

A List of Presentations Available to Your Church

Tips for Making the Budget this Year – A general overview for the Stewardship Committee and Administrative Council, sharing strategies to encourage financial support.

Your Will Your Way – A time to consider how you want to be remembered and designate that your plans be communicated for the future.

How to Start an Endowment – Learn how to design, set guidelines, establish and promote an Endowment Fund in your church.

Renewing an Endowment – Review your Endowment guidelines and encourage future gifts.

Investment Services – Learn about different investment strategies, and the different options and possibilities at the Iowa United Methodist Foundation. Review the church's current accounts.

What to do When a Large Gift is Coming – Learn how to receive bequests and other gifts, reviewing a Gift-Acceptance Policy, and how to encourage more gifts.

Capital Campaigns – When you are dreaming of a major remodeling or a new facility, a workshop and resources on how to accomplish this, step-by-step.

Building Loans – If you have immediate repairs, remodeling that can't wait, or a larger project to finance, learn about the Building Loans available through the Iowa United Methodist Foundation.

Please check out our website at www.iumf.org for scholarships that are available, the Carma Mohler grants, and the HELP loans for pastors (Higher Education Loans for Pastors program).



Tips for Financial Stewardship



Year-Round Financial Stewardship — WHY & HOW?

People give when they are convinced that their giving is directly related to something good happening. That message cannot be told only once a year! Stewardship is not an annual financial campaign, but a way of life. The ideas in this booklet are tools your stewardship committee can use to develop a year-round comprehensive stewardship strategy, focusing on nurturing Christian disciples, rather than balancing a budget. When a church replaces its goal of “increasing the budget” with the goal of “helping persons make a faithful response,” miracles will happen.

We suggest you share this booklet with your stewardship team, church council, or a small group committed to growing generosity in your congregation.

- 1. Mark the items your congregation is already doing.**
- 2. Have each person circle 5-6 ideas they think might work well in your congregation at this time. Tabulate these results.**
- 3. Implement one new idea per quarter, evaluating as you go. Avoid trying too many new things at once.**
- 4. Schedule them into the existing church calendar, avoid conflicts, and work in harmony with the current mission and ministry of the church.**

Be sure to enlist other people in the church to do these chosen activities. Involve as many different people as possible.

The time periods given are only a suggestion. What will work in your setting? Choose only as many as you can do well. Be sure to keep the pastor(s), Church Council and other leaders informed of your plans!

Be positive in all that you do! Lift up what is being given—not what is still needed, particularly when reporting financial stewardship.

Other Ideas Cont.

- * Read the booklet Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation—Stewardship, available from Cokesbury. It does an excellent job describing your function as a committee and gives more great suggestions.
- * Ask parents and grandparents of kids being baptized if they’ve prepared a will.
- * Present Confirmands with a personalized box of offering envelopes.
- * Recognize and thank a different category of volunteers each week, verbally and in the bulletin.
- * Have people answer: What is your response to a child who asks you why you give to the church?

“A campaign is a method of reaping a harvest. The harvest is much more likely to be abundant if you’ve had an effective year-round process for communication and celebrating the mission and ministry of the church.”



Other Ideas for ANY TIME

- * Have children do an “adult sermon” for the congregation about stewardship/sharing/giving in place of the children’s sermon.
- * Have a poster/banner contest.
- * Write a stewardship hymn.
- * Send a THANK YOU to those that give gifts other than money, such as their time and talents. Catch people being givers and say thanks!
- * Design a special stewardship bulletin cover.
- * Have a “what if all our church read the same 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.
- * Make all reports to congregation positive and affirmative.
- * Offer *Disciple Bible Study*, *Companions in Christ*, or similar in-depth spiritual studies. These are available from Cokesbury.
- * Watch out for stories about exemplary giving. Share them with the congregation.
- * Invite someone from the Conference to speak about connectional sharing (apportionments).
- * Hold a prayer vigil.
- * Make an effort to separate the Stewardship Committee from the Finance Committee.
- * Send a personal handwritten note and/or a gift after an unusually large gift.
- * Make an effort to separate the timing of the annual campaign from the preparation of the annual budget.
- * Hold a mission and ministry fair. Have various groups run a booth that informs others about their group. Have one booth on connectional sharing (apportionments).

Weekly

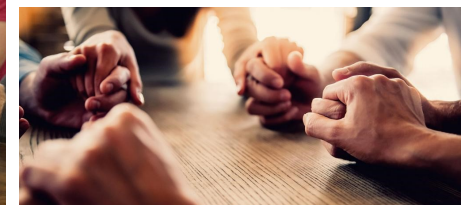
- * Pray for the spiritual growth and stewardship of the entire congregation. Divide your congregation into smaller segments and assign individuals to pray for those on their list.
- * Redesign and vary the weekly offering time. “Receive” the offering instead of “taking” the offering. Use appropriate scripture, make personal comments about meaningful giving, involve kids, share a story, use congregational movement. Make it a creative, celebrative point in worship!
- * Celebrate what you DO have and refrain from dwelling on what you don’t. Say THANK YOU.
- * Review the websites: gbod.org/stewardship and umcgiving.org for offertory prayers written in conjunction with the lectionary, weekly mission moments, and FAQ’s, as well as sermon starts and stewardship nuggets.
- * Send a personal note to a first time giver by Tuesday.
- * Make giving easier by providing Electronic Funds Transfers. Provide other options for ways of giving—mail-in with a prepaid envelope, online debit card, auto bank debit, or use the app UMCgo — read more about it at <http://www.gcfa.org/give/electronic-giving/>
- * Put LARGE easy-to-complete offering envelopes in the pews.
- * 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 mission and ministries.
- * Send out prayer concerns and updates via email.
- * Remove any communications that inadvertently imply that the church is not fiscally sound. Don’t compare any “year-to-date” statistics to past years. Don’t divide the budget by 52.
- * Set the tone for people and create a culture of giving: offer a free gift to first time givers, offer free breakfast to Sunday volunteers, offer movie tickets to those who bring guests, etc.

Monthly

- * Give a 2-3 minute talk during worship on the stewardship topic of the month (see page 5 for topic ideas).
- * Give a 2-3 minute talk during worship about a ministry of your church through which lives are being changed and thank people for their gifts which make that ministry possible.
- * Prepare bulletin boards to highlight different missions and ministries your church supports.
- * Write a letter to all members/constituents. Choose a different writer each month. The letter could be about the topic of the month (see page 5).
- * Prepare newsletter articles or bulletin inserts about the topic of the month (see page 5).
- * Use the Foundation's stewardship newsletter articles. If your church doesn't receive it, sign up at www.iumf.org/connect/ or email us at info@iumf.org and we can get you signed up and send you previous issues that pertain to you.
- * Prepare bulletin inserts relating to stewardship. "Because of your gifts, this great thing 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.
- * When reviewing the giving records of the congregation, look for changes—this may reflect a life change for them.
- * Ask children, youth, or adults to write about "How I've shared this week." Publish these in the bulletin or newsletter.
- * Mail giving envelopes monthly, rather than using a yearly box.

Annually Cont.

- * Celebrate with 3x5 notecards for four 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 has helped me grow spiritually is _____.
 - 3rd Sunday: One ministry or 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 5th week.
- * Publish a step chart listing the numbers of giving units given at each level about \$1/week.
 - * When sending out pledge cards, indicate the current year's pledge on the card for reference.
 - * Include a "wish list" for ministry needs in the giving statement or narrative budget. Include a testimony about mission and ministry in the statements.
 - * Expect your pastors, staff and leaders to tithe, and include a gift to the church in their will.
 - * Encourage the pastor to preach and teach about stewardship during worship as often and as comfortably as done about prayer, scripture study, and serving.

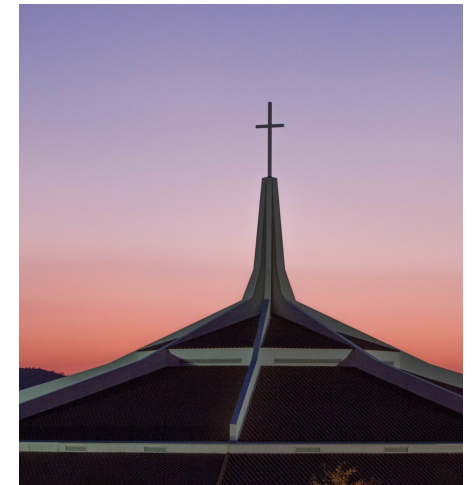


Annually

- * Publish a “Year-End Giving” brochure in November, which gives suggestions of gifts with tax benefits. Call or email the Foundation to receive an example.
- * Hold an annual campaign that emphasizes percentage giving. Use a purchased campaign or develop your own.
- * Hold a Charitable Gifts Seminar annually or every two to three years. Call the Foundation to schedule a presentation.
- * Hold a class—call the Foundation for book suggestions:
 - 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. A narrative budget helps to celebrate what is happening at your church and is a lot easier to read!
- * Hold a stewardship retreat.
- * Make a video of 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” of “time and talent” survey—then use them.
- * Hold a training session for Sunday School teachers to enable them to teach stewardship themes in their classes.
- * Hold an appreciation lunch or dinner to celebrate and thank faithful givers both in top dollar amounts and in fulfillment of commitments.
- * List and celebrate all the things that your congregation is already doing in mission and ministry with the gifts received

Possible Stewardship Topics of the Month

1. How God has blessed me
2. My plan to support the ministry I love
3. How I know I can make a difference with my giving
4. What giving means to me
5. How my giving relates to the sacrificial gift of Jesus
6. How my giving relates to the gift of life
7. How my giving relates to my spiritual growth
8. How my giving relates to the ministry of our church
9. How my giving relates to the gifts of the Magi and the gift of Jesus
10. How my giving relates to thankfulness
11. How my giving relates to (a chosen scripture)
12. How my giving connects faith and living
13. How my giving is an investment in what is important to me
14. Why I give to this church
15. Why I love this church
16. How I decide how much to give
17. The greatest joy in giving is...
18. I discovered the joy of giving when...
19. I give because...
20. Share what a particular ministry has done for yourself or others



Quarterly

- * Mail quarterly statements in something other than a window envelope which looks like a bill or junk mail.
- * Present a brief humorous skit during worship about giving.
- * Send a THANK YOU letter to every giver indicating the total amount received. The giving envelopes for the next month or quarter can be included in this letter. Include an auto debit enrollment, news about an upcoming event or sermon series, a ministry story of how gifts were used, and a reply giving envelope.
- * Schedule a brief stewardship education time during Church Council meetings.
- * Include a session on stewardship in your new member class and with Confirmands.
- * Write a special newsletter specifically about stewardship issues. Keep it positive!
- * Check the websites gbod.org/stewardship and umcsgiving.org for more great ideas.
- * Write a letter to all members/constituents. Choose a different writer each quarter. The letter could be about a topic listed earlier (see page 5). This could be mailed with the quarterly statements.
- * Develop of devotional guide or prayer calendar for the next few months.
- * Preach and teach stewardship in mid-January, right after back-to-school, and at least two other times.

Semi-Annually

- * Find creative ways to say THANK YOU to members for their giving.
- * Have a Bible Study on stewardship. Invite a Sunday School class, the UMW, the UMM, or a Wednesday evening class to choose a stewardship study.
- * Invite a guest speaker to share information about our connectional giving (apportionments). For example, invite a camp manager, mission leader, or Conference Council on Youth Ministries (CCYM) member to share how your apportionment dollars are helping them.
- * Encourage your pastor to meet with top donors to the church to listen and hear of their dreams for the church and to get opinions on future ideas.
- * Regularly offer a personal financial planning and budgeting class. Call or email the Foundation for resources.
- * Create a “giving challenge” to challenge non-givers to give something every week for eight weeks (or three months, or Lenten season, etc.)
- * Have a tithing emphasis, inviting people to try tithing for three months at a time.

