



Reflection by Allison Blanchard



Allison Blanchard has been involved in stewardship ministries for over 20 years.

For the past 8 years she has attended St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Annandale, VA where she chairs the Stewardship Committee.

She also serves on the Diocesan Stewardship Committee. She is married and has one son.

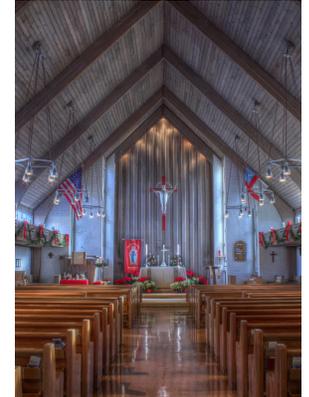
Upon reading today's Gospel passage, I was first struck by the care and effort the landowner put in to creating the vineyard. He planted the vines and dug a wine press. He put a fence around it and built a watchtower to protect it. Then he entrusted his creation to tenants. The landowner trusted that the tenants would do what was right with his creation, and even gave them several chances to do that. But the tenants wanted what was not theirs to keep and decided that power and money were more important than doing what was right. How sad for everyone.

Jesus moves from the story of the landowner to the quote from the Psalms, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone" and warns that the kingdom of God will be taken away and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. What at first seemed like a non-sequitur started to make more sense to me as I pondered the difference between what God tells us has value, and what we humans tend to think is valuable. It is so easy for us to get caught up in worldly definitions of success and value, and so hard to break free from them.

God has entrusted each of us with some bit of His creation — some set of abilities, skills, talents, time, opportunities, and resources — that we can use in our efforts to love God and love our neighbors. Bishop Catherine Waynick states that stewardship "acknowledges that all the things we count as 'resources' or as 'blessings' will never be ours to hoard, but are entrusted to us to be shared, nurtured, and used to fulfill God's purposes."

I believe that God is inviting me to fall on the cornerstone of Christ Jesus and be broken to pieces, thereby freeing myself from this world's notions of what is valuable. Only by being willing to be broken, can I be open enough to receive, and open enough to give. May we all receive what is truly valuable — God's love and trust, and may we all happily become people who produce the fruits of God's kingdom.

Proper 22 | Matthew 21:33-46
October 8, 2017



Reflection Questions

- How has God equipped you to work with Him?
- How much do you value the trust the God has placed in you?

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