

# ADDITIONAL FOUNDATION RESOURCES

## Announcing Stewardship Challenge Grant 2.0

The Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation has developed a new Stewardship **Challenge Grant** to encourage and reward congregations that develop an appropriate, intentional stewardship plan. Your church may receive from \$500 – \$700 each year for up to three years. This may be enough for several members of your church to attend the **Stewardship Retreat @ Pine Lake Camp** in August or to purchase some training materials. There are specific required tasks at each of the three levels. If you would like any additional information, please call us at the Foundation at 888-903-9863 or 608-837-9582. We would be happy to come to a church or circuit meeting to explain the program in detail!

### Stewardship Retreat @ Pine Lake Camp

2nd Friday/Saturday of August

### WUMF Stewardship KnowledgeBase

The goal of the **WUMF Stewardship KnowledgeBase** is to provide Foundation users access to information and tools pertaining to stewardship topics. Materials consist of informational documents such as policies, articles, blogs, etc., tools such as spreadsheets, charts and tables, and samples, such as brochures, programs or videos.

<https://www.wumf.org/knowledge/>

### Presentations & Consultation for your Church or Circuit

**Stewardship Consultation** — Individual consultation with church Finance/Ad Council teams to discuss strategies particular to your congregation that may encourage member commitment. (Sorry, we don't have a magic wand... but we can offer suggestions and encouragement.)

**Planned Giving** — Consider how you want to be remembered and where you feel called to share the blessings you've received. Learn of ways to meet your charitable giving goals through outright gifts or planned gifts.

**Personal Finances** — Learn how to get out of debt and manage to live and give within your means.

**Endowment Fund/Memorial Committee** — Learn how to design, set guidelines, establish and promote an endowment fund in your church.

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# IDEAS FOR YEAR-ROUND FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP



Created by the  
Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

*The mission of the Foundation is to assist the ministries of United Methodists in Wisconsin through lifelong financial stewardship.*

# YEAR-ROUND FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

## WHY AND 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 for disciples and for the church. 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 the budget. When a church replaces its goal of “increasing the budget” with “helping persons make a faithful response,” miracles will happen!

### How to use this booklet with your stewardship team to grow generosity in your congregation

- 1) Mark the items your congregation is already doing.
- 2) Then, 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 you do! Lift up what is being given—not what is still needed, particularly when reporting financial stewardship.

- ⚙ Make an effort to separate the Stewardship Team 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).**
- ⚙ Read the booklet [Guidelines—Stewardship: Raising Up Generous Disciples](#), available for \$3.99 from Cokesbury.com. It does an excellent job describing your function as a Stewardship Team 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 or invite them to pledge.
- ⚙ **Complete the WUMF Stewardship Challenge Grant application and earn \$500 to \$700 for 3 years. See [www.wumf.org/stewardship-grant](http://www.wumf.org/stewardship-grant) for details.**
- ⚙ 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 communicating and celebrating the mission and ministry of the church.”*

[Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation-Stewardship](#)

## WEEKLY

### 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. (We need more of these!)
- ⚙️ 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, or ...**
- ⚙️ Make all reports to the congregation positive and affirmative.
- ⚙️ Offer Disciple Bible Study, Companions in Christ, or similar in-depth spiritual studies. These are available from Cokesbury.
- ⚙️ Watch for stories about exemplary giving. Share them with the congregation.
- ⚙️ Invite someone from the Conference Finance Office to speak about Connectional Sharing (Apportionments).
- ⚙️ Hold a prayer vigil.
- ⚙️ Have your finance/stewardship committee members read and discuss **Not Your Parent’s Offering Plate** or **Whose Offering Plate is It? New Strategies for Financial Stewardship** by J. Clif Christopher.
- ⚙️ 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” rather than “take” 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: [www.umcdiscipleship.org/equipping-leaders/stewardship](http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/equipping-leaders/stewardship) and [umcgiving.org](http://umcgiving.org) for offertory prayers, **weekly mission moments, and FAQ’s, sermon starters and stewardship nuggets.**
- ⚙️ Send a personal note to a first time giver by Tuesday.
- ⚙️ Make giving easier by providing Electronic Funds Transfers, [connect.vancopayments.com/egiving](http://connect.vancopayments.com/egiving). Provide other options for ways of giving—mail-in with a prepaid envelope, online giving, debit card, auto bank debit. Put LARGE easy-to-complete offering envelopes in the pews.
- ⚙️ Provide opportunities for special, over-and-above gifts. Loose change, piggy banks, electronic or crowd source apps, to collect gifts for other specific missions and ministries.
- ⚙️ Send out prayer concerns and updates via email or social media groups.
- ⚙️ Remove any communications that inadvertently imply that **the church is not fiscally sound. 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 coffee and donuts, free breakfast to Sunday volunteers, offer movie tickets to those that bring guests, etc.

# MONTHLY

- ⚙ Give a 2-3 minute talk during worship (maybe right before the offering collection) on the stewardship topic of the month. (see Page 5 for topic ideas)
- ⚙ Give a 2-3 minute talk during worship (maybe right before the offering collection) about a ministry of your church through which lives are being changed and thank people for their gifts which make that ministry possible.
- ⚙ Prepare video/slides/bulletin boards/Web pages 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)
- ⚙ **Include the Foundation's monthly stewardship newsletter article in your church's newsletter. If your church doesn't receive it, call us at 888-903-9863 or email us at [wumf@wumf.org](mailto:wumf@wumf.org). Check past issues at [www.wumf.org/newsletter-help-church](http://www.wumf.org/newsletter-help-church).**
- ⚙ Prepare bulletin inserts relating to stewardship. Because of **your gifts...this 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. When new items are proposed – ask if it is a part of God's vision instead of who will pay for it.**
- ⚙ Encourage your pastor to review the giving records of the congregation. Look for changes – this may reflect a life change.
- ⚙ **Ask children, youth, or adults to write about "How I've shared this week." Publish these edited comments in the bulletin or newsletter.**

- ⚙ 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.
- ⚙ Celebrate with 3x5 note cards for 4 Sundays (or text links to an online survey). 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 5<sup>th</sup> week.
- ⚙ Publish a step chart listing the *numbers of giving units* giving at each level above \$1/week. Find a sample at [tiny.cc/p34kiz](http://tiny.cc/p34kiz).
- ⚙ **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.
- ⚙ 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 the Foundation for an example.
- ⚙️ Hold an annual campaign that emphasizes percentage giving. Use a purchased campaign or develop your own. Visit the **Foundation’s Stewardship Resource Room to view samples or view our Campaigns Brochure** at [www.wumf.org/stewardship](http://www.wumf.org/stewardship).
- ⚙️ Hold a Planned Giving 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 or retirees
  - ⚙️ Teaching healthy money values to your children
  - ⚙️ Wills and estate planning
  - ⚙️ Tithing and proportionate giving
  - ⚙️ What are Apportionments?
- ⚙️ **Create a Narrative Budget to explain the church’s finances**, rather than a line item budget. A narrative budget helps to **celebrate what is happening in your church and it’s much easier to understand**. Call the Foundation for samples.
- ⚙️ Hold a stewardship retreat. Or, better yet, bring a team to the annual Stewardship Retreat @ Pine Lake Camp in August to develop a year-round stewardship plan.
- ⚙️ Make a video of the happenings of the church. Not everyone **knows what goes on in the children’s Sunday School or what goes on during the week!**
- ⚙️ Choose a year long stewardship theme.
- ⚙️ **Do a “Spiritual Gifts” or “Time and Talent” survey.**
- ⚙️ Hold a training session for Sunday School teachers to enable them to teach stewardship themes in their classes.

## POSSIBLE STEWARDSHIP TOPICS OF THE MONTH

- How God has blessed me
- My stewardship plan
- How I know I make a difference with my giving
- What giving means to me
- How my giving relates to the sacrificial gift of Jesus
- How my giving relates to the gifts of life
- How my giving relates to my spiritual growth
- How my giving relates to the ministry of our church
- How my giving relates to the gifts of the Magi
- How my giving relates to thankfulness
- **How my giving relates to... (a chosen scripture)**
- How my giving connects faith and living
- How my giving is an investment in what is important to me
- Why I give to this church
- How I decide how much to give
- The greatest joy in giving is...
- **I discovered the joy of giving when...**
- **I give because...**
- What a particular ministry has done for me or others

## QUARTERLY

- ⚙ Mail quarterly statements in something other than a window envelope which looks like a bill or junk mail. One church uses canary yellow envelopes.
- ⚙ 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 next month or quarter may be included. 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 classes and with Confirmands.
- ⚙ Have the pastor preach about stewardship about 8 times a year.
- ⚙ Write a special newsletter specifically about stewardship topics. Keep it positive!
- ⚙ Check the websites [www.umcdiscipleship.org/equipping-leaders/stewardship](http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/equipping-leaders/stewardship) and [www.umcgiving.org](http://www.umcgiving.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 on Page 5.) This could be mailed with the quarterly statements.
- ⚙ Develop a 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 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 and Council Chair or Lay Leader 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 the Foundation to see when the next *Freed Up From Debt* session will be held or go to [fpu.com](http://fpu.com) and find a Financial Peace University class near you.
- ⚙ **Create a "giving challenge" to challenge non-givers to give something every week for 8 weeks, (or 3 months, or Lenten season, etc.)**
- ⚙ Have a tithing emphasis, inviting people to try tithing for 3 months at a time.

