



## Six Best Practices - Stewardship Strategy Assessment

Identify (mark) what your church is already doing in the following list. Which one or two things are you already doing well? Why and how?

### I. Operational Management- Sound Fundraising Methodology

\_\_\_ 1. Mission clarity: review and renew the congregation's mission statement every three years.

\_\_\_ 2. Narrative budget: develop a narrative *case statement* (vision for mission) that tells the church's story and **connects dollar amounts with the congregation's mission** priorities and ministries.

\_\_\_ 3. Annual giving program: ask members and adherents to make estimates of their annual giving and to base it on a proportion of income.

\_\_\_ 4. Multiple opportunities for financial giving: ensure people can give in many ways through the year (e.g., regular offering, systematic electronic payment, special offerings, credit/debit card, fundraising events, planned (legacy) giving}.

\_\_\_ 5. Donor appreciation: phone, visit, or send givers personalized thank-you letters with quarterly and annual reports and tax receipts. Statements include ministry stories of how gifts are being used to make a difference.

### II. Stewardship Integration in Worship - "Stewardship Every Sunday"

\_\_\_ 1. Plan worship with stewardship worship resources.

- a. *Minutes for Mission*
- b. Stewardship bulletin inserts
- c. Stewardship "Seconds" in bulletins

\_\_\_ 2. Preach stewardship almost every week.

Almost any lectionary reading can have a stewardship theme. Search for the non-obvious themes such as: steadfastness, abundance, generosity, hospitality, healing, reconciliation,

justice. **Remember, Jesus preached and taught about money and possessions** in 40% of his parables. You can, too!

\_\_\_ 3. Nurture young stewards through children's messages or theme time.

\_\_\_ 4. Celebrate the offering as an act of worship.

- a. Use an Offertory Sentence that connects people's lives to God's mission
- b. Dedicate offerings, including electronic gifts, with an Offering Prayer

### **III. Stewardship Formation – Create a Culture of Gratitude and Generosity**

The primary purpose of stewardship formation is to nurture individual and congregational identity as stewards and disciples, rather than as consumers. A secondary (and welcome!) outcome of good stewardship formation is greater generosity.

\_\_\_ 1. Stewardship formation opportunities for young people in

- a. youth confirmation training
- b. youth group activities
- c. Sunday school
- d. Children's Time in worship

\_\_\_ 2. Adult stewardship discussions in

- a. Seekers or new member classes
- b. Bible study or other small groups for discussion/study
- c. legacy giving education: how to arrange major and end-of-life gifts
- d. personal-finance training and budget counseling for individuals and families

### **IV. Stewardship Leadership - Leadership Development and Support**

\_\_\_ 1. Clergy and lay members active in wider church roles (Deanery, Diocese, Province, General Convention, ecumenical work, etc.)

\_\_\_ 2. Opportunities provided/encouraged for leaders to attend stewardship training events

### **V. Spiritual-Nurture Opportunities**

Understanding one's identity as a steward goes hand in hand with spiritual growth. People growing in discipleship are generous with their lives, including their money.

\_\_\_ 1. Bible study    \_\_\_ 2. Small group ministries

## VI. Engagement in Social Justice Concerns

\_\_\_ 1. Parish (or area-wide); Diocesan; and/or Episcopal Relief & Development (or similar) based promotion and support

\_\_\_ 2. Social justice learning and advocacy opportunities

\_\_\_ 3. Active involvement by the congregation in community social outreach (More than giving money-people volunteer time, skills)

**Note potential growth areas;** choose 1-2 practices that you did not mark. Brainstorm together how you might go about implementing them.

To develop an integrated year-round congregational stewardship strategy, **add an additional item every six months.**