

THINGS ENTRUSTED TO OUR CARE



A “Companions on a Journey” Lenten Bible Study



Diocese of Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island
Stewardship Resource Development Group
2009

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the *Companions on a Journey Lenten Bible Study - Things Entrusted to our Care*. One of the key goals of our Diocesan Vision, to build healthy congregations, is entrusted to the Companions on a Journey project. This is to *help people grow in stewardship understanding and response, and to give them opportunities to express their stewardship convictions*.

Offered by the Diocesan Stewardship Resource Development Group (SDRG), this study has been prepared as an accompaniment to the DVD of Bishop William G. Burrill's 1st keynote address to our Diocesan Synod last May. It invites us to focus on Bp Burrill's definition of stewardship as "the responsible management of those things entrusted to our care." These things are:

1. Creation
2. The Gospel
3. Our Fellow Human Beings
4. Our Vocations, Talents and Possessions
5. Our Personal Lives

The study sessions include time to reflect on Bishop Burrill's presentation, reflect on Scripture, and consider what sort of actions God is calling us to as we seek to live more fully within the abundance of God's generosity.

Materials You Will Need

- The Synod 2008 DVD
- A TV & DVD player OR a laptop computer, speakers, data projector & screen
- A copy of this resource booklet for each participant
- A pad of flipchart paper, markers and tape
- For the second session (on the Gospel) small pieces of paper, some pens and a basket

At the end of the study you will find an evaluation. We would love to hear from you about your experience with the study and the actions it has helped inspire. As the Stewardship Group continues its *Companions on the Journey* workshops throughout the diocese, we will share your stories, celebrate our growth as stewards of all God has entrusted to us, and hold you and your stewardship journeys in our prayers.

CREATION

We believe in one God, the father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth of all that is, seen and unseen.

Gathering (10-15 minutes, depending on the size of your group)

Welcome members to the group.

Opening prayer

*Lord, Eternal God,
we are about to begin our gathering
and we do so with the awareness
that without your divine presence here at the centre of our session
and also within ourselves – our work will be empty.*

*Grace us with your wisdom and vision;
gift us with humour and humility
so that not only this gathering but all our lives
may be a meeting place for your kingdom.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ
who lives with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit now and forever. AMEN*

[Catholic Archdiocese Kansas, Shantivanam
Ecumenical House of Prayer, adapted]

Gathering question

- *Ask participants to share with each other one thing they are hoping to learn from this study program.*

Introduction to *Things Entrusted to our Care & DVD* (20 minutes)

Everything we have is a gift from God – our world, our lives, our talents, and our possessions. An important part of our Christian journey, as individuals and as congregations, is to develop a greater appreciation of this abundance and what it means for our lives and ministries.

Religion is, first, an open hand to receive a gift, and second,
an acting hand to distribute gifts. [Paul Tillich]

How do we respond to God's generosity? How can we open our hands, eyes, ears and hearts to perceive and receive these gifts? How do we share the bounty? These are the questions that inspire our lives as stewards of God's whole creation.

During his time with us at Synod 2008, Bishop Burrill offered us a way of taking up the challenge. He talks about the ministry of stewardship and defines it as:

“the responsible management of those things entrusted to our care”

Let’s watch the DVD of Bp Burrell’s presentation and hear what he has to say.

Play the DVD until the 22:27 point of the 1st keynote.

Over the next 5 weeks we will be working our way through our stewardship of the 5 things God has entrusted into our care: Creation, the Gospel, our fellow human beings, our vocations and property, our personal lives. We begin with **CREATION**.

Opening Discussion (15 minutes)

Bishop Burrill names CREATION as the first thing entrusted to our care.

In groups of two or three discuss the following questions. (10 minutes)

- *What are your first impressions of the list of things entrusted to our care?*
- *Why do you think that Bishop Burrill named creation as the first thing entrusted to our care?*
- *Where would creation be on your own list? Why? What about our church’s list of things entrusted to our care?*

Invite reflections from the group conversations. (5 minutes)

Looking to Scripture (reading & discussion) (40 minutes)

In groups of 3, read the following passages and discuss the questions which follow. (20 minutes)

Genesis 2:7-9, 15

Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

Psalm 8:3-8

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have established;
what are human beings that you are mindful of them,
mortals that you care for them?

Session 1

Yet you have made them a little lower than God,
and crowned them with glory and honour.
You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under their feet, all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

Hosea 4:1-3

Hear the word of the Lord, O people of Israel;
for the Lord has an indictment against the inhabitants of the land.
There is no faithfulness or loyalty,
and no knowledge of God in the land.
Swearing, lying, and murder
and stealing and adultery break out;
bloodshed follows bloodshed.
Therefore the land mourns, and all who live in it languish;
together with the wild animals
and the birds of the air, even the fish of the sea are perishing.

Romans 1:19-20

What can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

Questions for discussion:

- *What do these texts suggest about God's views of creation?*
- *What do these passages suggest about our relationship with creation?*
- *Have you ever seen or felt the land rejoicing? Mourning?*
- *What are the best examples you know about, of people practicing good stewardship of God's creation?*
- *Do you have any stories of times when you have felt like a steward of God's creation?*

With the group together, ask the small groups to share their reflections on the questions.
(20 minutes)

Action: Our Stewardship of God's Creation (5 minutes)

A take-home exercise for reflection & prayer: *As you go about your week, thinking, praying, having conversations with friends and family think about what current environmental issues are of most concern to you.*

- *What can you individually, or we as a congregation, do to help our care for God's creation?*

Be prepared to bring your ideas and inspirations back to the group next week.

Closing Prayer

How wonderful, O Lord, are the works of your hands!
The heavens declare your glory; the arch of sky displays your handiwork.
In your love you have given us the power to
behold the beauty of your world robed in all its splendour.
The sun and the stars, the valleys and the hills,
the rivers and lakes, all disclose your presence.
The roaring breakers of the sea tell of your awesome might.
The beasts of the field and the birds of the air bespeak your wondrous will.
In your goodness you have made us able to hear the music of the world.
The voices of loved ones reveal to us that
You are in our midst.
A divine voice sings through all creation.
AMEN



THE GOSPEL

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God...

Opening prayer:

Eternal God, bless our gathering that this may be a place of sound learning, new discovery, and the pursuit of wisdom. Grant that those who teach and those who learn may find you to be the source of all truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN

[BAS, adapted]

Our Ideas & Offerings (15 minutes)

Gathering question: We finished last week with a take-home exercise – to think about which current environmental issues concern you most, and what we individually, or as a congregation, can do better care for God’s creation. What ideas and inspirations and ideas have you had?

Make 2 lists on flipchart paper

1. *What can we do individually to show our care for God’s creation?*
2. *What can our parish do to be better stewards of God’s creation?*

This begins our ideas and offerings from our Lenten Study. (Keep these lists and display them on the wall during each of the 5 sessions.)

DVD (5 minutes)

Tonight our topic will be the next in the list of what Bishop Burrill describes as things entrusted to our care: **THE GOSPEL**. Let’s refresh our memory about what he said.

Play the DVD until the end of the section on the Gospel. (~6:44)

Opening Discussion (20 minutes)

Sometimes sharing the Gospel is described as being like speaking a second language, since talking about the amazing and unexpected gift of God’s freely given grace is such a foreign concept in our world. Even life-long Anglicans can feel tongue-tied when asked to share the Good News of the Gospel with others. How are we doing in our management of this most precious gift, entrusted to our care?

Give the participants each a small piece of paper. Ask them to write the name of their favorite hymn (or hymns) on the paper. Collect the papers in a basket.

Hymns are one of the most powerful ways we have of communicating and affirming what we believe. What do our favorite hymns tell us about the Good News?

Pass the basket of favorite hymns around the group. Each participant takes one paper and in turn, reads it aloud to the group. Write the choices up on flipchart paper. Discuss:

- *According to these hymns what are the precious gifts the Gospel offers our lives?*
- *What do our favorite hymns tell us about who Jesus is?*
- *Are these images big enough? Is there more you would like to say about who Jesus is? More you would like to say about the Good News of the Gospel? What would it be?*

Looking to Scripture (40 minutes)

Ask the group to read the following passage aloud together.

1 Cor 3:9-14

For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—the work of each builder will become visible, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done. If what has been built on the foundation survives, the builder will receive a reward.

Questions for discussion:

Depending on the size of your group: either answer these questions together, or discuss them first in small groups for 20 minutes, then inviting reflections in plenary for 20 minutes.

- *Paul often uses multiple metaphors and images, inviting us see the situation from a variety of perspectives. What images does Paul use here to describe us, and our work?*
- *Which of these images fits you personally best? Which fits our parish best? Why?*
- *Bishop Burrill tells us that we are entrusted with the responsible management of the Gospel. What does this passage suggest about what responsible management involves?*
- *Paul tells us that if our foundation survives, we will receive a reward. What reward can you imagine? What rewards have we already experienced, personally? As a parish?*

Action: Our Stewardship of the Gospel (10 minutes)

A take-home exercise for reflection, prayer & action.

As Christians we live the Gospel. Living in Christ, we become eager to share with others what we have found through our relationship with Jesus and our relationships with each other. It is the best of all possible gifts we can give. It is the way we build on the foundation set by Jesus, Paul, the saints of the church through the ages through to those men and women who built the churches here in this diocese and this parish.

We do this is by inviting people to experience the transforming love and grace of Christ within our Christian community. The following is a short exercise to help us reflect on how well we share the Gospel in our parish. To do this we will consider the messages our church gives about the difference the Gospel makes to our lives and to the world. We will also consider the messages our church gives about whom we believe Christ to be.

The worksheet Sunday Morning Observations (p. 10) lists a set of questions to be answered next Sunday at church. The challenge is to see and hear only what is there, and not include activities you may know happen, but for which there are no clues.

We will share our responses next week. What we have noticed will help us become better at expressing the Good News of the Gospel for each other and for those we don't yet know.

Closing Prayer

Leader: Eternal God, from the beginning of history you have shown yourself to us through signs and glorious deeds.

All: We remember the rainbow, the tablets of the Law, the rock in the desert, the manna in the skies, and the call of the prophet.

Leader: For eons you also have spoken to us.

All: You have done so in the wind, in the fire, in the face of a child, and in the love of the saints.

Leader: We have shown our faith in you through signs, symbols, and through deeds of service. Stretching out our hands to those in need reminds us of your hope and promises.

All: The broken bread and the poured wine remind us of the body of Christ broken on the cross for our redemption and liberation.

Leader: The testimony of faith of our teachers and parents is embodied in churches and in gorgeous stained glass windows.

All: And also in the deeds of compassion, and the lives and words of everyone who shares your good news. All of these express our understanding of faith. For you have spoken to us in so many forms and through so many glorious deeds, teaching us the abundance of your love and continued care for us. We are grateful O God. AMEN

[With Whatever Gift: Anglican Church of Canada]

Sunday Morning Observations

On Sunday morning - before, during and after worship - take a good look around, and listen to the conversations:

What are the signs of life and vibrancy in our church? What are they?

Are there signs of decay, tiredness or depression? What are they?

If you had no other clues, other than what you can see and hear this morning, what do you think this congregation cares about most? How can you tell?

What messages does our church give about the difference the Gospel makes to people's lives? To the world?

What messages does our church give about whom we believe Christ to be?

Bring your responses back to our group next week.

OUR FELLOW HUMAN BEINGS

For us, and for our salvation he came down from heaven...and was made man.

Opening prayer:

Leader: O loving God, you have created us in your image

All: And given us life and all that sustains it.

Leader: You have baptized us in Jesus' name

All: And called us to new life as Christ's disciples.

Leader: Mighty God, empower us to live in Jesus way;

All: Showing compassion for all people;

Leader: Inviting all people to receive your saving grace;

All: Working for justice and peace;

Leader: Caring for the sick, the lonely, and troubled;

All: Feeding the hungry and celebrating signs of hope with all your people.

Leader: Brothers and sisters in Christ, are we, like the widow, ready to respond to the fullness of God's gift?

All: With God's help, yes!

Leader: Are we ready to encourage each other to be disciples in all aspects of life?

All: With God's help, yes!

Leader: Are we ready to give as each needs to give, and as others need to be helped?

All: With God's help, yes! AMEN

Our Ideas & Offerings (15 minutes)

Gathering question: We finished last week with a take-home reflection – to observe our own church(es) asking how we are doing as stewards of the Gospel here in our parish.

- *From what you saw and heard, what messages does our church give about the difference the Gospel makes to people's lives? To the world?*
- *What messages does our church give about who Jesus is?*
- *What are we doing well? What needs improvement?*

(Keep these lists and display them on the wall during each of the 5 sessions.)

DVD (10 minutes)

Tonight our topic will be the next in the list of what Bishop Burrill describes as things entrusted to our care: **OUR FELLOW HUMAN BEINGS**. Let's refresh our memory about what he said.

Play the DVD until the end of the section on our fellow human beings. (~9:47)

Opening Discussion (20 minutes)

Individual reflection. (2 –3 minutes) Ask the participants to spend a few minutes thinking in silence about the challenge this offers them.

- *When have I had the opportunity to do good for the sake of others, and done it?*
- *When have I walked away?*
- *What good do I find easy to do?*
- *What good do I find most difficult to do?*

In groups of 2 or 3 tell each other your responses to these questions (10 minutes). Allow each of the members to speak, uninterrupted.

Invite reflections from the group conversations (5 minutes)

Looking to Scripture (40 minutes)

Ask a member of the group to read the following passage aloud together.

John 21.12-17

Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, 'Who are you?' because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Tend my sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep.'

Questions for discussion:

- *Jesus gives Simon Peter 3 instructions: to feed his lambs, to tend his sheep, and to feed his sheep. What do you think Jesus is asking with these 3 commands?*
- *Make a list of all the things we can remember Jesus doing during his ministry among the 1st century Galileans and Judeans to tend and feed them.*
 - *Why did Jesus do these things? What was his purpose? What responses did He get to these actions?*
- *In this passage Jesus passes this ministry to us. What do you think Jesus is asking us to do? For what purpose? What sort of responses should we expect?*
- *Are we courageous enough in following these commands, personally, as a parish, as the Anglican Church?*

Action: Our Stewardship of Our Fellow Human Beings (10 minutes)

Last Lent, a parish in our diocese challenged themselves to do one act of extraordinary and unexpected kindness each. Following the model of Christ, the recipient of this generosity would be someone who is vulnerable, marginalized, and outside of the circle of people we would normally provide care for. The act could be anything – but giving or doing something other than simply writing a cheque was encouraged. People of all ages were encouraged to participate.

Once people practiced their act of kindness, they told what they had done to the rector who collected the stories. At Easter, the random acts were published in the bulletin with no names attached.

Over the next week, as you go about your normal daily routines, be challenged as this parish was challenged. Take the opportunity to do one extraordinary and unexpected act of kindness that expands your experience of stewardship of your fellow human beings.

Closing Prayer



*Disturb us, Lord, when
With the abundance of things we possess
We have lost our thirst for the waters of life;
Having fallen in love with life,
We have ceased to dream of eternity
And in our efforts to build a new earth,
We have allowed our vision
Of the new Heaven to dim.*

[Prayer attributed to Sir Francis Drake, 1577]

OUR VOCATIONS, TALENTS & POSSESSIONS

Webdiøvein theHdy Spirit, theLørd, thegiver øf life

Opening prayer:

Faithful God, we gratefully acknowledge that you are the giver of all things. You call us to share these gifts so that we may experience the joy and humility of giving to others. We pray that this very act of offering our gifts to you will enable us to be obedient disciples of your work. We are blessed to receive and to offer the message of salvation. Jesus Christ is Lord. Praise your holy name! AMEN

[Centre for Christian Stewardship, United Methodist Church]

Our Ideas & Offerings (15 minutes)

We finished last week with a challenge – to practice a extraordinary or unexpected act of kindness that would stretch our experience of stewardship for the sake of our fellow human beings.

- *Going around the group, invite each participant to say in one or two words: What was your first reaction to the task when I gave it to you last week?*
- *Going around the group again, invite each participant to say in one or two words: What is your reaction to the task now?*
- *What happened? Do you have a story to tell?*
- *What acts of kindness have we done?*

(Keep a list of the acts, without names attached, and display them on the wall for rest of the sessions.)

DVD (10 minutes)

Tonight our topic will be the next in the list of what Bishop Burrill describes as things entrusted to our care: **OUR VOCATIONS, TALENTS & POSSESSIONS**. Let's refresh our memory about what he said.

Play the DVD until the end of the section on our vocations, talents and possessions.(~12:38)

Opening Discussion (20 minutes)

Bishop Burrill puts lots of things together in this element of stewardship. In this single point, he tells us that God, the giver of life, has entrusted us with the care of our resources: our own personal callings – our vocations and careers - our talents and gifts, and our possessions.

- *What resources do we find it easiest to give for the ministry and mission of this parish? What about for our own Christian life and witness?*
- *Which resources do we tend to withhold from our Christian life and witness? From the mission and ministry of the parish? Why do you think this happens?*

Looking to Scripture (40 minutes)

Ask a member of the group to read the following passages aloud.

John 15: 9-17

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

Questions for discussion:

- *Jesus says to his disciples that he chose them, and appointed them to go and bear fruit. Do you believe that God has chosen you, and has plans for you?*
- *What about for our parish? Why, or why not?*
- *Some say that a vocation is what we find when our time, talents and possessions, are all aligned with God's call to us. Have you ever had an experience of vocation? How would you describe it?*
- *Bishop Burrill tells us that we are stewards of our vocations, our time and talents, and our possessions.*
 - *What is easiest part of this stewardship for you personally? What is most difficult?*
 - *What about for our church: How are we doing as stewards of our time, talents, and possessions? What are we doing well? What do we need to improve?*

Action: Our Stewardship of Our Vocation, Talents & Possessions (10 minutes)

A take-home exercise for reflection and prayer

Stewardship of our vocation, talents and possessions is about what we do with all we have, all the time. As Christian stewards we repeatedly make choices about what we do with our gifts from God, our time, our talent and our material resources.

An essential truth about our obligation of Christian stewardship is that we have a deep need to give because we have something to offer.

On the following pages is a worksheet for your consideration. It offers a chance for you to do some personal reflection on your stewardship of time, talent and possessions.

While we will discuss this next week, you may keep as much or as little of this private.

Closing Prayer

*Almighty God, in Christ you make all things new:
transform the poverty of our nature
by the riches of your grace,
and in the renewal of our lives
make known your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.*

[Spirituality Group, Diocese of Llandaff]



Personal Stewardship Audit

Answer the questions that are appropriate to you.

My Time (in my employment):

- a. How do I make my living: How many hours per day or week, on average, does earning my living take? Is this consistent, throughout the year, or are there seasonal variations?

- b. In what ways do I express my Christian faith as I go about earning my living? To God? To other people?

- c. If others look for Christ in my actions, would they find them? (Always? Often? Seldom? Only with a microscope?) How would people know?

My Time (as a volunteer):

- d. How many hours per day or week, on average, do I volunteer my time? Is this consistent, throughout the year, or are there seasonal variations?

- e. In what ways do I express my Christian faith through my volunteering? To God? To other people?

- f. If others look for Christ in my actions, would they find them? (Always? Often? Seldom? Only with a microscope?) How would people know?

Personal:

- g. As a general rule, what do I do for myself with the leisure time that I have? Hobbies? Holidays? Rest and relaxation?

- h. On average, how much time do I give to building strong, healthy family relationships?
How do I do this?

- i. How do I express my particular talents and skills? The things I love to do best, and know I do well? Is this leisure time activity, work, both? What are some examples of how I do this?

- j. How do I express my Christian beliefs and values in my leisure? With my family? When I am doing what I love best?

- k. How much time do I spend nurturing my own spirit? How do I do this? Prayer? Reading? Studies? Worshipping? Other activities?

- l. Are you happy with the amount of time and energy that goes into nurturing your spiritual life? Is there anything you would like to change, grow or develop?

Possessions:

- m. As a general rule, how much time do I spend thinking about and dealing with my finances?

- n. On average, how much time do I give to tending my possessions? Worrying? Fixing? Buying?

- o. How do I express my Christian beliefs and values through how I deal with my money and possessions?

- p. Are you happy with the amount of time and energy that goes into tending your finances and property? What would you like to be able to change given the resources you have?

OUR PERSONAL LIVES

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

Opening prayer:

*Thou angel of God who has charge of me from the dear Father of mercifulness,
The shepherding kind of the fold of the saints to make round about me both day and night.*

*Be thou a bright flame before me,
Be thou a guiding star above me,
Be thou a smooth path below me,
And be a kindly shepherd behind me,
Today, tonight, and forever.*

AMEN

[A Celtic Prayer]

Our Ideas & Offerings (20 minutes)

Over the past week we were asked to reflect on our stewardship of our time, talent and possessions. We were given a Personal Audit worksheet to help us examine the choices we make about how we allocate these gifts.

- *Going around the group, invite each participant to say in one or two words: What was your first reaction to the task when I gave it to you last week?*
- *Going around the group again, invite each participant to say in one or two words: What is your reaction to the task now?*
- *Is there anything you would like to share from your personal audits?*
- *What did you learn that surprised you?*
- *Did this reflection help you identify anything you want to do differently? What?*
- *How could the church support you in making these changes?*

DVD (20 minutes)

Tonight our topic will be the next in the list of what Bishop Burrill describes as things entrusted to our care: **OUR PERSONAL LIVES**. Let's refresh our memory about what he said.

Play the DVD to the 22:27 point of the 1st keynote.

Opening Discussion (20 minutes)

Bishop Burrill says a lot about the stewardship of our personal lives.

In groups of 3 people: (10 minutes)

- *What did you find easy to hear? Why?*
- *What was difficult or challenging to hear? Why?*
- *What 1 or 2 things stand out for you personally as something important to remember? Are these affirmations or challenges, or both?*
- *What 1 or 2 things stand out as something for our parish to know? Why? Are these affirmations or challenges, or both?*

Invite reflections from the group conversations. Note the responses on flipchart paper. (10 minutes)

Action: Things Entrusted to Our Care (30 minutes)

This is our final session together. Through these past weeks we have collected a number of thoughts and ideas about how we, and our parish, might become better stewards of those things God has entrusted to our care.

Take a look at the flipchart lists from all our sessions. They include ideas about our stewardship of God's creation, the Gospel; our fellow human beings; our vocations, talents and possessions; and tonight, our personal lives. Looking at all we have said and learned:

- *Imagine we are sitting here next year, what would we like to be able to say is different because of what we learned in this Lenten study? For ourselves personally? For our parish?*
- *What specifically would we like to share with the rest of our congregation? Which ideas and inspirations would we like to see our church(es) act on? Which of our ideas are most crucial for the sake of our church's health and growth?*
- *What would be the best ways of sharing these ideas with others in the parish?*
- *Imagine writing a letter to our Parish Council about what we have learned together. What would we say?*

Closing and Evaluation (5 minutes)

Thank the group for their participation in this study and invite them to fill in the evaluation for the Stewardship Resource Development Group.

Closing Prayer (say together)

Glory to God,
whose power, working within us,
can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.
Glory to God from generation to generation,
in the Church and in Christ Jesus,
for ever and ever. AMEN

THINGS ENTRUSTED TO OUR CARE EVALUATION

Please let us know how this Lenten Study was for you by filling in this evaluation and sending to

*Stewardship Resource Development Group c/o Synod Office
5732 College St. ☞ Halifax, NS B3H 1X3*

We would also like to know something about the actions that you are taking because of this study so that we can hold you in our group's prayer life over the next year.

1. This purpose of this study was to help us focus on the teaching of Bishop Burrill during our last Synod: examining our stewardship of the 5 things God has entrusted into our care. Overall, how did the study do at achieving its purpose?
2. What were the highlights?
3. What were the low points?
4. What have you learned from this study? What difference do you think it will make to your stewardship of those things entrusted to our care?
5. What difference do you hope it will make for your parish or congregation's stewardship?

Thank you