

Bill Anlyan, Rector's (Senior) Warden

Stewardship Moment, Oct. 9, 2022

It's Stewardship time again! Many years ago I was involved in fundraising at the university here in town, and I'll never forget a meeting where we had a donor who had elected to give millions and millions of dollars away. Not only to UNCW but to the church and to Duke University. After we signed all the documents there was a pregnant pause. He looked at me and he said, "Bill, now that I have given all of this money away does this mean 'hello' or 'goodbye?'" That was like a spear right through my heart. "Goodbye? No! It's Hello."

I thought about it and prayed about it. Two weeks later I got a handwritten note from him. In it he said, "I deeply apologize for asking you that question. I have been very successful in my life. I can buy any car I want. But, no matter what car I drive, in two weeks it's just a car. I can buy any business I want, and I have; but all I get is more headaches. I can eat at the fanciest restaurants in the world, and I have; but usually the fancier and more expensive they are, the worse the heartburn. The only thing that brings pure joy in my life is when I discovered the power of giving away my wealth to help people in need."

That is why we are here today. To offer you the invitation to really feel good about the love and the generosity that our church plays not only in our lives but also in the lives of our community. So, when we think about stewardship, please think not in terms that you have to give away millions of dollars. I am always reminded when I look at the Agnus Dei window that that window is in our church because of the work of the "little workers." I don't know who they are. I don't know how they did it. But, their legacy is with us today. So we invite you to join that legacy and become a part of our family by giving what you can to help us with our mission. Thank you very much.