



Moving ministries forward, *together.*

Best Practices for Whole Life Stewardship

Stewardship is all we do with all we have all the time. With that in mind, the following ideas are offered to help stewardship leaders develop a holistic and whole-life stewardship ministry that focuses on nurturing faithful and generous disciples all year long.

Consider the culture of your ministry and what will work as you develop your plan, ensuring that you select steps from all areas, vary the choices from year to year, set goals, and identify ways to evaluate outcomes.

Before You Get Started:

- Craft a definition of biblical stewardship, as well as what your community of faith believes about stewardship.
- Rename the church budget the “**ministry funding plan**”.
- Ensure multiple giving options are available: online, QR codes, text-to-give, and traditional methods

Weekly:

- Establish the offering as an integral part of worship. Link the offering with how the church is making an impact. Involve children, share a story, make it creative and celebrative.
- Utilize email, text, social media, and print to highlight stewardship results. Ex. “Your gifts of time and talent helped us provide 100 meals to neighbors this week, bringing not just food but dignity, community, and hope.”
- Share brief impact stories on social media, including short videos, to show ministry in action
- Pray for the congregation



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Monthly:

- Give a short talk during worship about stewardship or a particular ministry of the church and its impact.
- Include stewardship updates in the church's communications: opportunities for people to get involved, financial, etc.
- Tell stories: about the work, mission and ministry of the church, about how people's stewardship is making a difference. Utilize in-person opportunities and physical spaces as well as print and digital media.
- Invite people to respond to a particular stewardship prompt* and share those answers with the congregation.

Monthly Stewardship Prompts:

- I give because....
- I have been blessed by other people's stewardship when...
- Stewardship matters because....
- The person whose generosity I admire most is/because....
- I discovered the joy of stewardship when....
- I am grateful for.....
- This week I thank God for.....
- A scripture verse that speaks to me as a steward is/because....

Quarterly:

- Preach on stewardship. Include themes of creation care as well as relational, financial, and whole life stewardship.
- Send a thank-you letter to everyone who has given to the church. Include an insert that highlights a specific ministry of the church or recent activity that was made possible by people's gifts of time, talent or treasure.
- Provide a financial snapshot or impact report
- Invite someone from a local organization with whom the church is connected to speak during worship.
- Open board meetings with devotions centered on stewardship.



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Annually:

- Prepare a narrative budget to connect money with ministry and celebrate people's financial stewardship.
- Offer a personal finance class.
- Select a scripture passage on which to focus educational and invitational efforts.
- Share a "year-end giving" article which gives suggestions of gifts with tax benefits.
- Include a moment for stewardship during Church Council.
- Have a celebration and gratitude event for the congregation's stewardship and what it has accomplished that year.
- Identify areas of ministry for special focus. Example: have a prayer breakfast for Christian education volunteers before the school year begins.
- Invite people to make a commitment (time, skills, financial) to God and God's work through your church.
- Invite a guest speaker to share how the church's provincial/district shares are used to support shared ministries (ex. Board of World Mission, IBOC, Archives, District or Provincial camp, etc.)
- If your church utilizes pledge cards, personalize them to show the giver's current year pledge for reference. Includes a "steps chart" to show what will happen if each giver "steps up" their giving for the coming year.
- Provide people with personal devotional materials that focus on stewardship.
- Offer congregational or small group Bible studies or Sunday School classes on biblical stewardship.
- Offer a spiritual gifts workshop or other way for people to discover their gifts and how to use them for God.
- Review the church's assets (physical, relational, skillsets, etc.) and make sure no gifts are not being used.



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- Incorporate environmental stewardship into the life of the congregation, focusing on what scripture tells us about care of creation.
- Have a stewardship retreat for stewardship leaders.
- Have a congregational book study on stewardship.
- Encourage people to include the church in their estate plans. Provide information on bequests, endowments and other planned gifts.
- Conduct surveys or polls to understand congregational interests
- Review demographic data to assess the neighborhood's and community's areas of needs and align the church's outreach with meeting those needs.
- Invite gifts of appreciated stock
- Send a targeted communication to members 70½ and older explaining how they can fulfill their Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) requirement by making a tax-free gift directly from their IRA to the church. Be sure to include simple step-by-step instructions for working with their financial institution.
- Create a short 3-5 minute video sharing impact stories.