

DO SOMETHING FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE!

by Rev. Thomas Soltis, Stewardship Director

Church Bulletins Reveal a Congregation's Profile

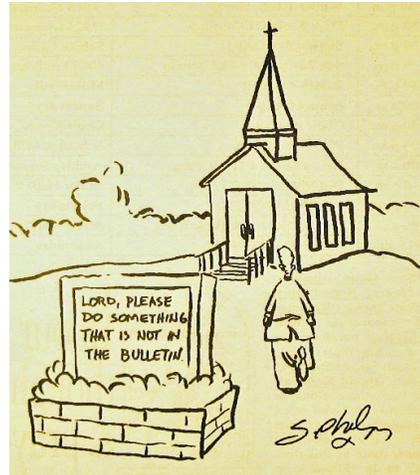
Church bulletins are revealing. They indicate what a congregation is doing (and not doing). Some congregations are busy fulfilling mission-ministry activities which Christ desires. Others are busy spinning their wheels exerting time and energy on non-essentials. Others, again, are hardly doing anything with too many do-nothing members, satisfied to attend worship services and do little else.

Feeders Only

The famous preacher, Charles Spurgeon, once commented on Job 1:14b: "The oxen were ploughing and the asses feeding beside them." (KJV) He said, "There is a similar situation in the Church. Some are energetically at work, always plowing, breaking up the fallow soil, preparing the ground for good seed and then spreading the seed around. Others are only feeding. I know some of you dear people. You never miss a service. You are always feeding, feeding, feeding. It is good to feed on the Word. It is necessary to feed. But plowing and spreading the seed of God's Word is necessary as well."

The Three "T's"

Christian stewardship calls for the consecrated use of the 3 "T's" (**Time, Talent, Treasure**) in congregations. Christ's "Great Commission" (Matthew 28:18-20) calls upon church members to make disciples of others. Billy Graham once remarked that the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod was a "sleeping giant". Our synod is finally wide awake! Two programs have been placed on synod's front burners. "**Ablaze**" and "**Fan into Flame**" call upon church members to engage in personal evangelism and fund synod for world missions. Ministries of mercy and service are important as well. The 3 "T's" of members should be engaged in meeting physical, mental, personal, educational and social needs. Psalm 82: 3-4 urges aggressive action! "Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver



them from the hand of the wicked." Church members should be busy doing such things.

What Do You Believe?

A Lutheran leader of the past century made a profound statement: "**Stewardship is all that I do after I say I believe.**" What do you believe? Do you believe:

- * that God owns all of you by reason of creation?
- * that God will own you forever thru Christ's redemption?
- * that God owns every second of your time?
- * that God owns your inherited talents and acquired abilities?
- * that God owns all of your money and possessions?

If you answered affirmatively, then you are positioned to live the life of a Christian steward. Find your niche in your congregation. Engage in the real work of the Church. Do something important for Christ that perhaps up to now has not appeared in your church bulletin.

Workers - Shirkers - Jerkers

Someone once said that the church could be divided into thirds - the workers, the shirkers and the jerkers. Don't be a church jerk hindering the work. Don't be a shirker shunning responsibility. For heaven's sake, be an energetic worker stewarding your 3 "T's"!

Resources

Contact the SELC Stewardship Dept. for a free resource to help you identify your spiritual gifts and their use in your congregation.

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