gospel Verse: John 6:51

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: God provides in abundance- what might this mean for us in our scarcity driven culture? How do we live into God’s dream and gift of abundance?

**Sunday October 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**      “God Calls Samuel”

Focus Text: 1 Samuel 3:1-21

Gospel Verse: John 20:21-23

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: All that we are and all that we are called to be, is from God. It is by God’s gift, grace, call, and blessing. What might this mean for us today? (If connecting to gospel verse- what might this mean for forgiving or retaining sins?)

**Sunday October 22<sup>nd</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

“God Calls David”

Focus Text: 1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 51:10-14

Gospel Verse: John 7:24

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: “Restore to me the joy of your salvation,” (Ps 51:12) - do we respond to God’s call joyfully or with fear, denial, or complaint?

**Sunday October 29<sup>th</sup> – Reformation Sunday**

“Solomon’s Temple”

Focus Text: 1 Kings 5:1-5; 8:1-13

Gospel Verse: John 2:19-21

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: Temples, buildings, tents, bodies... God uses all to do God’s work (and sometimes in spite of these). On this 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the start of the Reformation it is important to remember that it is God’s action in the world, not ours. All we do, is the response to God’s work and gifts.

**Sunday November 5<sup>th</sup> – All Saints Sunday**

“God Speaks to Elijah”

Focus Text: 1 Kings 19:1-18

Gospel Verse: John 12:27-28

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: God speaks in the silence, and God is with us even in the most horrible and sad times and experiences of life. God chooses to be in relationship with us. How do we steward our relationships? Our memories and lessons learned from those relationships (perhaps of saints who have dearly departed as well as those living)? And how can we steward the message, that no matter what happens in life, God is with us and wants to be with us?

**Sunday November 12<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

“Amos: Justice Rolls Down”

Focus Text: Amos 1:1-2; 5:14-15, 21-24

Gospel Verse: John 7:37-38

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: “Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream” (Amos 5:24). What is the relationship between our worship and service/ministry, and God’s work for justice in the world?

**Sunday November 19<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

“Isaiah: A Child is Born”

Focus Text: Isaiah 9:1-7

Gospel Verse: John 8:12

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: This text often heard in late Advent or on Christmas Eve reminds of God’s promises, that “a child has been for us, a son given to us...” (Isaiah 9:6). When we hear the words “for you,” or “for us,” how do we respond? In gratitude? In joy? Do we pay attention, or does it pass us by?

**Sunday November 26<sup>th</sup> – Christ the King Sunday**

“Jeremiah’s Letter to Exiles”

Focus Text: Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14

Gospel Verse: John 14:27

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: God’s work of building up the kingdom is entrusted to us as we “seek the welfare of the city” where we are and have been sent, and we pray for our communities and contexts (Jeremiah 29:7). This is in part how God’s peace, love, and mission breaks into the world.

**Sunday December 3<sup>rd</sup> – First Sunday of Advent**

“Daniel: The Fiery Furnace”

Focus Text: Daniel 3:1, [2-7], 8-30

Gospel Verse: John 18:36-37

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: God is present with us, and God delivers, just as God delivered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fiery furnace. How do we tell and live this story of our God who is not only near to us, but delivers and saves us today?

**Sunday December 10<sup>th</sup> – Second Sunday of Advent**

“Ezekiel: Valley of Dry Bones”

Focus Text: Ezekiel 37:1-14

Gospel Verse: John 11:25-26

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: “I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live” (Ez 37:14). God gives life, and life abundant. How has God given you life, and how do you live into that life abundant found only through God’s gifts and love?

**Sunday December 17<sup>th</sup> – Third Sunday of Advent**

“Word Accomplishes God’s Purpose”

Focus Text: Isaiah 55:1-13

Gospel Verse: John 4:13-14

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: In this time of preparation and likely Christmas shopping, how can we avoid the pitfalls of consumerism (spending on “that which is not bread” as in Isaiah 55:2), and instead dwell in God’s promises so that we shall “go out in joy and be led back in peace” (Isaiah 55:12)?

**Sunday December 24<sup>th</sup> Morning – Fourth Sunday of Advent**

“Word Made Flesh”

Focus Text: John 1:1-18

Psalms 130:5-8

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: No matter the darkness we find ourselves in, the Word that is God is there shining through. How do we point to this in our daily lives? How do we make space to wonder, what might God be up to? What new thing might God be doing?

**Sunday December 24<sup>th</sup> Evening – Christmas Eve**

“The Birth of Jesus”

Focus text: Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

Psalms 96:7-10

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: This is God’s work for us. Duh... Please don’t mess this up, and think it’s about what we do. We’re Lutherans after all.

**Monday December 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day**

“The Shepherds Visit”

Focus Text: Luke 2:8-20

Psalm 123:1-2

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: See Christmas Eve.

**Sunday December 31<sup>st</sup> – First Sunday of Christmas**

“A Voice in the Wilderness”

Focus Text: John 1:19-34

Psalm 32:1-2

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: John gives voice about God in Christ, calling us to pay attention and to turn toward God. How do we hear God’s voice today? Where or to what might it be calling us?

**Sunday January 7<sup>th</sup> – The Baptism of Our Lord**

“Jesus Says Come and See”

Focus Text: John 1:35-51 (could add 1:29-34)

Psalm 66:1-5

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: In the water, word, and meal, Jesus says, “come and see” (1:39). Where do we see God at work? Where is God showing up to you or through you? In baptism we make promises (see ELW page 228 or 236). How are we doing at living, hearing, proclaiming, serving, and striving? How is Jesus showing up to us and through us in these ways or in spite of them?

**Sunday January 14<sup>th</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany**

“Wedding at Cana”

Focus Text: John 2:1-11 (12)

Psalm 104:14-16

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: You could talk about the relationship of the role of a steward to stewardship (2:9), but it would probably be best to think about the idea that Jesus is able to do the extraordinary through the ordinary. Jesus turns water into wine, just as Jesus does God’s work for us, and sometimes even through us. How do we see this and point to it?

**Sunday January 21<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany**

“Jesus Cleanses the Temple”

Focus Text: John 2:13-25

Psalm 127:1-2

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: Do we sometimes lose sight of why we do what we do? Do we get so caught up in our fundraising, service, volunteerism, activities, etc., that we lose sight of the bigger picture? Is our narthex full of things to sign up for, but little explanation for how that is (or isn’t) part of our calling as followers of Christ? How do we steward our time and resources, and how might we need to adjust these and re-prioritize?

**Sunday January 28<sup>th</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany**

“Nicodemus”

Focus Text: John 3:1-21

Psalm 139:13-18

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: “God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him” (John 3:17). This is a pure gift and promise. How do we live into this and live in response to it, born anew in the Spirit?

**Sunday February 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany**

“The Woman at the Well”

Focus Text: John 4:1-42

Psalm 42:1-3

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: Jesus sees us and sees all, including a woman at the well that society might have otherwise ignored. Jesus comes near and offers life and living water. How can we open our eyes to our neighbors like this woman? And how has God come near to us and through us?

**Sunday February 11<sup>th</sup> – The Transfiguration of Our Lord**

“The Man Born Blind”

Focus Text: John 9:1-41

Psalm 27:1-4

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: How does God open our eyes? How does God change us? And how do we see and respond to what we see, and the gift of new sight and life in Christ?

**Wednesday February 14<sup>th</sup> – Ash Wednesday**

“The Good Shepherd”

Focus Text: John 10:1-18

Psalm 23

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: What a bummer that Valentine’s Day is on Ash Wednesday, but there is some balm in though we recognize that we are dust and to dust we shall return, we know that our Good Shepherd lays down his life for us and offers life abundant (10:10)? What might abundant life really mean?

**Sunday February 18<sup>th</sup> – First Sunday in Lent**

“Jesus Raises Lazarus”

Focus Text: John 11:1-44

Psalm 104:27-30

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: Jesus weeps, feeling sadness just as we do. But Jesus does what God in Christ always does, he brings a message of hope and life, and then does something even more remarkable, he shows for all to see that he is indeed the “resurrection and the life” (John 11:25). As we begin our Lenten journey, how do we live our lives changed, and how might we be changed (and resurrected) a new today?

**Sunday February 25<sup>th</sup> – Second Sunday in Lent**

“Jesus Washes Feet”

Focus Text: John 13:1-17

Psalm 51:7-12

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: “Servants are not greater than their master,” is just one of Jesus’ many signs of love and examples of what love looks like. What love or ministry in action do you see in your midst? What might you be called to join, take on, or give up? Why?

**Sunday March 4<sup>th</sup> – Third Sunday in Lent**

“Peter’s Denial”

Focus Text: John 18:12-27

Psalm 17:1-17

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: Inevitably we fall short. In this season of Lent, perhaps more than other times we acknowledge our sin, brokenness, and need for God. What areas in life, do you need to turn over to God? What are times where you wish you could go back and change things? And how can you give up those burdens you carry, and live into God’s gifts of grace and new life?

**Sunday March 11<sup>th</sup> – Fourth Sunday in Lent**

“Jesus and Pilate”

Focus Text: John 18:28-40

Psalm 145:10-13

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: “My kingdom is not from this world” (John 18:36). God’s kingdom is much different than what we might understand kingdom to mean. What are signs of the kingdom that you have seen? How do you steward your ideas, dreams, hopes, and knowledge of this kingdom?

**Sunday March 18<sup>th</sup> – Fifth Sunday in Lent**

“Jesus Condemned”

Focus Text: John 19:1-16a

Psalm 146

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: In the cries of “crucify him,” we are reminded by the psalmist that the “Lord sets the prisoners free,” “lifts up those who are bowed down,” and “watches over the strangers...” (Ps 146). How do we live in this tension? Put another way, how do we live as Easter people in a Good Friday world?

**Sunday March 25<sup>th</sup> – Palm/Passion Sunday**

“The Crucified Messiah”

Focus Text: John 12:12-27; and John 19:16b-22

Psalm 24

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: “The earth is the Lord’s and all that’s in it, the world, and those who live in it” (Ps 24:1). As we journey into and then through Jerusalem, and to the cross, we are confronted and comforted by the reminder that we are all God’s people, and everything that we have is God’s. It’s a central stewardship tenant, built on the deep understanding that God will go even to death for us, because God loves and cares for the earth that God created and all that are in it.

**Thursday March 29<sup>th</sup> – Maundy Thursday**

“Jesus’ Last Words”

Focus Text: John 19:23-30

Psalm 26:3

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: “Here is your son,” and “here is your mother” (John 19:26-27). In Jesus’ last breath, he takes care of those close to him, because Jesus cares so deeply and recognizes the depth of relationships. This is after all why he is going through this insanity of death on a cross, the death caused by sin and allowed because of unjust and broken systems and government. (Perhaps it would be nicely paired with John 13:34, a usual focal point for Maundy Thursday). How do we steward our relationships with one another?

**Friday March 30<sup>th</sup> – Good Friday**

“Jesus the Passover Lamb”

Focus Text: John 19:31-42

Psalm 31:9-18

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: Let this speak for itself.

**Sunday April 1<sup>st</sup> – Easter Sunday: The Resurrection of Our Lord** “Resurrection”

Focus Text: John 20:1-18

Psalm 118:21-29

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: As Mary Magdalene proclaims, “I have seen the Lord,” so have we (John 20:18). Where at? What all has God done for us? How are we changed? How do we respond to this ultimate Good News?

**Sunday April 8<sup>th</sup> – Second Sunday of Easter**

“Thomas”

Focus Text: John 20:19-31

Psalm 145:13-21

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: “Seeing is believing,” yet also in this story we are reminded about the call with the Holy Spirit to forgive (and also the challenge if we choose to retain those sins). How do we see the Resurrected Christ showing up in our midst? How are we challenged, and like the disciples, set loose by the breath and reception of the Holy Spirit?

**Sunday April 15<sup>th</sup> – Third Sunday of Easter**

“Paul’s Conversion”

Focus Text: Acts 9:1-19a

Gospel Verse: Matthew 6:24

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: Look up on YouTube for a recording of Egil Hovland’s moving song, “Saul.” This really puts this passage and story in perspective. How would you respond to such an experience? How would/does your life change because of this?

**Sunday April 22<sup>nd</sup> – Fourth Sunday of Easter**

“Paul and Silas”

Focus Text: Acts 16:16-34

Gospel Verse: Luke 6:18-19, 22-23

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: “He brought them up into the house and set food before them; and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God” (Acts 16:34). This is what the joyful response to what God has done looks like. What are some examples of the joyful response you can point to? What is your joyful response for all that God has done and continues to do for you?

**Sunday April 29<sup>th</sup> – Fifth Sunday of Easter**

“Paul’s Sermon at Athens”

Focus Text: Acts 17:16-31

Gospel Verse: John 1:16-18

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: Paul describes who God is (especially well in Acts 17:24-25). In this we are reminded that God has made all, and gives life and breath to all. This same God chooses to be in relationship with us, as God gives us life, hope, meaning, and purpose. What is our story that we can tell, like Paul tries to tell his and share the good news of God with the people of Athens?

**Sunday May 6<sup>th</sup> – Sixth Sunday of Easter**

“Partnership in the Gospel”

Focus Text: Philippians 1:1-18a

Gospel Verse: Luke 9:46-48

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: How are we partners in the gospel like the Philippians were with Paul (1:15-18)? How do we live this out in word and deed? This would be a good day (like any other, but perhaps more so) to highlight the different ministries that your faith community is part of, both inside and outside the congregation.

**Sunday May 13<sup>th</sup> – Seventh Sunday of Easter**

“The Christ Hymn”

Focus Text: Philippians 2:1-13

Gospel Verse: Luke 9:46-48

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: A reminder of the gifts and works of Easter that God has done for us, once and for all, and for all time. How do we live and share this good news? How are we sent out to be bearers of this message?

**Sunday May 20<sup>th</sup> – Day of Pentecost**

“Pentecost: Rejoice in the Lord”

Focus Text: Acts 2:1-21

Second Lesson: Philippians 4:4-7

Gospel Verse: John 14:16-17

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: “Rejoice always” (Phil 4:4). With the Advocate, or the Spirit of Truth (John 14:16-17), we are called, gathered, and sent to be bearers of God’s redeeming work of love and kingdom building in the world. What are some ways that you are a part of this work already? What might be some new ways that God could be calling you or preparing you for?

*For Summer 2018*, it is recommended by the Narrative Lectionary preparers that the following series be utilized:

5/27-6/17: The Ten Commandments (4 weeks)

6/24-7/15: 1 John (4 weeks)

7/22-8/12: Ruth (4 weeks)

8/19-9/2: Stewardship & Generosity (3 weeks)

Thoughts on the Stewardship & Generosity Focus:

**Sunday August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

Focus Text: Matthew 6:19-34

Psalms 51:6-9

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: The parables and advice around treasures, hearts, worries, and the kingdom of God. What does it mean to strive for the kingdom of God, and to store up treasures in heaven? (Especially as we are Lutherans who do not believe in works righteousness).



**Sunday August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

Focus Text: Mark 10:17-31

Psalm 51:10-12

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: The encounter and the conversation with the rich man underscores how hard it is to let go of our earthly ambitions and relationships and focus on God. How do we steward all that we have been entrusted with, in such a way, that God is at the center, and how we discern and let God lead us to live our lives changed in such a way that everything that we have and all that we are, are used as God has entrusted us to use them?

**Sunday September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018**

Focus Text: Luke 12:13-34

Psalm 51:15-17

Potential Stewardship Preaching Nugget: The Parable of the Rich Fool and the call to not worry. We are reminded to “sell our possessions and give alms” (Luke 12:33), and “where our treasure is, so our heart will be” (Luke 12:34). These are verses that call to mind all sorts of stewardship implications. Here’s the challenge, where can you find good news in this? (And yes, I believe it is possible to do so. But first we have an opportunity to name how hard it is- perhaps by stating the obvious that money is something that when we don’t talk about it, we give it power, and the more power it has, the harder it is to see past it and see God first.)