

As you know, we will be celebrating Consecration Sunday on November 13. This is the day when we make our annual commitment to support the Lord's work here at Bethany. Why do we put so much emphasis on making an annual financial commitment? Because, as you know, the foundation of everything we do at Bethany is Faith Formation and one of the key components of growing our faith is our willingness to return a portion of the blessings we have received to support the work here. It is not as exciting as some of the things we support on a one time basis, but it is essential to support the day to day work of Bethany.

As we are told in the book of James, "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead". For most of us the primary way we do deeds is through our financial support of Bethany.

When I was asked to speak on behalf of the Stewardship Ministry Team, I asked myself why am I willing to make a one year commitment to support the work here at Bethany? I think our theme "Blessed to be a Blessing" says it all. We are certainly blessed as a congregation and as individuals and families. And the best way we can be a blessing is to make a commitment to support the Lord's work. When I think about that commitment I am reminded that it pales in comparison to the commitment God has made to me – eternal life. I also know that a true test of my faith is a willingness to return a portion of my blessings to support His work. In that regard I am reminded of the words of Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount when he says "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" and when I am concerned that my circumstances might change over the course of a year I am comforted by Jesus' assurance that I need not worry because God will provide all that I need.

May God give us the wisdom and the courage to make a commitment that will strengthen our faith and give us the comfort of knowing we are Blessed to be a Blessing.