“A Blessing to All” - Stephanie Sorge, 9/25/22

 I’ve skipped around a bit, but in fairness, so has the Narrative Lectionary. Joseph was the favorite son of Jacob, the younger son of Isaac, the son of Abraham and Sarah. Joseph knew he was the favorite. Everyone knew he was the favorite. It didn’t help that he told all of his older brothers about his dreams, which he interpreted to mean that he would rule over them one day. His brothers hated him, and nearly killed him, but then sold him to some nomadic traders, instead.

 Joseph was sold to Pharaoh’s chief officer, where he’s entrusted with everything due to his success. We learn that he was also a handsome man, and that Potiphar’s wife tried to seduce him. When that fails, she wrongly accuses him of sexual assault, which lands Joseph in jail. Even in jail, he’s a success, so he’s eventually running things there, too.

 There is so much we could explore in this story - in this whole family dynamic - but not today. Instead, as we prepare to call House Churches and Marks Groups for the year ahead, I’m struck by Joseph’s exceptional gifts of stewardship. Despite plenty of obstacles and injustices against him, Joseph persevered in his using his God-given gifts.

 He knew, from a young age, that he had some extraordinary gifts for leadership, and wherever he found himself, he used those gifts to the best of his abilities. Eventually, he ended up in a position of power and leadership second only to Pharaoh. Because of his faithful stewardship, he was able to save his whole family from famine in Canaan. Not just his family, but everyone in the land. God worked through Joesph to bless many nations, just as God had promised to Abram.

 We have a wealth of gifts within this congregation, and in the larger community, and one of the ways that we practice stewardship of those gifts is through House Churches and Marks Groups. Through those ministry groups, we seek to be a blessing in our community and beyond. We now have an opportunity to hear calls, and I encourage you to be open to how God might be calling you to participate in these ministries, or others. Today is calling Sunday, but calls can be issued at any time during the year. Let us all be open to the ways that God is inviting us to use our gifts and resources in this particular time and place, to be a blessing to all.