

## **Some Ideas for a Year Round Stewardship Emphasis**

### **Weekly...**

- Pray for the spiritual growth and stewardship of the entire congregation, or divide your congregation into smaller segments and assign individuals to pray for those on their list.
- Redesign and vary the weekly offering time. Use appropriate scripture, make personal comments about meaningful giving, involve children, share a story, use congregational movement. Make it a creative, celebrative point in worship!
- **Review the website:** [www.gbod.org/stewardship](http://www.gbod.org/stewardship) for offertory prayers written in conjunction with the lectionary, as well as sermon starters and stewardship nuggets.
- Review the website [www.umcgiving.org](http://www.umcgiving.org) for video clips, mission moments, and other resources related to the mission of the United Methodist Church.
- **Make giving easier by offering Electronic Funds Transfer.**
- Provide opportunities for special, over-and-above gifts. Loose coin offerings, piggy banks, special envelopes, or special baskets may be ways to collect gifts for other specific missions and ministries.

### **Monthly...**

- **Give a 2-3 minute talk during worship on the stewardship Topic of the Month.**
- Give a 2-3 minute talk during worship about a ministry of your church through which lives are being changed.
- Post visuals around your building, post on Face Book and in newsletter articles about missions and ministries your church supports.
- Prepare bulletin inserts relating to stewardship. Because of your gifts...this has happened...
- Ask the Church Council chair to put the Treasurer's Report last at the meeting. Put exciting changes happening in people's lives at the beginning of the meeting. When new items are proposed – ask if it is a part of God's vision instead of who will pay for it.
- Ask children, youth, or adults to write about "How I've shared this week." Publish these edited comments in the bulletin or newsletter.

### **Some Stewardship Topics for a Monthly Focus...**

- ❖ How God has blessed me.
- ❖ My stewardship plan.
- ❖ How I know I make a difference with my giving.
- ❖ What giving means to me.
- ❖ How my giving relates to the sacrificial gift of Jesus.
- ❖ How my giving relates to the gifts of life.

- ❖ How my giving relates to my spiritual growth.
- ❖ How my giving relates to the ministry of our church.
- ❖ How my giving relates to the gifts of the magi and the gift of Jesus.
- ❖ How my giving relates to thankfulness.
- ❖ How my giving relates to... (a chosen scripture).
- ❖ How my giving connects faith and living.
- ❖ How my giving is an investment in what is important to me.
- ❖ Why I give to this church.
- ❖ How I decide how much to give.
- ❖ What is the greatest joy in giving?
- ❖ I discovered the joy of giving when...
- ❖ I give because...

### Quarterly

- **Send a THANK YOU letter to every giver indicating the total amount received.** Include information on how the church is transforming lives with these gifts.
- Present a brief, humorous skit or video during worship about giving. One resource is the Skit Guys for downloadable scripts and video clips for a nominal cost.
- Schedule a brief **stewardship education time during the Church Council meetings**.
- Include a session on stewardship in your new member and confirmation.
- The pastor **preaches about stewardship at least 4 times a year**.
- Write a special newsletter specifically about stewardship issues. Keep it positive! Remember it is about more than money.
- Write a letter to all members/constituents. Choose a different writer each quarter. The letter could be about one of the topics listed above. And it could be mailed with the quarterly statements.
- Develop a devotional guide or prayer calendar for a church season such as Lent or Advent.

### Semiannually...

- **Find creative ways to say THANK YOU** to members for their giving.
- Have a **Bible Study on stewardship**. Invite the UMW, the UMM or a small group to lead a stewardship study.
- Invite a guest speaker to share information about our connectional giving: A conference camp manager (ORM), mission leader, or the conference Apportionment Administrator to share how your apportionment dollars are helping them.

### Annually...

- **Hold an annual stewardship campaign.** Use a purchased campaign or develop your own. Visit the Foundation's Stewardship Resource Library to view samples.
- Publish a *Year- End Giving* brochure which offers suggestions of gifts with tax benefits.

Call the Foundation for ideas.

- **Hold a Charitable Gifts Seminar** annually or every two to three years. Call the Foundation to schedule a presentation.
- Lead a **Seminar on financial management**. Some important topics:
  - ❖ Budgeting and money management
  - ❖ Money management for empty nesters
  - ❖ Teaching healthy money values to your children
  - ❖ Wills and estate planning
  - ❖ Tithing and proportionate giving
  - ❖ Money management for retirees
  - ❖ What are Apportionments?
- **Create a Narrative Budget** to explain the finances, rather than a line item budget. This does not have to be done by the Finance Committee, but use the information they provide. A narrative budget helps to celebrate what is happening in your church. And it's a lot easier to read! Call the Foundation for samples.
- Hold a stewardship retreat
- Make a video of the happenings of the church. Not everyone knows what goes on in the children's Sunday School!
- Choose a year-long stewardship theme.
- **Do a Spiritual Gifts or Time and Talent survey.**
- Hold a training session for Sunday School teachers to enable them to integrate stewardship themes in their class studies.
- Hold a congregational dinner to celebrate and thank people for their giving.
- **List and celebrate all of the things that your congregation is already doing** to promote all types of stewardship.
- Explore the videos and other materials available from the [Media Resource Library](#), 847.931.0710, extension 17.
- **Celebrate with 3x5 note cards for 4 Sundays.** Have people write their responses to statements such as:
  - ❖ 1st Sunday: God was closest to me in this church when...
  - ❖ 2nd Sunday: One person in this church who helped me grow spiritually is...
  - ❖ 3rd Sunday: One program or activity of this church that has helped me grow is...
  - ❖ 4th Sunday: One future vision God has given me for this church is...Post the cards for all to read. This could be followed with a pledge card the 5<sup>th</sup> week.
- Publish a **step chart** listing the numbers of giving units at each level above \$1/week.
- When sending out pledge cards, indicate the current year's pledge on the card for reference.
- If your church has not conducted an annual campaign for several years, consider using Herb Miller's *New Consecration Sunday Stewardship Program*

### Some Other Good Ideas...

- Have children do an “adult sermon” for the congregation about stewardship/sharing/giving.
- Have the congregation learn a new song celebrating steward. “Breathing the Breath” by Mark Redman is one suggestion. Listen to the Utube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xW9xJ90kTok>
- Design a special Stewardship bulletin cover.
- Host a **One Church One Book** event. Provide multiple copies of an interesting book about stewardship.
- Circulate stewardship books through your church library.
- Interview someone (live or through video) who has been a giving member forever, or who has recently begun tithing, or ...
- Make all reports to the congregation positive and affirmative.
- Offer *DISCIPLE BIBLE STUDY*, *FaithQuest*, or *Steward-Living as Disciples in Everyday Life*. These are all available from Cokesbury.
- Watch for stories about exemplary giving. Share them with the congregation.
- Invite someone from the Conference office to speak about Connectional Sharing.
- Hold a prayer vigil.
- Make an effort to **separate the Stewardship Committee from the Finance Committee**.
- Hold a **mission and ministry fair**. Various groups run a “booth” that informs others about their group. Have one booth on Connectional Sharing (Apportionments).
- Read the booklet *Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation—Stewardship*, available for from Cokesbury. It does an excellent job describing your function as a committee and gives more great suggestions.