



A Stewardship Resource
for Congregations of the
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

Praying, Praising, Proclaiming Christ: An Emmaus Encounter

On the evening of the first Easter, two of Jesus' followers were joined by a stranger as they walked along the road to Emmaus. When they got to the end of their journey and sat at table with him, the stranger took bread, prayed a blessing and broke it, and gave it to them. In that moment they recognized that Jesus Christ, their risen Lord, had been their companion on the road. They rejoiced that he had walked and talked with them, explaining the Scriptures to them. And then they quickly went, found the other followers in Jerusalem, and proclaimed the good news to them.

Stewardship is our response to God's love shown to us in Jesus Christ, who is our companion on the road of our lives, and who comes to us in the breaking of the bread of Holy Communion. Like those earlier followers, we proclaim that good news in word and deed, using every gift and skill that God has graciously given us to share God's love in the world.

Each year the Stewardship committee of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA puts together a booklet of devotions to begin your congregation's council meeting. Beginning your meeting in the Word with light discussion tones down your meeting to be inviting and welcoming, putting things into perspective that results in a productive meeting. This booklet is available on our synod's [website at swpasynod.org](http://swpasynod.org) . There are many additional resources available both on our synod's website as well as ELCA.org under Resources.

All or parts of this booklet may be duplicated
for use in congregations of the
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA.

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A Letter from Bishop Kurt F. Kusserow



Dear Friends in Christ,

One of the most profound and simple prayers in all of Holy Scripture was spoken on the road to Emmaus: “Stay with us, Lord.” These words have found their way into the Church’s evening liturgies because they reveal how deeply we depend on Christ, and how faithful he is in being present with us.

Faithful stewardship arises out of this kind of profound understanding that our identity and wellbeing is a gift from a gracious God who does promise to be with us. An initial and natural response to a realization of this depth is praise. “Were not our hearts warmed within us?” the disciples blurted out to each other, giving voice to the realization that Christ had in fact been with them on the whole journey!

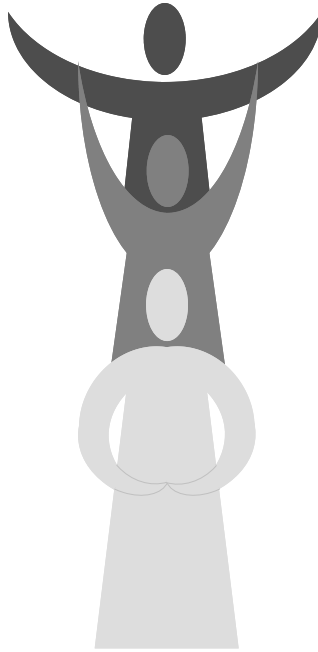
Both prayer and praise flow spontaneously from human hearts. Our deep need for the saving grace of Christ, and the astounding joy of having received it can be moving personal experiences. But the Church, in its life together, takes another step – an intentional, active, external step: it tells the story to others.

Long before the two breathless disciples reached Jerusalem and proclaimed, “Christ is risen!” their actions had begun to give public witness to their faith. In this same way, our proclamation of the grace of God is found in our words and in our actions. Faithful stewardship is an active exercise of the work of proclamation.

Thanks be to God whose grace gives us life!

With you in Christ,

Kurt F. Kusserow, Bishop



Praying, Praising, Proclaiming Christ

What comes to mind when you hear the word “stewardship?” Money, probably. Possibly time, talents and treasure. Maybe using God’s gifts or care for creation.

This year’s theme encourages us to add three more words to our vocabulary of stewardship - prayer, praise and proclamation.

Use the thoughts and ideas in this section to spark discussion in your Stewardship Committee or Congregation Council.



Praying

Having a grateful heart is central to living as a faithful steward. Gratitude for God's love and providence for us (*that come to us apart from our deserving!*) moves us to respond with love and care for our neighbor and for the world God made.

Genesis 12:3
is a particular,
intentional
stewardship role.
"... in you all families
of the earth will be
blessed."

Bishop Kusserow

Stewardship begins with prayer. It is through prayer that we cultivate a grateful heart and an appreciation of God's blessings in our lives. Saying "thank you" in prayer is a constant reminder that we are dependent upon God for all that we need for daily life.

Through the fruits of the earth, the people around us, and our intellect and skills, God does indeed provide us with all that is needed for daily life.

Prayer gives us an awareness of all that God entrusts to our stewardship. And through prayer we open ourselves to God's guidance and direction. As stewards we

understand that we are blessed so that we might then be a blessing in others' lives.

Questions to Ponder

- How can you make prayer an important part of your annual stewardship program?
- How can prayers of thankfulness highlight our role as stewards throughout the year?

Ideas to Consider

- If your annual stewardship program coincides with Thanksgiving, have Sunday School classes make placemats or prayer cards that children can color and put on their Thanksgiving table.
- Ask different groups in the congregation to write prayer petitions that offer thanks to God. You could use them all on one Sunday, or spread them out over several weeks. Be sure to include children in the prayer writing. Consider asking families to write down the grace they say at mealtime. Post them and see which prayers are common to several families. Talk about why that's the family's prayer. Is it the one grandpa used to say, or one that was learned in preschool?
- Make a collage of the people and things that God provides for us, and put it on a bulletin board. Include the words, "Thank you, God, for..."
- Use a Bible concordance to find passages about prayer. Write a brief prayer to go along with each passage and put them together in a booklet for congregation members to use in their daily devotions at home during your annual stewardship emphasis.

Actions to Take

- It's easy to get into a pattern of praying the same way and for the same things every day. Constancy in prayer is good - but so is variety. Written collections of prayers can help expand our prayer life by inviting us to pray for people and concerns that we might not think about on our own. Use the prayers in the LBW or ELW as part of your prayers each day.
- Commit yourself to offering a prayer of thanks for something different each day.
- When you are driving around or at the dinner table, ask your children to name one thing they are grateful for that day.
- Write an email or note to someone telling them why you are grateful that God put them in your life.



Praising

Offering ourselves, our time, and our possessions to God is an act of worship and praise. It's a way of joyfully recognizing who God is to us - our creator, redeemer and sanctifier - and who we are in relationship to God - caretakers of creation, beloved children, God's holy people.

When we live as stewards we wisely, generously, and faithfully use that which God has entrusted to us. Using all that we have for the purpose God intends - for the well-being of all people and of the world - gives honor to God and puts us in our proper role as stewards and caretakers of all that God has created.

In our praise, we recognize the gracious providence God shows toward us. We are filled with awe at the majesty of God, who made everything that exists and to whom everything belongs. As we worship God, we put our trust in God rather than in our own possessions or skills or plans.

Questions to Ponder

- Do you truly believe that everything belongs to God? How does your answer affect the choices you make each day?
- How do you praise and honor God through your everyday life?
- Do people in your congregation understand that their financial offering is part of the way they worship God each week?

Ideas to Consider

- Regularly include songs and hymns from the Stewardship section of your worship book in worship. Don't just sing them during the annual stewardship appeal.

• Thrivent and other organizations have programs that teach children about being good stewards of their money. Go to the Thrivent.com website and type "teaching" in the search box. It will take you to financial education resources for children and teens.

"God's work.
Our hands." reminds
us that we do nothing
on our own. It's God who
does it. But God says, "The
way I'm going to do it is
through you!" That's
stewardship.

Bishop Kusserow

Actions to Take

- St. Augustine wrote, "Find out what God has given you and take from it what you need; the remainder is needed by others." Open your closet. Walk through your garage. Look in your attic. Is there anything you have that is not needed by you, but instead is needed by others?
- Spend some time looking at your next bank statement. What do your spending and saving habits say about your priorities? If you don't like what you see, decide what you can do to be a better steward of your money.
- If members of your congregation use Simply Giving, consider putting envelopes such as these in the pew racks:

Simply Giving

These envelopes are for those who are enrolled in **Simply Giving**.

Please place the empty envelope in the offering plate as a way of participating in the gathering of the offering even though your offering has been transmitted electronically.

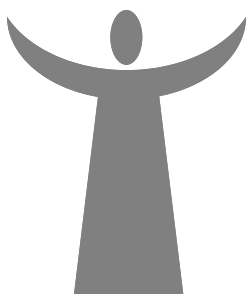
(Envelopes are reused - they are not wasted.)

If you wish to make an additional offering you may use this envelope.

Name _____ Additional offering amount _____

Then include something like this in your bulletin:

*Our offering is an act of worship. If you make your offering through **Simply Giving**, or regularly give on a non-weekly basis, you are encouraged to place a Simply Giving envelope in the offering plate when it is passed to you as a reminder of the offering you have already made.*



Proclaiming

When we live as faithful stewards in the world, all that we say and do proclaims God's sovereignty and love.

As stewards, it is our duty (as well as our delight) to use what God has entrusted to us for the good of all. When we regard our time, talents and treasure as a trust from God, rather than as private possessions to use as we wish, we bear witness that God is the creator and rightful owner of all that we have.

We live in a society that tells us that we have a right to have everything we want. But as faithful stewards we know that there is a difference between wants and needs. Our neighbor's needs are more important than our desire to have everything we want. The priorities we set and the choices we make speak clearly about what we believe.

A steward is one who is charged with the trustworthy use of another's property. "Charge" means there is intentionality. "Trustworthy" means there is accountability. "Use" means engagement, not preservation or misuse. And "another's" reminds us that we are not the owner.

Bishop Kusserow

On the first Easter evening Jesus joined two of his followers on the road to Emmaus. When they realized that it was Jesus who had been with them, their first reaction was to go and tell others what had happened to them and what had been made known to them. That encounter with Jesus gave their lives a new direction and purpose.

As we encounter our Lord in worship and prayer and the holy meal, our lives are given new direction and purpose. We have a story to tell about why we give generously and share what we have, about why we choose to give of our time and our skills for the sake of others, and about why the love of God leads us to love others and the world God made.

Questions to Ponder

- Has the way you think about money and possessions changed over the years?
- What's hardest for you to give to others - your time, talents, or treasure?
- What does your lifestyle say about your faith and values?
- Is there anything wrong with having a nice car or enjoying fine dining? Why or why not?

Ideas to Consider

- Engage your youth group or teenage Sunday School class in a discussion about their clothes and electronic devices. What's important to them? How do they make their choices?
- At Christmastime, encourage members to make a donation instead of buying a gift for someone who has everything they need. Or make purchases through fair trade organizations. Some websites to look at are www.serrv.org (jewelry, household items, chocolate and coffee), www.elca.org/goodgifts (animals for needy families, water purification, education, mosquito nets, farming tools), and lwr.org/coffee (equal exchange coffee). Or ask your pastor for catalogs from SERRV and ELCA Good Gifts.
- Use a Spiritual Gifts Assessment with new members, council, and women's groups. Have assessments available during a coffee hour for anyone to fill out. Then provide people with information about how their gifts can be used in ministry through the congregation and beyond.

Actions to Take

- Look through your church building. Are there things that are being saved that you no longer need? Donate or recycle those items.
- Form a Green Team, a group of people who will help your congregation "reduce, reuse, and recycle." Take action to reduce your congregation's use of electricity, paper, and Styrofoam.

Resources for Your Stewardship Program

Please take the time to look through the following questions, ideas and resources before you plan your stewardship program. There may be something new that you haven't done before, or some suggestion might spark your imagination. Take some time to think creatively before you start planning. (That's why the planning worksheet is included *after* the questions and ideas.)

As you plan your program, remember that people not only need to hear a message repeated several times, they also need to hear it in different ways and to see it. Have the hymns and prayers repeat the theme of the sermon. Use the graphics as bulletin covers each week, on letters that are sent out, and on a banner. All of these things will raise your members' awareness that something special, and worth paying attention to, is happening in the life of your congregation.

Questions to Ponder

- When was the last time you had a stewardship program? If you do not have annual appeal, why? Would it be beneficial for your congregation to ask people to intentionally consider their giving every year?
- What shape should this year's program take? Variety is good, so if you have done one particular type of program (temple talks, sermon series, informative mailings, cottage meetings) consider doing something different this year.
- How can you creatively use the theme of *Praying, Praising, Proclaiming Christ*? Do the ministries of your congregation fall into those three categories? How does the financial stewardship of members support those ministries?

Ideas to Consider

- Have your council, adult Sunday School or women's group put together a display of your congregation's ministries. Include some that are supported by you through Mission Support that you give to the synod. Group the ministries under the headings of Praying, Praising, and Proclaiming. It may be a stretch to figure out where, for example, the work of the property committee fits in, but think about motivation and commitment. You keep your building in good shape because it is a house of worship. So maybe property fits under Praise. Or maybe you value being able to use your building to serve others, which makes property fit under Proclamation. Wherever it ends up, having the discussion will be beneficial.

- Plan a three Sunday Stewardship Emphasis from Sept 24-Oct 8, 2023.
 - Week 1 Proclaim Focus text: Philippians 1:21-30 (Lectionary 25)
 - Week 2 Praise Focus text: Philippians 2:1-13 (Lectionary 26)
 - Week 3 Prayer Focus text: Psalm 80:7-15 (Lectionary 27)
- Over the summer, ask a couple people to take pictures of the congregation in the act of praying, praising, and proclaiming Christ. Get photos of people being faithful stewards. Then use those photos as part of your fall stewardship emphasis. Perhaps they could be used as a bulletin cover or bulletin board. Or maybe they could be projected as part of a sermon.
- Two of the gospel lessons in October lend themselves well to Stewardship themes.
 - Oct. 8, 2023** Jesus says, "I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will last. ", directing us to Steward our relationships in spreading his Word.
 - Oct. 22, 2023** Jesus' response to the Pharisees is very clear when he tells them to give to Caesar's what is Caesar's but give to God what is God's. Reminding us all that everything we have comes from God as blessings. He puts the responsibility back on us to manage these blessings.
- More sermon ideas can be found here:
www.workingpreacher.org and <https://www.stewardshipoflife.org/>
- For a children's sermon, have three children of about the same height stand one behind the other. Have the first one fold their hands in prayer. Ask the second to raise their arms toward heaven in praise. Tell the third to reach out to help people around them. Now ask someone in the congregation to tell you what shape they make. (A cross.)
- For a youth discussion, have a basket of items, some of which are necessary for life, some which are luxuries - for example, a sweatshirt, a designer purse, an apple, a bag of chips. Ask the youth to identify which are "needs" and which are "wants." It's not always clear what the difference is. Be ready for some good discussion.
- Choose songs and hymns that lift up the praise and proclamation aspects of stewardship. Some good choices would be:
 - Praise and Thanksgiving ELW 689 LBW 409
 - We Are an Offering ELW 692
 - Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ ELW 674 WOV 754
 - Voices Raised to You ELW 845
 - Take My Life, That I May Be ELW 583, 685 LBW 406
- Include stewardship petitions in the prayer of the church throughout the year. Write your own, or use the prayers for Day of Thanksgiving, Harvest, and Stewardship of Creation on pages 61-63 of the ELW. Similar petitions can be found

Sample First Letter



Dear Friends,

This year the theme of our annual stewardship program is "Praying, Praising, Proclaiming Christ."

Over the next ___ weeks, we will be looking at what it means to be a congregation that prays, praises and proclaims Christ while we live as faithful stewards of all that God has entrusted to us.

Stewardship is the wise and faithful use of all that we have. That applies to our skills and talents, our relationships, our time, our witness to the faith, and our money.

Over the next few weeks, you will have the opportunity to think carefully and prayerfully about all that you have and what you have to offer to God and the world through our congregation.

(At this point you can add details about the program, especially if you have planned events outside of worship. Let people know how and when Estimate of Giving Cards and Time and Talent Forms will be distributed and collected.)

Thank you for your generous and faithful stewardship in the past. Because members shared their time, talents and treasure, we were able to provide Sunday School for our children, meaningful worship, and support for those in need during the past year. *(Alter this to reflect your congregation's specific ministries.)* We also provided malaria nets for children in Africa, and support for Bethesda Children's Home. *(Again, change this to reflect your specific outreach ministries.)*

I/We look forward to the mission and ministry we will share in the coming year.

In Christ,

(This letter could come from the pastor, congregation president, or stewardship committee.)

Sample Second Letter

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

A couple weeks ago you received a letter outlining our fall stewardship program. This coming Sunday, *(date)*, we will be collecting Estimate of Giving Cards during our worship services.

Our offering of money is an act of worship just as much as the prayers and praise we offer. The giving of our money for something other than our own needs proclaims where we put our trust - in God, rather than in our own abilities and possessions.

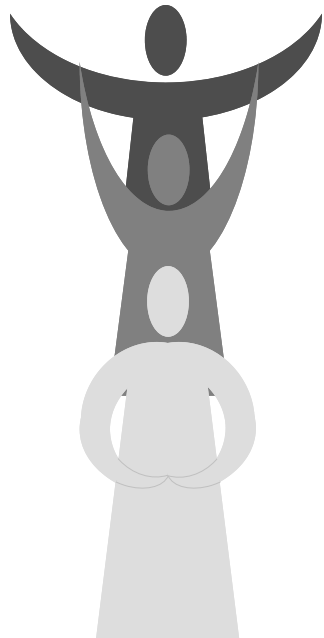
Over the next few days, I/we invite you to think seriously about how you are using the time, skills and wealth that has been entrusted to you by God. Are you using them in a way that serves Christ and the people he loves? Are you supporting the ministry within our congregation, and through our congregation to the world by generously sharing your talents and possessions? Are there new ways that you might share and serve in the coming year?

Enclosed with this letter there is an Estimate of Giving Card and an envelope to put it in. There is also a Time and Talent Form and a Spiritual Gifts Assessment. I/We invite you to look through the assessment and then consider the time and talents you have to offer through the ministry we share at *(insert congregation name)*. You can return the Time and Talent Form in the same envelope with your Estimate of Giving Card.

(At this point include any other pertinent information related to your program.)

Thank you for your faithful stewardship in the past.

In Christ,
(This letter could come from the pastor, congregation president, or stewardship committee.)



Bulletin Insert 1



As the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, we are one church that is praying, praising and proclaiming Christ in 149 locations in our corner of Pennsylvania.

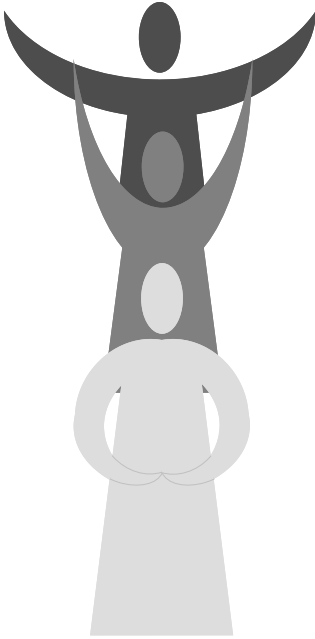
Sometimes we can think of the synod as a separate entity from our congregations. But it's not. All of us together are the synod, and the synod's ministry includes every ministry of every congregation.

What that means is that all of us are engaged in caring for the community of West View through The West View Hub. All of us are part of the furniture ministry of New Start out of Bethlehem in Glenshaw and the clothing ministry of Trinity in Latrobe. All of us are part of the Vacation Bible School that takes place in over 100 locations each summer.

It also means that our individual congregation's education ministry includes Thiel College and United Lutheran Seminary. Each congregation's ministry with children includes Lutherlyn and Camp Agape, Glade Run Lutheran Services and Bethesda Children's Home. Every congregation is present with college students at our two Campus Ministry sites. We all provide support and relief for those in need through work camps, food pantries and refugee resettlement. And we offer care for our elders through Lutheran Senior Life.

So when you include agencies and institutions as well as congregations, as the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod we are one church praying, praising and proclaiming Christ in MORE than 149 locations. The mission support dollars your congregation shares with the synod enable all of us to support ministries here and throughout the world.

Bulletin Insert 2



Lutherans have always understood that faith takes the shape of a cross. We pray and lift our hands in praise to God. We also reach out to neighbors near and far. The vertical and the horizontal parts of faith are equally important.

As members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we gather each week in our congregations for prayer and praise, for learning and support. Worship and congregational life is central to who we are.

And so is service in the world.

After we have been fed by God's word and the holy meal in our congregations, we go out into the world. Through our congregations we serve people in our local communities. Through the synod we extend

our reach farther into all parts of southwestern Pennsylvania. Through the ELCA we touch lives all over this country and the world.

Together we provide aid to those who are hungry, homeless or impoverished. We serve as teachers, nurses and doctors, pastors, construction workers, and social workers.

Through state and national advocacy ministries we speak for those who are too easily forgotten - the elderly, children and poor. Through chaplains we are beside our soldiers, at hospital bedsides and in college dorms.

We are in preschools and children's homes, hospitals and retirement communities. We are counseling, arranging adoptions, resettling refugees, and providing disaster relief. We do all of this and more, in Christ's name, as part of the ELCA. It's amazing what we can do together.

Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America



Adapt this two-page assessment to include the ministry opportunities available through your congregation. Invite people to take the assessment before filling out a Time and Talent Form or looking through a Ministry Opportunities Booklet.

Spiritual Gifts Assessment

Want to know where the best place is for you to get involved in our congregation? Consider what brings you joy and satisfaction - that's where your spiritual gifts are.

If you:

feel grateful to be able to offer communion to others,
are comfortable being in front of people and read out loud well,
enjoy having a role to play in worship,
prefer to help without being in charge,
find joy in worship...

then you may have the gifts for Worship Leadership.

Consider ministries of Worship and Music.

If you:

like working behind the scenes,
are moved to assist people in need,
feel an urgency to provide food for the hungry, shelter for the homeless,
are passionate about peace and justice issues...

then you may have the gifts of Caregiving, Service, Mercy.

Consider ministries of Outreach, Service, and Social Ministry.

If you:

are someone with whom children are comfortable,
can share Bible stories in a way that children can understand,
delight in being around children,
think teenagers are fun to be with,
enjoy nurturing faith in young people...

then you may have the gifts for Ministering with Children and Youth

Consider ministries of Children, Youth and Education.

If you:

find satisfaction in a job well done,
like to work outdoors or are handy around the house,
are skilled in repairs, woodcraft, plumbing and the like...

then you may have the gifts of Caretaking and Skilled Crafts.

Consider ministries of Property, Outreach, Service, and Social Ministry.

If you:

can identify steps that need to be taken in order to achieve the desired result,
are someone people look to for direction,
enjoy organizing people and delegating tasks,
find satisfaction in making spread sheets, lists or inputting data,
find joy in making order out of chaos...

then you may have the gift of Administration.

Consider ministries of Administration, Computers, and Stewardship as well as the administrative and organizational ministries of other areas.

If you:

find joy in expressing yourself through artistic means or music,
can translate into artistic form what you first see in your imagination,
have a good singing voice or musical talent...

then you may have the gifts of Art and Music.

Consider ministries of Worship and Music.

If you:

are certain of the Spirit's presence in your life and the lives of others,
can take difficult concepts and make them understandable,
find enjoyment in learning as much as you can about the Bible and faith,
turn to God for guidance when making decisions,
pray often and for significant periods of time...

then you may have the gifts of Faith, Knowledge and Wisdom.

Consider ministries of Prayer, Education and Evangelism.

If you:

are comfortable talking about your faith and the Bible,
enjoy meeting new people and becoming acquainted with them,
enjoy welcoming guests and making them feel at ease,
value time you can spend with your church family...

then you may have the gifts of Hospitality, Evangelism and Fellowship.

Consider ministries of Evangelism, Fellowship, Support and New Members.

Sample Time and Talent Form

Create a form that fits your congregation and your ministries. Invite committees to brainstorm about all the different ways people can share their time and talents. This is an example of a very simple Time and Talent Form.

What activities are most fulfilling for you? Where is it that your heart finds deep joy and satisfaction? Those are the places where you are using the gifts and talents God has given you.

Think about your time and talents and the needs of our congregation's mission and ministry. Where do they intersect? Where will you serve in the coming year? Circle your choices.

Name _____

Worship Leadership

Lector	Usher	Lay Assistant
Altar Guild	Acolyte	Communion Assistant
Choir	Greeter	Worship and Music Committee

Discipleship and Education

Adult Sunday School	Teacher	Participant
Children's Sunday School	Teacher	Participant
Weekday Bible Study Participant		
Christian Education Committee		
Plan Special Sunday School Programs		
Children's or Youth Group	Leader	Participant

Hospitality, Fellowship and Evangelism

Coffee Hour	New Member Sponsor
Fellowship Committee	Evangelism Committee
Advertising	Website Manager

Property

Lawn Mowing	Gardening
Small Repairs	Woodworking
Property Committee	Clean-up Day

Social Ministry

Crop Walk	Meals for Households in Need
Social Ministry Committee	Work Camp Participant

Administration and Organization

Help with Bulk Mailings	Volunteer in Office
Cradle Roll Mailings	Long Range Planning

Sample Ministry Opportunities Booklet

If you choose to put together a booklet describing ministry opportunities, a page from it might look something like this. Enlist committees and groups to write descriptions of their ministries and the time commitment. This kind of booklet is a wonderful tool to use with new members. You can have people contact your pastor or church office, or you can include contact information with each area of ministry.

WORSHIP and MUSIC

If you are new to the congregation, one of the fastest and easiest ways to meet people and get involved is through serving as a Greeter.

The Worship Leader schedule is put together through the church office and printed in the monthly newsletter. Additionally, a reminder is sent out during the week, along with any readings or prayers. If you have a conflict with your assigned time, just let the office know and a substitute will be found for you.

ACOLYTE - Youth 5th grade and older 6-8 times a year

Training is provided during First Communion classes held each October or individually. Acolytes light the candles and carry the cross.

GREETER - All ages 20 minutes several times a year

Greet people as they enter the sanctuary (worship area). Families may greet together or individuals will be teamed with another person.

LECTOR - Youth and adults about 6 times a year

Read the first lesson. It is sent to you ahead of time (and a pronunciation guide is included).

LAY ASSISTANT - Confirmed youth and adults about 6 times a year

Sit up front with the pastors, read the second lesson and some prayers, and assist with the distribution of communion. Training is provided individually.

COMMUNION ASSISTANT - Confirmed youth & adults 6 times a year

Share the wine with people during communion. Training is provided individually. Four communion assistants are needed at each Sunday service.

USHER - Youth and adults once a month

Hand out bulletins, assist with seating, collect the offering and guide people to communion. Younger children may usher with a parent. Four ushers are needed at each Sunday service.

Planning Worksheet

Beginning Date _____ End Date _____

How many Sundays? _____ Use the chart below to plan the Sundays.

Date	Worship Resources to use? Special music?	Special information in bulletin	Temple Talk who?	Children's Sermon who?	Emphasis in hymns, preaching	Other: such as Collection of Pledge Cards

Will anything be mailed to members?

A first letter introducing the appeal? Will anything else be included? Date _____

A second letter inviting financial commitments? Enclosures? Date _____

Enclosures could include:

- Giving Chart
- Estimate of Giving Card
- Return Envelope
- Budget
- A DVD about your mission and ministry
- Time and Talent Form
- Ministry Opportunities Booklet
- Spiritual Gifts Assessment

Who will the *Questions for Pondering, Ideas to Consider, and Actions to Take* be shared with?

- Pastor Adult Sunday School Teacher Children's Sunday School Teacher
 Youth Group Leader Small Groups Women's Group Council

How will we involve our children and youth?

(A lot of young people are technologically savvy. Consider inviting them to create a DVD about stewardship.)

Will we use graphics? How?

Bulletin covers?

Mailings?

Bulletin board?

Is there someone who can make a banner?

How will our Stewardship Program conclude?

Commitment Sunday

- Guest Preacher
 Special Worship Service
 Special Offering of Commitments

Congregational Meal

- Speaker
 Program

Collection of Estimate of Giving Cards

- As part of the offering
 As a second offering
 As people leave

How will we follow up on unreturned commitments?

- Phone call
 Letter

How and when will we thank people for their commitments?

Now go back through and decide who will be responsible for each part of the Stewardship Program.

And remember: Delegate, Be Creative, and Pray.

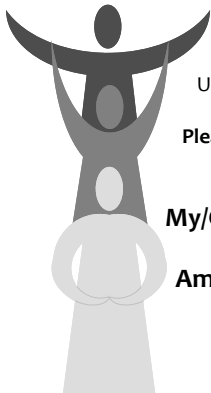
Giving Chart

HOW MUCH SHALL I GIVE?

Take a step of faith. Earnestly consider your offering to maintain God's house and support all our ministries. Think prayerfully about what you will give. You may want to find your weekly, monthly or annual income and current offering in the chart below. Then take a step to the right to the next higher percentage. And try to grow into a tithe.

INCOME find your weekly, monthly or annual income	2%	3%	4%	5%	6%	7%	8%	9%	10% TITHE
\$200	\$4	\$6	\$8	\$10	\$12	\$14	\$16	\$18	\$20
\$300	\$6	\$9	\$12	\$15	\$18	\$21	\$24	\$27	\$30
\$500	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30	\$35	\$40	\$45	\$50
\$700	\$14	\$21	\$28	\$35	\$42	\$49	\$56	\$63	\$70
\$1,000	\$20	\$30	\$40	\$50	\$60	\$70	\$80	\$90	\$100
\$1,500	\$30	\$45	\$60	\$75	\$90	\$105	\$120	\$135	\$150
\$2,000	\$40	\$60	\$80	\$100	\$120	\$140	\$160	\$180	\$200
\$2,500	\$50	\$75	\$100	\$125	\$150	\$175	\$200	\$225	\$250
\$3,000	\$60	\$90	\$120	\$150	\$180	\$210	\$240	\$270	\$300
\$5,000	\$100	\$150	\$200	\$250	\$300	\$350	\$400	\$450	\$500
\$10,000	\$200	\$300	\$400	\$500	\$600	\$700	\$800	\$900	\$1000
\$12,000	\$240	\$360	\$480	\$600	\$720	\$840	\$960	\$1080	\$1200
\$20,000	\$400	\$600	\$800	\$1000	\$1200	\$1400	\$1600	\$1800	\$2000

Estimate of Giving Card/ Pledge Card



In grateful thanks to God,
we give generously of our time, talents and treasures.
Using the form below, please indicate your financial commitment for 20__.

Please return this form to the church office, via mail or the offering plate by _____.

My/Our Financial Commitment for 20__ will be:
Amount _____ week/month/year

Additional Stewardship Resources

The Rev. Melissa Stoller

Southwestern PA Synod's Director for Evangelical Mission
melissa.stoller@elca.org 412-367-8222

Pastor Stoller is always willing to work with congregations in the areas of stewardship and evangelism.

Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod

www.swpasynod.org

Across the top of the page are several choices. Click on MINISTRIES. Go down the list to STEWARDSHIP SUPPORT. You will also find resources from the top of the page, Click on CONGREGATIONS. Go down to MISSION SUPPORT

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

www.elca.org

Towards the top of the page under the ELCA logo; Click on REOURCES. There are several boxes in alphabetical order. Click on STEWARDSHIP.

also go to resourcefulservants.org . Point to CONGREGATIONS, then STEWARDSHIP, ANNUAL PLAN. Scroll down and watch the video. Also, you can download the Stewardship Planning Calendar as well as other resources

Stewardship of Life Institute, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

www.stewardshipoflife.org

Great ideas and resources - many of them free.

Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota

www.luthersem.edu then type STEWARDSHIP in the search box in the upper right corner for lots of good ideas.

Synod Resource Center, Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod

beth.caywood@swpasynod.org 412-367-8222

Director Beth Caywood can help you find and evaluate all sorts of resources for congregational life.

Books (available from the publishers or from online booksellers)

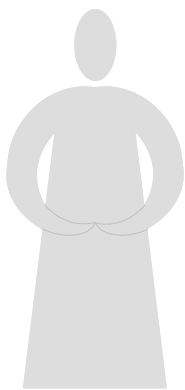
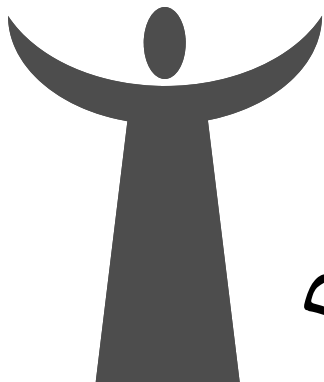
Ask, Thank, Tell: Improving Stewardship Ministry in Your Congregation
by Charles R. Lane, published by Augsburg Fortress

New Consecration Sunday Stewardship Program
by Herb Miller, published by Abingdon Press

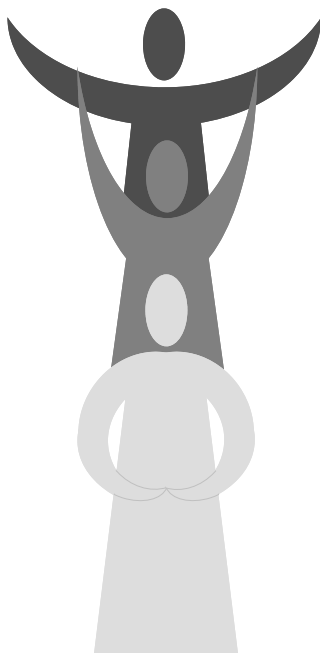
Abundance: Creating a Culture of Generosity
by Michael R. Ward, published by Fortress Press

Graphics

These graphics can be cut and pasted to create your own designs. They can also be downloaded at www.swpasynod.org



Praying, Praising, Proclaiming Christ



To Make a Banner

Use a copier to enlarge the image to the desired size. Choose your own color scheme or use the colors on the cover of this booklet.

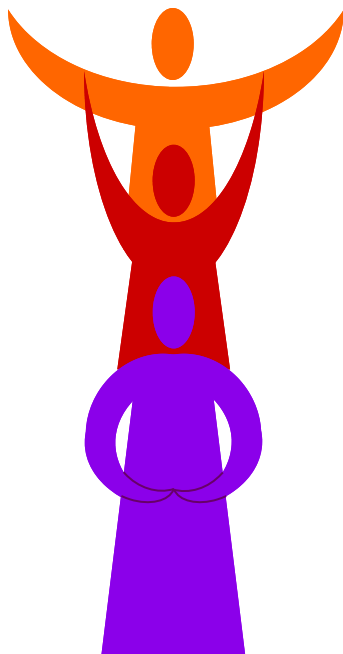
An easy way to make the letters is to have someone with a computer print them at the desired size. You can then cut them out and use them for a pattern.

This image fits well on a 4'6" x 3' background. The font used in the graphics is Tempus Sans.



Praying, Praising, Proclaiming Christ: An Emmaus Encounter

A Stewardship Resource for Congregations of the
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA



Produced by the SWPA Synod Director for Evangelism
(deployed staff for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America)
and the SWPA Synod Stewardship and Financial Support Committee
August 2023

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