

From Generation to Generation



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Many of you will recognize Rev. Robert “Bob” Riggert as an executive of Iowa District West, but the seven children in the picture below know Bob and his wife, Diane, simply as “Grandpa and Grandma.”

“Our family is very important to us,” says Riggert. Bob and Diane’s four children - Jennifer, Jodi, Jonathan, and Julie - were all born in Ft. Wayne, Indiana where Riggert served as a principal and teacher at Trinity Lutheran School.

While living in Ft. Wayne, Riggert completed his studies at Concordia Theological Seminary and received his first call in 1981 to St. Luke’s in Cylinder, Iowa. Riggert also served as parish pastor at Immanuel, Lone Rock and Zion, Manning before accepting a call to Iowa District West in 1997.

For twelve years Pastor Riggert has worked diligently to minister to children, promote Christian education, and encourage heartfelt stewardship throughout western Iowa. He and Diane have been doing the same thing with their own family for much longer.

“Stewardship begins at home,” says Riggert. “I have the privilege of serving as Executive Assistant for Stewardship for the District. I teach stewardship at the congregational level. While our stewardship in the church is very important, the stewardship of our time, talent, and treasure in the home is equally important. God calls us to be stewards of our children and to teach stewardship to our children.”

Riggert shares a personal experience. “Last Christmas season we took our grandchildren shopping to buy gifts for the gift distribution in Los Angeles (the Nehemiah project). After many years we finally figured out that we need to help them learn that they not only receive at Christmas but that we give to others who are in need. Hopefully it will be a tradition for us.”

The Riggerts also use Christian estate planning as an opportunity for stewardship. Over the years, gift planning counselor Jim Schroeder has provided his assistance and expertise.

“Shortly after our ministry began in Manning Jim offered to do a ‘Wills Awareness’ workshop for the congregation (one of his first, I believe),” says Riggert. “Following that presentation we wrote our first will which included a Christian preamble. We have maintained professional and personal contact with Jim ever since.”

The Riggerts chose the following passage as part of the Christian preamble to their will.

“They are the children God has graciously given your servant” (Genesis 33:5).

Riggert reveals why. “Jacob explains to Esau that the family that follows him is God’s gift to him. Our children and grandchildren are a gift from God. We want to celebrate that gift while we’re living and leave eternal treasures (and God-willing some earthly treasures) for them.”

Recently the Riggerts decided to update their will to include a charitable trust for their grandchildren. “Our will was over twenty years old and obviously out-of-date in many respects. Some of our priorities for charitable giving had also changed,” says Riggert. “Obviously we wanted a portion of our estate to go to our children.”



Rev. Bob and Diane Riggert with their seven grandchildren

With Jim Schroeder’s help, the Riggerts established a “Give it Twice” Trust which gives them the opportunity to provide a gift to their grandchildren and to various ministries. After their deaths, Bob and Diane’s grandchildren will receive an annual gift from their grandparents for twenty years and then the Trust will be directed to their ministry choices.

“It was a spiritual journey,” reflects Riggert. “We rejoiced again as to how God has blessed us. He is the Giver! We were challenged to evaluate our priorities. Jim was patient with us as the process took a while. Jim was extremely helpful in explaining some options (without any pressure). He was a valuable partner in the process.”

Think what you can do to teach the next generation about stewardship. Contact Jim Schroeder to develop your Christian Gift Plan today. As Bob and Diane Riggert say, “Pray about it! Do it!”

If you would like more information on developing your Christian Gift Plan contact Jim Schroeder at 1-877-913-2221 toll free or email Jim.Schroeder@idwlcms.org Visit the Foundation’s web site at www.lfndgp.org

(This article written by Kristin Kaldahl of Spencer, IA.)