

The Stewardship Committee approached me to talk to you about my gifts of service.

I was the youngest in my family so tagged along with my mother to most of her church meetings and activities. Even then it was natural for me to imitate her and others in service. I probably first volunteered my gift in my hometown nursing home during their church service. When I was there I was often asked to sing my favorite Sunday School song. Being the ham I am I had no problem obliging. Even then the smiles I received from this small service felt good. Throughout grade school and high school I worked at numerous church suppers "this is what they call the evening meal in Iowa" by helping set-up, serve, and clean-up. I also was asked to help with the Nursery Class in Sunday School and was able to teach a Vacation Bible School Class. I remember how proud I was to be in charge of those kids and have their presentation go well at the end of the week. What a way to build self-esteem. I've sung in a Church Choir since High School and have since worked with Sunday School in many capacities, served on numerous committees, been on council, financial secretary, hosted, nursery duties, volunteer office secretary, quilting, drama, garage sales and of course more singing. These gifts of service weren't done at once but spread out throughout about 50 years. Sometimes just making sure to welcome a visitor or listening to someone's situation was all I could handle during our child rearing years. But always I feel God's presence in helping me serve others.

My Confirmation Verse is Psalm 19:14, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, Oh Lord, my strength and my redeemer." This has been a guide to follow all these years.

How does service come back to you? Many ways but one example is: We lived away from family after we got married, so our church home is very important to us. They are our family. We lived only 3 years in Kansas City, during which time I worked with the Evangelism committee and sang in choir but I was pretty busy as Heather was a baby and toddler. Along came the surprise birth of twins and a month of daily trips to the hospital. Our church saw a way to serve and gave us a baby shower to supplement what we had and also brought in meals twice

a week. What a wonderful blessing it was to us. This was a much unexpected response and gave us another example of how to serve.

I would remind everyone that they are part of the Family of God and just as in your own family it takes help from everyone for life to run smoothly. Use your gifts to serve and help God's family run smoothly also.