

My Personal Story

By Stephanie DeLucia



As I was visiting with my mother in South Florida this past weekend, I heard her pastor preach on the Gospel of John. In particular, chapter 13 verses 1-20. This passage exemplifies the ultimate example of how Jesus came to serve as He washes His disciples' feet. You may be wondering how washing of feet and backpacks are connected, which I will get to in a minute. First let me begin by introducing myself.

My name is Stephanie DeLucia. I've been attending St. Luke's for a year and a half, but have had the privilege of working alongside many St. Lukers for the past ten years through the Educational IMPACT program. I have the honor of serving as an Instructional Coach at Pineloch Elementary. I am passionate about what I do and the children/families that I serve each day. Some may say it is because I have a heart for teaching and a love for children, which is most certainly the case, but there is something more.

See, I grew up in a single parent home where money was ALWAYS tight! My brother and I didn't have the newest or best of anything, but we always had what we needed. At a young age, we were taught that to receive blessings, you have to be a blessing. We couldn't do this monetarily, but we could this with our time, love, and compassion. I remember spending hours packing and delivering food baskets from the church's love pantry, volunteering time to clean houses for those who could no longer do it themselves, sorting through donations of all sorts, and many other opportunities.

Why do I share all of this with you? Because through our service, we were blessed! Blessed with food, gifts at Christmas, money for field trips, school supplies, and countless other things. Through the blessings that we received, both my brother and I were able to succeed in school and become successful in our careers. I often wonder if the people who made the donations of food, school supplies and/or money ever realized the impact they were making in our lives?

Each day when I walk into my second home, Pineloch Elementary, I not only get the privilege of carrying out the plan the Lord has laid before me, but I get to see how the Lord is using St. Luke's to bless and impact these children's lives. One way we do this by providing backpacks and school supplies to elementary and middle school students in need. I can tell you there is a light that shines in a child's eyes and a smile that comes across their face when they receive a backpack stuffed with everything they will need for the year. Now, how does washing of feet and backpacks relate to one another?

- Jesus showed love not by words, but through his actions
- The bridge to a blessing is to be a blessing
- We have been sent so that others may receive His love

Thank you for taking the time to read and for allowing me to share my story.

Blessings,
Stephanie DeLucia
2017 Backpack Challenge Chair