

Stewardship 2019

People of God's Generosity

In the original Pony Express, messages were carried on horseback from the Missouri River to the Pacific coast. In BCMC's Pony Express materials are carried from one household to another in neighborhood clusters to gather intentions for the coming budget year. (Materials are mailed to non-resident and inactive members). The Pony Express runs from Stewardship Sunday on November 4 until November 18 when packets are returned during worship.

The practice of receiving an offering during worship takes place week after week not only at BCMC, but in most services of worship in most Christian congregations all around the world.

We who are familiar with the practice may not give it a second thought. It's just what we do, perhaps by habit, or out of a sense of duty. Perhaps sharing our financial gifts is our way of saying thank you to God or tangibly supporting God's work through our congregation.

But there is yet another reason why sharing our resources within the context of our faith and our faith community is a vitally important practice: it helps us remember who and whose we are. It invites us to recount and enter into God's story about why we're here, who we are called to be, and who it is that is the Source and Sustenance of our life, from beginning to end. In short, it is a faith-shaping practice.

We see the people of Israel participating in such a faith-shaping practice in Deuteronomy 26:1-11. As they bring the first-fruits of their harvest to the altar of God, they are to retell the story of God's saving work among them. They are to remember who and whose they are as they offer their gifts to God in worship.

As we participate in our congregation's Pony Express process and reflect on what is ours to share, may we be guided by this prayer by Carol Penner:

Generous God, with this action of offering we tell your story;
how you deal generously with us,
how you meet our needs,
how you hear our prayers,
how your goodness is from everlasting to everlasting.
Bless the offerings we give in the name of Christ. Amen.

I N S T R U C T I O N S

- 1. Find the envelope with your name inside the packet.**
- 2. Find and study the contents of your envelope.**
- 3. After reviewing the contents, complete the intent form and sign your name.**
- 4. Keep the lower part of your completed intent form for your records.**
- 5. Place the upper part (church record) of your completed intent form back in your personal envelope (the envelope with your name on it.) Seal the envelope and place it in the packet. Check off your name on the list.**
- 6. Arrange a time to deliver the packet to another household on the list. If possible, take time to visit when you give the packet to someone. The list is arranged alphabetically. You do not need to deliver to the next person on the list if you feel it would be more expedient to deliver the packet geographically! If you need assistance, contact your captain.**
- 7. The last person on the list to receive this packet returns the packet to the captain before Sunday, November 18.**

Thank you for your participation!