

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a small green seedling with soil. The seedling has two large, heart-shaped leaves and a small bud at the top. The background is a blurred green, suggesting an outdoor setting. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

You Talking to Me? Strategic Messaging in Stewardship

The Episcopal Diocese of Newark

Stewardship  Matters

Opening Prayer

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Book of Common Prayer Collect

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery, by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

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The Book of Common Prayer,
p. 280

What we'll talk about today

You Talking to me? Strategic Messaging in Stewardship

- I. Who wants to talk about money?
- II. Communication strategies
- III. Generational considerations
- IV. Ideas for youth, children and others

I. Question: Who wants
to talk about money?

“We don’t talk
about money!”

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Why?



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Table Time

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Guess who wanted to talk about money?

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And all the time!

- 16 of the 38 parables were concerned with how to handle money and possessions
- In the gospels, 1 out of 10 verses (288) in all deal directly with the subject of money
- The Bible offers 500 verses on prayer, less than 500 verses on faith and more than 2,000 on money and possessions.



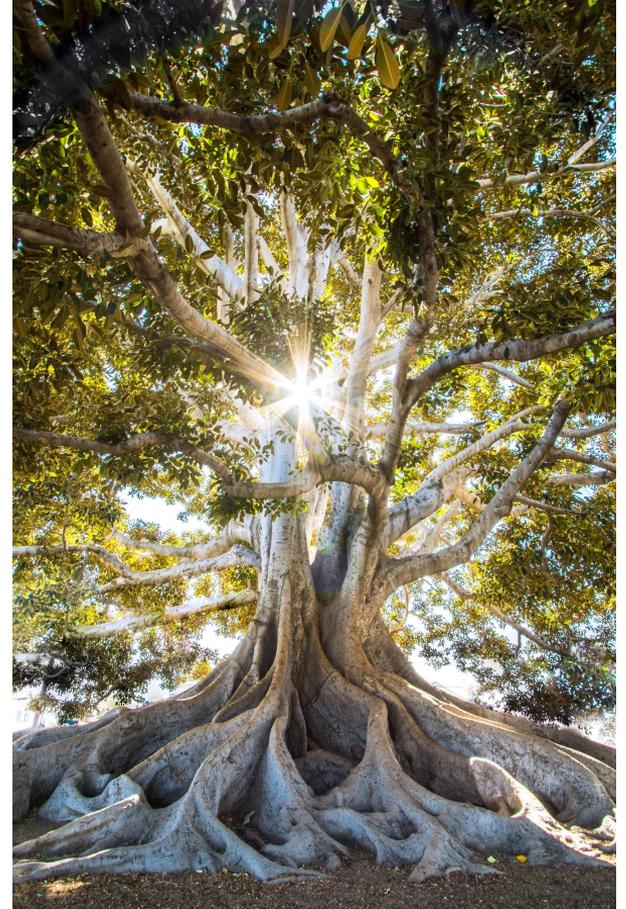
Theology of Stewardship

What is Stewardship?

Q. What is Stewardship?

A. All that we do, with all that we have, all of the time

This definition informs our approach to stewardship, indeed our approach to BEING THE CHURCH; inspiring individual disciples and congregations in their response to GOD'S LOVE.



II. Communication strategies

Your strategic message challenge is to communicate how your community lives out its portion of God's love.

...and it is your responsibility to communicate effectively - not their responsibility to work to understand you.

Communication Strategies

Mission is the only thing

In the church, mission isn't everything, it is the only thing! God's mission (ideally) drives every aspect of church life. God's mission determines when we say "yes" to certain opportunities, and also when we say "no."

A clear vision of God's mission is the heartbeat of a congregation's movement as a community. And as we enter "stewardship season," that vision plays a vital role in communication and helps answer the "why should I give" questions that many folks have.

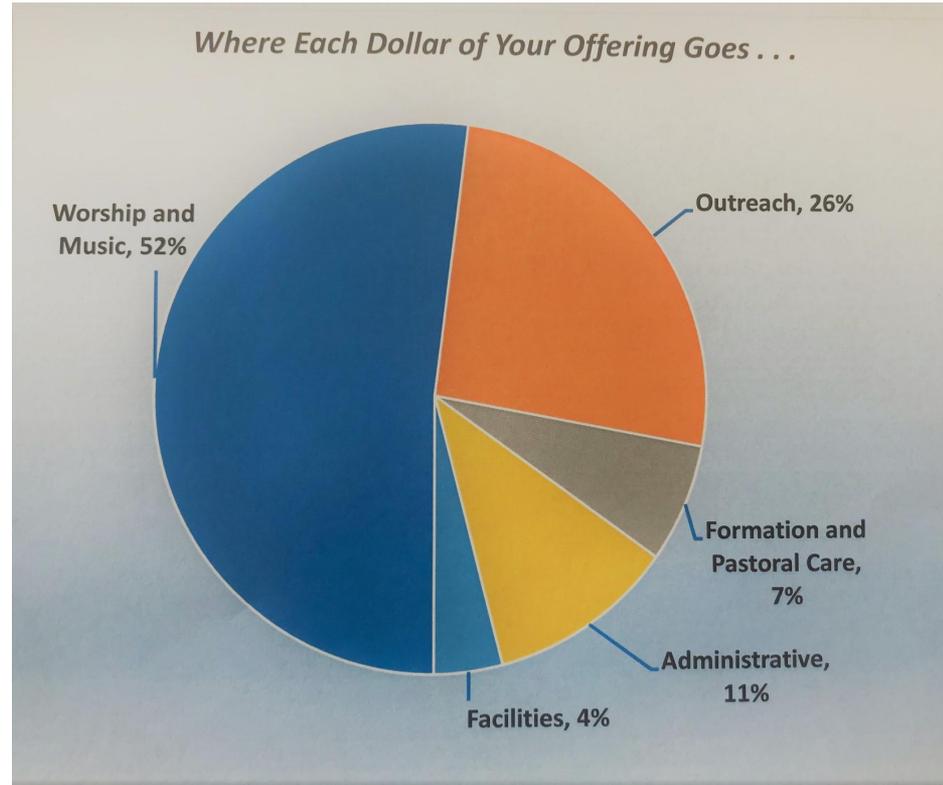


Year-Round Stewardship

Working Groups	Suggested Spiritual Gifts	Focus
ASK	Comfortable talking about money. Generous givers	Planning and implementation of the way you ask for time, talent, and financial resources entrusted to you by God
THANK	Spirit of thanksgiving and can cultivate that in others	Cultivate an atmosphere of thanksgiving in our congregation
TELL	Good written and oral communication skills	Tell stories about the wonderful things happening in the congregation and around the world because of their generosity



A Narrative Budget shows where each dollar of your offering goes...



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Communication Strategies

Get a “Gratitude Attitude”



Power of the story



Communication Strategies

Collect pictures!

- Children in Sunday School!
- Acolytes!
- Altar Guild!
- Choir practicing!
- Confirmands!
- Food pantry and other ministries!
- The neighborhood
- Little-acknowledged acts of stewardship - the member of your congregation who always remembers to say hello...who plants flowers out front...
- *P.S. you don't even need a camera - use your phone!*

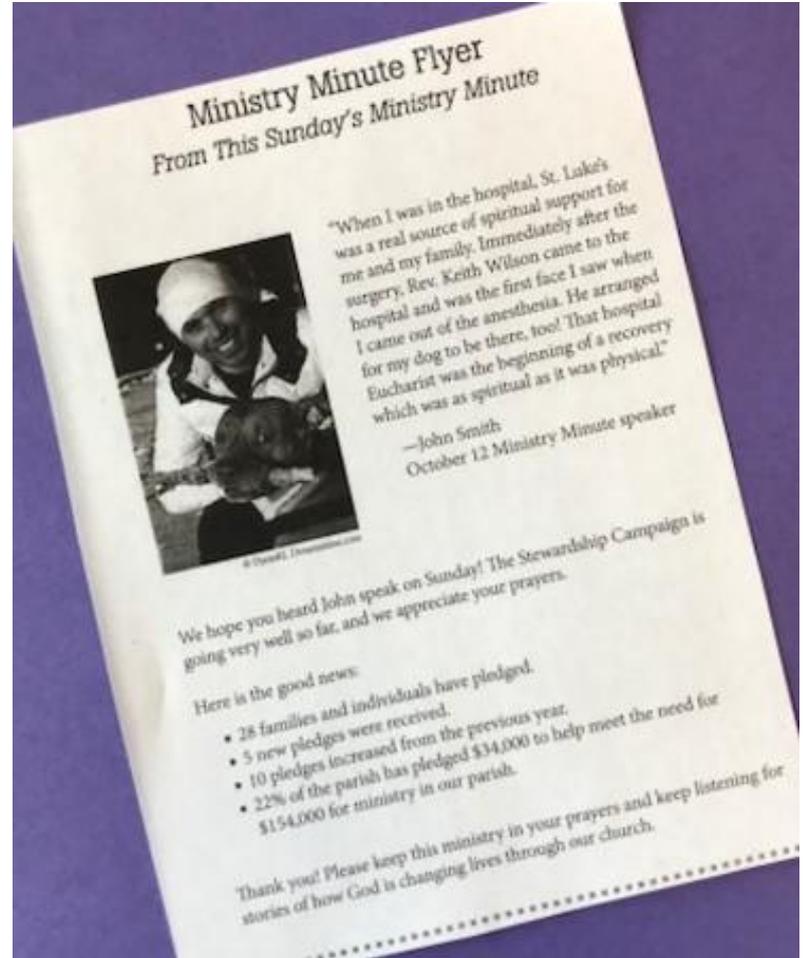


Communication Strategies

Find new ways to tell your story

For example:

- Ministry Minute Flyer
- Short excerpt from the speaker's talk (in advance)
- Photograph (in advance)
- Caption the date
- Highlights about the campaign
- How can you share this? In the Bulletin? Newsletter? Website?



Date

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Friend
Street Address
Hometown

BORING

Dear Friend,

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Blessings!

Printed Signature

Date

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Friend
Street Address
Hometown

ENGAGING

Dear Jane and Art,

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© 2013 iStockphoto by Paul Hager in Germany

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Blessings!

Signature
Signature in blue

P.S. It really pays to include a "P.S." Most readers scan the "p.s." before they read the letter!

TENS Resources - 2018 Series “Transforming Generosity”

All of these templates are available to any church in the Diocese. GO TO: www.TENS.org - Member Resources, User name is Mark, and password is 10:21

- Pledge Cards
- Sample Letters - all MS Word, easy to adapt
 - Rector
 - Stewardship Chair
 - Senior Warden
- Transforming Generosity Logos
- Prayers of the People*

Reflections are also available in Spanish): October 7, October 21, October 28, All Saints, November 4, November 11, Christ the King

Look at these as TOOLS, and feel free to personalize. For letters:

- Use your own letterhead
- Better to use a serif font (**in other words, this kind**)
- White space
- Personalize Personalize Personalize!
- Can you add images (include a caption)
- Long letters are fine if they’re engaging!
- Make it about your church, your mission, your ministry

IV. Generational considerations

Generational perspectives



Silent Generation/Greatest Generation

- **Value Loyalty, conformity. Married early. Set the Church up as we know it.**
- **More likely to read, spend time with written materials.**
- **Respect for authority**
- **Message: Legacy. You built this**
- **The values we teach are timeless and can provide to future generations**
- **Your gift can provide for future generations.**

Generational perspectives

Baby Boomers

- **Rebelled against institutions**
- **Seek spirituality and personal meaning**
- **Research suggests many are turning to religious institutions as they age in search for personal meaning.**
- **May be downsizing, no longer accumulating assets. Considering future plans**
- **Generation comfortable with mobility**



Generational perspectives



Gen Xers

- **Entrepreneurial, cynical of authority.**
- **May have had no Christian Education - curious about “what it’s all about.” -**
- **Opportunity for Adult Christian Formation**
- **Wish to “experience” church, but may not attend regularly. Experience ties to giving.**
- **If parents of older children, time-crunched with extracurriculars**
- **Message: We are a people/community who care about each other.**

Generational perspectives

Millennials/Young Families

- **Socially conscious, digital media, child-focused**
- **Message: Your gift is important and will impact lives. Can you join us for this event on Tuesday to meet some of our outreach partners?**
- **Parents with young children are looking for ways to help their children deal with an ever more complex world. Communicate the value of the church in the lives of their children.**



Can't afford to ignore social media. Period.

It's not just young people!

Baby Boomers and Gen Xers are heaviest Facebook users.

Baby Boomers "share" 20% more than any other generation.

Millennials are on Instagram.



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V. Ideas for youth, children and others

Children and young families

Make Stewardship family-friendly

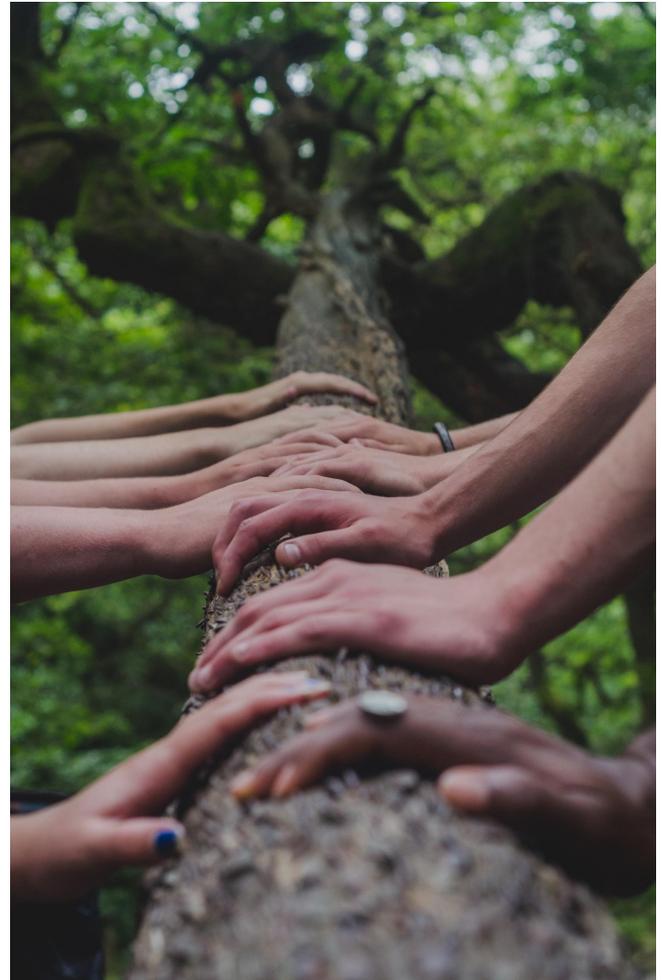
Can offer family-friendly stewardship events so families can get in the habit of discussing stewardship in their daily life together.

Provide discussion questions for parents so they can continue the discussion at home.



Youth

- Confirmation class is a logical place to begin stewardship instruction.
- “We spend a week on the BCP but we also need to spend a week on giving as a spiritual practice.
- Empower youth to take on projects: Invite youth to take on projects in their community at home or abroad. Encourage them to think creatively about how to raise awareness and increase giving to their cause. Encourage them to make the project their own - and encourage the church community to support them.



Case Study: Saint George's, Maplewood

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Don't assume new members are “in the know”

Did you know that nationally, over 70% of members in the Episcopal Church were not raised Episcopalian?

This is exciting -- as the Episcopal Church offers a faith tradition that is compelling and rich. BUT: don't assume that newcomers know either how giving can be transformative or how funds contributed support the mission/ministry of the congregation.

And don't let the first piece of communication to a new member/new household a letter asking for their pledge!



Q&A

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Recommended resources

Lane, Charles R. *Ask, Thank, Tell, Improving Stewardship Ministry in Your Congregation*, Augsburg Books, 2006.

LaFond, Charles *Fearless Church Fundraising*, Morehouse Publishing, 2012

Clif, Christopher, J. *Not Your Parents Offering Plate, A New Vision for Financial Stewardship*, Abingdon Press, 2015; and *Rich Church, Poor Church: Keys to Effective Ministry*

Cloughen, Jr., Rev. Charles, *One Minute Stewardship Sermons*

Nouwen, Henri, J. M. *A Spirituality of Fundraising*, Upper Room Books, 2011.

Websites: Vestry Papers, Episcopal Church Foundation Vital Practices ehttp://www.ecfvp.org/vestry-papers

TENS, The Episcopal Network of Stewardship www.TENS.org, User name is Mark and password is 10:21

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Keep the conversation going!

- Join our “CLOSED GROUP” on Facebook. Just search “Stewardship Matters” on Facebook or use this link:
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/397040670803304/>
- We are re-structuring our Stewardship Resources on the diocesan website. Go to www.dioceseofnewark.org/stewardship
- We will soon be launching a new “Stewardship Matters” Newsletter!
- To reach us: Cynthia McChesney cmcchesney@dioceseofnewark.org; Paul Shackford pshackford@gmail.com; Pat Yankus patyankus@gmail.com; David Farrand dcfarrand@aol.com.

Closing Prayer

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Stewardship Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, with the great dynamos of your power, you have pulled life from death, freedom from imprisonment, wakefulness from sleep, inaction to action. Help us do the hard word of leadership in stewardship and financial development.

Help us to pull a sleepy people weighed down by distraction and greed into a generous wakefulness of gratitude and mission-investment by helping them give their money away. Help us to set free a church too often confined in the coffins of scarcity so that all Saints may work to unfurl the Kingdom of God. *Amen.*

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Project Resource, 2001,
Charles LaFond