



More Than
STONE SOUP

A Stewardship and Giving Emphasis Program for Congregations

THE BLESSING OF THE STONES

Over the centuries the church has made use of many symbols as a means for interpreting faith beliefs and in expressing our spiritual life. Symbols such as water, bread and wine, sheaves of wheat, loaves and fishes, triangles, interwoven circles and the sign of the cross have proven beneficial to understanding theology and the nurturing of our faith.

Today we introduce yet another symbol, the ‘Little Stone.’ This symbol is not intended to be representative of faith practices so much as it is intended to be a reminder of God’s gifts and faithfulness in providing all that we need for daily life. Much like other symbols used over the centuries, the stone is a simple object plucked from God’s good earth.

As a part of the ***More Than Stone Soup*** stewardship and giving emphasis campaign, we ask that you select one of the small stones that were blessed for distribution today and carry it with you at all times no matter where you go. Each time the stone is noticed, be it in pocket or purse, let it remind us of God’s gracious love.

Truly God has provided far more than mere stones for sustaining our lives. All that we have comes from God. As Brother Martin Luther has stated in his Small Catechism,

“I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that he has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my

members, my reason and all my senses, and still preserves them; also clothing and shoes, meat and drink, house and home, spouse and children, fields, cattle, and all my goods; that he richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life; that he defends me against all danger, and guards and protects me from all evil; and all this purely out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness on my part; for all of which it is my duty to thank and praise, to serve and obey him. This is most certainly true.”

Each time you run across your stone, offer this simple prayer: “O God, I thank you for my many blessings. Amen”

THE CHALLENGE OF THE STONES

But wait! There is more. We want the Little Stone to be a source of fun, as well. So, the stone comes with a challenge for our members; Don’t get caught without your stone. The Challenge of the Stones works like this: Anyone caught without the little stone owes the ‘Soup Pot’ a dollar.

The challenge has proven to be a lot of fun! This is how the challenge is made: Walk up to any of our members and, holding your stone out for them to see, say, “Here is my stone. Can you show me yours?” If they can’t, the fine is \$1.

Beginning next Sunday and each Sunday throughout the campaign, the Temple Talk speaker will ask, “Who was caught without his or her little stone? Please come forward and place your dollar in the Soup Pot.” So remember to carry your stone with you at all times. To borrow a marketing phrase from a popular credit card company,

“Your Little Stone; don’t leave home without it!”