



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.**