

THE FOUR T'S OF STEWARDSHIP: TIME, TALENTS, TREASURES & TREES



The Deacon's Role

"Weigh our opportunities for giving and service and use the church's resources discerningly... Be prophetic critics of the waste, injustice, and selfishness in our society... and in all your ministries help us participate in the renewing of all things even as we anticipate its completion when God's kingdom comes."

(CRCNA Form for the Installation of Elders and Deacons - 2016).

"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." Genesis 2:15

Wait, do you mean actual trees??



YES! And air, land, water, plants, animals... all the "stuff" of God's very good creation that we share with others around the world.

We also mean the things that are entrusted to our care collectively, as congregations of God's people - our buildings and our land. The way we manage these things can have a big impact on the rest of God's creation.

"...The custody of the garden was given in charge to Adam, to show that we possess the things which God has committed to our hands, on the condition, that being content with a frugal and moderate use of them, we should take care of what shall remain. Let him who possesses a field, so partake of its yearly fruits, that he may not suffer the ground to be injured by his negligence; but let him endeavor to hand it down to posterity as he received it, or even better cultivated. Let him so feed on its fruits that he neither dissipates it by luxury, nor permits to be marred or ruined by neglect. Moreover, that this economy, and this diligence, with respect to those good things which God has given us to enjoy, may flourish among us; let every one regard himself as the steward of God in all things which he possesses."

John Calvin on Genesis 2:15, *Commentary on Genesis*, 1554

"Made in God's image to live in loving communion with our Maker, we are appointed earthkeepers and caretakers to tend the earth, enjoy it, and love our neighbours. God uses our skills for the unfolding and well-being of his world so that creation and all who live in it may flourish."

Our World Belongs to God, #10

What does this look like, in practical terms?



Stewardship of Trees might include:

- doing an energy audit of your building and taking action on the results (anything from upgrading light bulbs to installing solar panels)
- finding productive ways to use church-owned land (try a community garden or playground instead of a big green lawn!)
- reducing waste in church-related activities (and at home) by cutting down on single-use, disposable items
- helping the congregation learn more about creation care issues such as food security, plastic waste and their own environmental footprint
- sharing the church building with other organizations and neighbourhood groups when it's not in use



"We lament that our abuse of creation has brought lasting damage to the world we have been given: polluting streams and soil, poisoning the air, altering the climate, and damaging the earth. We commit ourselves to honor all God's creatures and to protect them from abuse and extinction, for our world belongs to God."

Our World Belongs to God, #51

Questions for Reflection:

- Why is our stewardship of "Trees" important?
- What "Trees" have been entrusted to our care?
- Are we keeping these "Trees" to ourselves or do we share?
- Are we wasteful with God's creation, using it in ways that harm our community?
- How can we use our "Trees" to show that Jesus is Lord?



To find out more or get helpful resources, contact Diaconal Ministries Canada today:
dmc@crcna.org or 1-800-730-3490.