# Five Stewardship Learning Together Moments

*—by Amy Crawford, Team Leader: Communities in Mission, The United Church of Canada*

*You might want to have some sort of journey symbol that you incorporate each week. For example, you could have footprint cutouts, and at the end of each message tape two footprints on the floor heading to the altar or cross. Tell the children these footprints are a reminder of our journey together and that each week you’ll add more.*

*You could also wear a backpack during each Children’s Time and remind the children that we are on a journey together, and we always need a backpack or something to carry supplies when we’re on a journey.*

## Children’s Time, Week 1

*Greet the children as they gather and join you.*

Over the next several weeks our church is going on a journey together. It’s a journey of stewardship, and we’re hoping we’ll get closer and closer to God each week of the journey.

Does anyone know what the word “stewardship” means? It means taking good care of something you have or something someone else has and asks you to care for.

What are some things you have and take care of? (*Possible answers: pets, plants, rooms, siblings.*)

Has anyone ever asked you to take care of something for them? (*Suggestions: gather newspapers or mail or water plants for a neighbour on holiday; pet sit or babysit.* *Maybe a friend has just lent them an item and asked them to take care of it.*)

It can be a lot of responsibility to take care of things, can’t it? How do you feel when you know you’ve taken good care of something?

When you take good care of something you are being a good steward, and you are practising good stewardship.

Some of the biggest and best things we have to take care of were given to us by God. Can you think of some of the gifts God has given to people? (*Possible answers: the world, families, Jesus, love.*)

Why do you think God gave us such big things to take care of? (*Possible answer: God trusts us and believes we can do a good job.*)

How do you think God feels when people do a good job of taking care of the earth and one another?

How do you think God feels when we don’t do such a good job?

As we journey together over these next few weeks, we’ll talk more about how to be good stewards of all that God has given us.

Let’s say a prayer together, shall we? (*Ask the children to repeat after you:*) Dear God, we thank you for the many gifts you have given… Teach us to care for those gifts… Amen.

## Children’s Time, Week 2

*Greet the children as they gather and join you.*

Last week I told you our church is on a stewardship journey together and we are hoping we will get closer to God each week of the journey. Does anyone remember what the word stewardship means? (*Provide the answer if necessary.*) Does anyone remember what a good steward is? (*Provide the answer if necessary.*)

As people of God we believe God has given us many gifts and asked us to care for those gifts. God really trusts us with a lot!

One of the gifts God has given us is the gift of time. Did you know God gave us the gift of time? One of the ways we can say thank you to God for this gift is by using our time wisely.

What are some ways you could use your time as a way of thanking God? (*Possible answers: prayer, coming to church.*)

What are some ways you could use your time to take care of some other gifts of God? (*Possible answers: Doing something to care for the earth: picking up garbage, recycling, walking instead of getting a ride, planting a tree. Doing something to care for someone else: reading to a younger sibling or friend, visiting an elderly person who is lonely, doing an extra chore around the house. Doing something to care for the church: helping to clean up your Sunday school room, handing out bulletins, greeting people as they come to church.*)

Can you think of ways you might waste your time or spend your time in ways that might harm God’s gifts to us? (*Possible answers: fighting with a family member or friend, watching too much TV, ruining something someone else has made.*)

This week, try to think of ways you could use your time to take care of God’s gifts to you and to share God’s love with other people and the world.

Let’s say a prayer together, shall we? Dear God, thank you for the gift of time… Help us to use our time in ways that honour you and each other… Amen.

## Children’s Time, Week 3

*Gather and greet the children.*

We’re still on our stewardship journey together. We’re still thinking about ways we can take care of the gifts God has given to us so we can grow closer to God.

Last week we talked about God’s gift of time, and we thought of ways we could use our time to honour God, one another, and all the gifts of God.

Today I thought we would talk about the talents God has given to each of us. Can any of you tell me what talent God has given to you? (*Possible answers: reading, singing, athletics, being a good friend.*)

Can you think of ways you might practise good stewardship by using your talents for God? (*Possible answers: reading the Bible in church, singing in the choir, teaching a younger child how to throw/catch/kick a ball, offering your friendship to someone who is new in your school or to someone in your neighbourhood or church who is lonely.*)

It is possible to waste the talents God has given us. We can waste our talents by not using them, by thinking someone else can sing better, or read better, or play hockey better than you.

It’s also possible to use talents in ways that might hurt other people or hurt the earth.

We practise good stewardship as we use our talents in ways that honour God and one another. This week I hope you’ll think of one way you might use your talents to be a good steward. Will you do that? Remind me next week to find out how you used a talent for God, okay?

Let’s say a prayer together. Dear God, we are thankful for the talents you have given us… Help us to use our talents in ways that honour you and those around us… Amen.

## Children’s Time, Week 4

*Gather and greet the children.*

Whew! We’ve been on a long journey here at United Church. We’ve been on a journey of stewardship. This is our fourth week on the journey, and I think we’re getting closer to God as we think about ways to take care of all that God has given to us.

We’ve thought about ways we could use our time to honour God and show God’s love in the world. We’ve thought about ways we could use our talents to honour God and show God’s love in the world. Today we’re going to think about ways we can use our treasure, or money, to honour God and show God’s love in the world.

Have you ever thought about money as a gift from God? We don’t always think about money as a gift from God. We can certainly be good stewards and practise good stewardship by choosing carefully the ways we spend our money.

Have you ever given money to the church? Have you seen other people, maybe your parents, give money to the church?

What happens to the money that is given to the church? (*Possible answers: pay for electricity and water for our church building, purchase materials for Sunday school and music for the choir, provide a salary for our minister.*)

Our money is also used for people and projects outside our church. Did you know our church helps to provide food and clothing to people in Mozambique and in Toronto? Did you know our church provides for education and healthcare of people around the world?

It’s amazing what can be done with even a little bit of money when it is added to the little bit that others give.

Sometimes we want to spend all our money on ourselves. Sometimes we even want to spend money for silly things we don’t really need. This week when you think about what you’ll spend your allowance on or what you’ll ask someone else to spend on you, I hope you’ll remember to be a good steward and decide to use your money in ways that honour God and other people and shares God’s love in the world.

Let’s say a prayer together. Dear God, thank you for all that you have given us… Remind us this week to practise good stewardship in the ways we use our money… Amen.

*If you will be inviting the children to complete an Estimate of Givings form, let them know they’ll be receiving it this week and they can bring it with them next week.*

## Children’s Time, Week 5

*Plan ahead: bring party hats, noisemakers, and cookies.*

*Gather and greet the children.*

Guess what! We’re coming to the end of our stewardship journey! Well, sort of. We’re coming to the end of this time when each week we think and talk about stewardship and about being good stewards of our time, our talents, and our treasure. As good stewards, we know the journey never really ends. We always want to get closer to God, so we always want to practise good stewardship as a way to honour God and the gifts of God.

Today we’re going to celebrate. We’re going to celebrate the gifts God has given to us. We’re going to celebrate the gifts we bring to God and to the church.

What do you like to do to celebrate? I like to have a party when I feel like celebrating. So today, we’re going to celebrate. I brought some party hats; here, put them on. I also brought some noisemakers; here. take one. Now, let’s make a lot of noise with our noisemakers! Good job! I also think food is a necessary part of any celebration, so I brought cookies for all of you. After we say our prayer together, I’ll give each of you a cookie.

Let’s pray. Dear God, the gifts you have given us are many and wonderful… We thank you! Teach us each day to be good stewards and to use our time, our talent, and our treasure to honour you and to share your love in the world… Amen.

Thank you. Be sure you take a cookie with you.

*Note: If you have used footprint cutouts to indicate your approach to God (the altar or cross), show the children your progress and have them follow the steps right up to the end for your time together.*