



Moving ministries forward, **together.**

## **2026 Stewardship Steps:**

**Every month:** Spend time in prayer/study on stewardship (individually, board, congregation)

### **January: Reflect, Review, Learn**

- Review the year:
  - How did the church make a difference in people's lives and the community?
  - If the church has a mission or vision statement, how was it fulfilled?
  - How were the church's resources utilized?
  - Where and how was God at work throughout the year?
  - What stories of transformation can we share from 2025?
- Identify and evaluate the church's stewardship efforts over the last 3-5 years: What were the goals and the results?
  - What worked? What didn't work?
  - How can you build on/expand what worked?
  - Is there anything you used to do that should be brought back?
  - Is there something new you'd like or need to try?
- Review giving patterns:
  - What percentage increased their giving?
  - What percentage gives regularly?
  - How many people are not giving?
  - What demographic trends do you notice (new givers, age groups, etc.)?
- Conduct listening sessions:
  - Host informal gatherings to hear from people about their understanding of stewardship
  - Ask: "What brings you joy in giving?" and "What obstacles do you experience?"

**Recommended congregational communication:** 2025 gratitude report: Utilizing information gained from reviewing the year, thank people for how their gifts of time, talent, etc. enabled the church to make a difference.



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### **February: Set Goals and Draft the Plan**

- What long term change(s) does the church hope to see in stewardship?
- What short term goals will help the church get there? (see MMFA's "[Four Stewardship Essentials](#)" resource for ideas)
- Is there one scripture passage that the church can use to guide its stewardship actions for the rest of the year (emphasis on the verse each quarter)? OR
- Are there stewardship "basics" on which to build over the year? Ex. What does it mean to be God's stewards? What do we steward? What difference does our stewardship make in the world?
- Build off the work you've done to identify actions the church will take.
- Identify 3-5 people to share personal stewardship stories throughout the year
- Prepare a "Year of Generous Living" focus/theme

**Recommended congregational communication:** 2026 stewardship focus: scripture verse to accompany "Year of Generous Living" as well as questions to be explored together. Share your "why" behind the year-round whole life stewardship focus.

### **March: Finish the Plan**

- What will we do in 2026 to grow people in their service, stewardship, and faith?
- What will we do each quarter to celebrate the generosity of our congregation?
- What will we do in 2026 to help people understand the impact of their stewardship?
- How will we measure our actions and know they were successful?
- Stewardship calendar: plan monthly newsletters and bulletin features, social media posts, and story-telling moments

**Recommended congregational communication:** Upcoming opportunities for stewardship development (see April-September section for ideas)



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## **April-September: Steward Formation**

### **Bible study and teaching:**

- Congregational or small group study on biblical stewardship
- Expand understanding of “stewardship”
- Preach whole life stewardship (aim for one sermon per quarter)
- Intergenerational education: offer an event or series that teaches adults and children together
- Offer deeper dives into specific aspects of whole life stewardship: time, talent, treasure, relationships, Creation, etc.
- Stewardship book study

### **Workshops:**

- Financial health: budgeting, saving, debt reduction, retirement, etc.
- Planned giving
- Generosity Autobiography

### **Other ideas:**

- Develop a narrative budget
- Earth/creation care stewardship education and projects
- Partnerships with community organizations who are addressing areas the congregation cares about

## **October-November: Steward Dedication**

- Invite people to make a commitment to God and God's work through the church: time, skills, relationships, money
- Emphasize stewardship as discipleship and a spiritual practice
- Provide multiple ways to commit (in-person, online, paper)
- Host a special meal or fellowship event in conjunction with Commitment Sunday
- Begin sharing vision for 2027 ministry

**Recommended congregational communication:** Why commitments matter, both for spiritual growth and for how the church will make a difference in people's lives in 2027.



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### **December: Advent Stewardship of Our Spiritual Lives**

- Utilize the four Sundays of Advent to speak to how faithful stewards live and grow as we prepare for the birth of Jesus.
- Connect the themes of anticipation, preparation, joy and peace to stewardship
- Create an Advent calendar where families can engage in acts of service and generosity throughout December

### **Year-End Stewardship Emphasis:**

- Communicate about year-end tax benefits for giving
- Begin sharing 2026 impact stories and look ahead to 2027 possibilities
- Thank volunteers and recognize their gifts of time and talent

### **Quarterly Check-Ins:**

- Are we following our plan?
- What adjustments do we need to make?
- What stewardship stories do we need to be telling?
- How are people responding to our living generously emphasis?
- How are we showing gratitude for the stewardship we are witnessing?