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Stewardship Talk
October 23, 2011

When I was first called and asked to come speak at the stewardship service, I was, truthfully, more than a little nervous. Seeing as this was my first time to formally present something of my own writing to the congregation, there was, well, a lot of pressure, which was only added to by the very circumstances under which I was being asked to present. Stewardship; the time when everyone decides how much they'll give to the church throughout the next year. Am I supposed to come and show why this is a good investment? Well, to me it felt as though I had the entire financial security of Emmanuel Episcopal riding on my shoulders!

However, this is obviously not the case because this isn't school, and it is not some assignment where every single thing I say will be thoroughly analyzed. See, after taking some time to think about just what it was I was going to say, I came to this realization: There shouldn't be any pressure involved in this because the people that I'm addressing aren't some cold, detached analytical audience. No, no they are a family, people that I have known for almost my entire life, who have watched and supported me as I grow, and who I know truly care for me.

I've heard church described as a community of individuals who share similar beliefs regarding God and worship. But truthfully, I believe our church is more than that because the connection I share with the people of Emmanuel is not just limited to our religion, and it is not simply confined to the building alone. No, it extends far beyond that. You see, this is the only place I know where I can experience everything from a free lunch, courtesy of Grace and Grub, to comfortably discussing my views on God over a hamburger with Karl Wehner, to interviewing one the most influential people in our community, Ralph Chase, about his life, to spending a week laying tile in Galveston alongside Father Allan and the rest of the Emmanuel Youth. It is experiences such as these that have opened my eyes to the fact that this is a place where I can come and feel accepted and loved by you, my family, who know and care for me, and it is this idea that founds the basis of what Emmanuel Episcopal means to me.