

Everything I Have Is Yours

We are in an interesting time right now between our Consecration Sunday, which wrapped up stewardship season, and the Thanksgiving holiday. We are thinking about two things that go hand in hand: thankfulness and giving. I think there is a companion piece which makes these into a trinity in which we experience God: celebration.

You may recognize the verses above as part of the story of the Prodigal Son (as we most often call it) in Luke. It is a beloved account of a father's love and forgiveness, and we understand it to be a parable about God's love and forgiveness. It is also about giving, thanking, and celebrating. The prodigal son suffers degradation and hunger, wishing he could eat his fill of what he is feeding pigs. I imagine that when he is welcomed back he feels intense *thankfulness* and *celebration*. The father is *thankful* and having a great time *giving a party*.

There is, however, the other son of the story. We struggle with him because we sympathize with him. He has experienced his life as all giving/serving and no celebration. The father's words are compelling, "You are always with me, and everything I have is yours." He is inviting his son to look at life in a new way and celebrate. Luke's story leaves unanswered the question of the angry brother ever joining the party; that is for each to answer for themselves.

When I talk about stewardship, I usually emphasize that everything we have is God's, and we are responsible to use it to serve God. But what if we need to turn things around sometimes to be truly thankful and celebrate? Everything God has is ours. God is always with us. God is continuously inviting us to the salvation party. Hooray! Let's join in!

We know from "studies" that giving makes us happier and healthier. The Finance Committee recently heard that saying "thank you" can also make us happier and healthier. And surely celebrating with each other and with our God can make us happier and healthier.

Happy GiveThankCelebrate season!

by *Rev Karen Oehl*

Then his father said, "Son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad because this brother of yours was dead and is alive. He was lost and is found."

Luke 15:31-32

STAFF:

Pastor: Rev Karen Oehl
revoehl@gmail.com

Assistant Pastor: Rev Bob Alexander
reverendrla@yahoo.com

Admin Asst./Financial Secretary:
Rhonda Williamson,
officegaystumc@gmail.com

Treasurer: Sherri Pembrook

Organist: Bob Hendrickson

Wesley Ringers Dir: Mary Kepple

Chancel Choir Dir: Mary Kepple

Youth Bells Dir: Heather Stewart

Children's Choir Dir: Suzy Springer

Kitchen Mgr.: Karen Pritchard

Custodian: Keyaira Daniel