

January 2011
A STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE FOR YOUR CHURCH

#274 The world of the generous gets larger and larger;
The world of the stingy gets smaller and smaller.
The one who blesses others is abundantly blessed;
Those who help others are helped. Proverbs 11:24-27 *The Message*

We began the Advent and Christmas season very early in 2010 with carols on the radio before Thanksgiving and Christmas displays in the stores almost before the Halloween displays were taken down! The retailers have their reasons for pushing Christmas ahead this year. Let's make sure the church remembers that the 12 days of Christmas don't really begin until December 25th and end on January 6th.

Kathy Gilbert of the United Methodist News Service has rewritten the popular Christmas song, "12 Days of Christmas", changing it into a song about some of the wonderful projects supported by the United Methodist Church throughout the world. While the song only allows for 12 examples, the church has many, many other opportunities for giving. Try singing it to the original tune. It might not work out musically harmonious, at least for the purists among us. However, it gives us some visions of the work of Christmas which lasts all year.

"12 Days of Christmas Giving" by Kathy Gilbert, UMNS

On the first day of Christmas, my true love sent Haiti, *a heifer for a hungry family*.

On the second day of Christmas, my true love offered income by giving two rabbits breeding and *a heifer for a hungry family*.

On the third day of Christmas, my true love helped quench thirst with clean water pumping, two rabbits breeding, and *a heifer for a hungry family*.

On the fourth day of Christmas, my true love fueled knowledge with kind tutors teaching, clean water pumping, two rabbits breeding, and *a heifer for a hungry family*.

On the fifth day of Christmas, my true love scrubbed and scrubbed with big cleaning buckets, kind tutors teaching, clean water...

On the sixth day of Christmas, my true love opened doors with scholarships for students, big cleaning buckets, kind tutors...

On the seventh day of Christmas, my true love encouraged folks to go a-gleaning, scholarships for students, big cleaning buckets, kind...

On the eighth day of Christmas my true love supported missions in the world, people a-gleaning, scholarships for students, big cleaning...

On the ninth day of Christmas my true love cast a line for fishers in Angola, missions in the world, people a-gleaning,...

On the tenth day of Christmas, my true love hurried aid to community hospitals, cast a line for fishing, missions in the world, people...

On the eleventh day of Christmas, my true love built shelter with Habitat for Humanity, community health care, cast a line for fishing...

On the twelfth day of Christmas, my true love saved some lives by imagining no malaria, Habitat for Humanity, community health care, cast a line for fishing, missions in the world, people a-gleaning, scholarships for students, big cleaning buckets, kind tutors teaching, clean water pumping, two rabbits breeding, and *a heifer for a hungry family*.

Happy New Year!

From all your friends at the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation.
Perhaps this song can give us a ministry a month to celebrate in 2011 as we live the message of Christ's love throughout the year.

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When the song of the angel is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost – To heal the broken –
To feed the hungry –
To release the prisoner – To rebuild the nations –
To bring peace among brothers and sisters –
To make music in the heart. -Howard Thurman

February 2011
A STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE FOR YOUR CHURCH

#275 *Giving is an act of Love.* Protect yourself against the least little bit of greed. Life is not defined by what you have, even when you have a lot.” Luke 12:15 The Message

Welcome news for those age 70-1/2 and older!

The new Tax Reform Act that was just signed into law on December 17th restores the IRA Charitable Rollover through December 31, 2011.

If you own an IRA and are over age 70-1/2, you may transfer up to \$100,000 from your IRA, directly to your local United Methodist Church or any United Methodist ministry because they are all qualified public charities. This qualified charitable distribution will also qualify for your annual required minimum distribution. What is the benefit? Your distribution goes directly to the church or charity and is not included in your gross income for tax purposes.

What types of IRA's qualify? Only Traditional and Roth IRA's.

When? Now through December 31, 2011.

Where can I make Qualified Charitable Distributions from my IRA? Only to qualified public charities. All United Methodist Churches and United Methodist ministries are qualified public charities - UMCOR, any of our Health and Welfare Ministries, UM Camps, or Advance Specials.

Why make an IRA Rollover gift to my church? First, there are tax advantages. If you make a gift directly from your IRA to your church or another UM ministry, you do not pay income tax on the withdrawal. Second, you may be able to use money from your IRA to support your local church or another ministry you are passionate about, at a level you are unable to reach simply by making gifts from ordinary income. Third, you may wish to make an outright gift or a gift that establishes a permanent endowment fund.

For more information, contact:
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Helps for the Stewardship Chair

Keeping What Matters

Then the king responded, 'Give the first woman the living boy; do not kill him. She is his mother.' (1 Kings 3: 27, full story 1 Kings 3: 16-28)

It was close to Valentine's Day and the confirmation class was tittering. To cut through the silliness I invited them to go around the circle and share a scripture about *love* to the best of their memory. I was impressed by how many “love passages” they knew, more than - love one another ... neighbor ... stranger.

Andy's unique choice was the story usually called Solomon's choice.

Two women with newborns shared lodging. One infant died in the night and both claimed the living child. They screamed at each other. Solomon suggested the baby boy be bisected and each woman be given half. One woman said, “Fine.” (*Can you hear the teenaged boy say it?*) The other said, “Give her the baby - don't kill him.” Solomon gave this woman the child. Whatever the biological truth was - this was the mother!

“So how is this a love story,” I asked?

“Well, if you really love something or someone, you know that cutting it in half will kill it,” said Andy. A young woman (soon to get her driver's license) picked up the thought. “Also, if you really love something, you're willing to let it go.”

These wise confirmands suggest some Solomon-stewardship for our churches. In a difficult budget time - cut, cut, cut is frequent advice. But there is much precious and vulnerable programming that won't survive the knife. Keeping what matters in our faith communities alive often requires personally sacrificial gifts - gifts without strings, ownership or naming rights - gifts of love.

Maren C. Tirabassi is Pastor of Union Congregational UCC of Madbury, NH. Her most recent book is God in My Life: How and Why We Share Faith Stories.

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March 2011
A STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE FOR YOUR CHURCH

#264 "Give each what would keep (them) above want, and bestow all the rest in such a manner as would be most for the glory of God." - John Wesley

Don't let this happen to you!

A few years ago Karen inherited shares of stock from the estate of a family friend. All the paperwork was completed by the estate lawyers and Karen received notice when the shares had been transferred to her name. When her church was in the process of a building campaign, Karen entered on her pledge card that she had stock she would like to redeem in order to pay her pledge. No one from the finance committee or church office contacted her to help her gift the stock to the church!

She didn't know who to contact in the secular world either so she left the stock invested. Years later she read in her church newsletter that the Wisconsin U.M. Foundation could process gifts of stock, which meant she could avoid paying capital gains taxes. She also could avoid paying a selling fee or commission. She was amazed! By following the Foundation's simple procedure, she could actually make a larger gift to her church than if she had sold the gift of stock herself and written a check to the church for the proceeds.

In 2010, the Foundation assisted 73 people in giving \$529,811 in stock gifts to 42 different churches and ministries. That's an average gift of \$12,614 per church, or over \$1,000/month! By making these gifts through the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation, these individuals made sure that 100% of the proceeds from the sale were used for ministry.

For more information on how you can make a gift of appreciated stock to your favorite church or United Methodist ministry, please find the most current securities processing form on our website at <http://www.wumf.org/assets/ProcessingStockGifts.pdf>. Be sure to call us or send us a copy of the form so that we can process your gift as quickly as possible.

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Helps for the Stewardship Chair

Giving for the Glory of God

"Imagine the President of the United States and the Committee on Ways and Means sending out jugs, mugs, boxes, barrels, eggs, and buttons with their pictures on them to catch pennies to meet the fiscal needs of the great government of the United States!

Imagine the different states and counties holding fairs, festivals, concerns, and ice cream socials. With women cooking, sewing, and acting so that each community may meet its apportionment!

This would disgrace any earthly government in its own eyes and the eyes of the nations. Yet this is what Christians are doing year by year to finance the Kingdom of God!"

*-from Gems of Thought on Tithing, published 1911
By George W. Brown, a Presbyterian layman*

The early Hebrews mentioned only crops and herds in their base for a tithe. Later when the people settled and started raising olives and grapes, products such as oil and wine were included in the base. A generation or two ago people could not conceive of anything but cash as the base for a tithe. But with more people investing in the stock market, and in real estate, people can now consider tithing other assets as well.

For more information on giving with assets other than cash, visit our website at www.wumf.org or contact us at:

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May 2011
A STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE FOR YOUR CHURCH

#265 *Giving means thinking positively.* "Make the most of every chance you get. These are desperate times." (Ephesians 5:16 *The Message*)

Tornados in the Midwest, tsunamis and earthquakes around the world, spring floods on the East Coast and along the Mississippi River, state and national budget controversies, rising gas prices ... the past few months definitely feel like desperate times.

The apostle Paul writes, "Make the most of every chance you get. These are desperate times." How will we as United Methodists make the most of every chance we get during these desperate times? For one thing, we've just come through another tax season. I'm always amazed that no matter what kind of a year we've had - good or bad - we always find a way to pay our taxes.

If you examine your tax return and you wish you had given Jesus a bit more so that you could give Uncle Sam a bit less, we invite you to consider starting now for next year. **"Resurrect your finances"** during the Easter season. Here are some suggestions:

- Make the first check you write each pay period, or the first automatic withdrawal you make, be a "thank you" gift to God.
- Instead of buying your children or grandchildren candy and trinkets for Easter or graduation, consider a gift in their honor to help victims of a natural disaster through UMCOR or to your church's portion of our shared mission (apportionments).
- Give at least 50% of the total you might spend on a vacation or special events during the summer to the ministry of Christ.
- Try tithing; i.e., giving 10% of your income to the church for 3 months during the summer or fall.
- See how quickly you can get out of debt under various repayment scenarios by going to www.moneypurposejoy.com, click on "resources," "calculators," and "accelerated debt payoff calculator."
- Attend the "Freed Up From Debt" workshop at Pine Lake Camp on Friday, August 19. Register for the Stewardship Retreat at www.wiumcamps.org.

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Helps for the Stewardship Chair

A Story of Two Seas

There are two seas in the Land of Israel. One is fresh and fish are in it. Splashes of green adorn its banks. Trees spread their branches over it, and stretch out their thirsty roots to sip of its healing waters. Children play along its shores.

The River Jordan makes this sea with sparkling water from the hills. So it laughs in the sunshine. And people build their homes near to it, birds their nests; and every kind of life is happier because it is here.

The River Jordan flows on south into another sea. Here there is no splash of fish, no fluttering leaf, no song of birds, and no children's laughter. The air hangs heavy above its waters and neither people nor animals will drink here.

What makes this mighty difference in these seas? Not the River Jordan. It empties the same good water into both. Not the soil in which they lie; not the country "round about."

This is the difference:

The Sea of Galilee receives but does not keep the Jordan. For every drop that flows into it another drop flows out. The giving and receiving go on in equal measure.

The other sea is shrewder, hoarding its income jealously. It will not be tempted into any generous impulse. Every drop it gets, it keeps.

The Sea of Galilee gives and lives.

This other sea cannot sustain life. It is named the Dead Sea.

There are two seas in the Land of Israel.

There are two kinds of people in the world.

*From "The New Mahzor" for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur
Compiled and edited by Rabbi Sidney Greenberg and Rabbi Jonathan D. Levine*

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June 2011
A STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE FOR YOUR CHURCH

#267 *Giving is an expression of love and gratitude.* -- “Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul.... there was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold.... and it was distributed to each as any had need. (Acts 4:32-35 NRSV)

When my son was a toddler, he had a favorite song about all the pockets on his overalls. Whenever he lost something, we always checked all five pockets on his bib overalls and, eventually, we’d find the missing treasure!

If the Sunday offerings in your church aren’t quite enough to meet the ministry challenge Christ has given you, don’t give up! Keep looking! Have you checked all the potential pockets of income? Our annual income is one “pocket.” It may be that up-front pocket that’s most visible. But, what about the other “pockets” we might check? Have you ever considered checking the “pockets” that hold your non-cash assets when considering gifts to the church?

Did you know you can make gifts of appreciated stock to your church? By processing gifts of stock through the Foundation Office, you can avoid paying any commission or selling fees, allowing you to make a larger gift to the church! You also avoid paying any capital gains taxes when you use stock to make a gift.

Have you considered donating “obsolete” life insurance policies that might have been purchased long ago for a reason that no longer exists? What a wonderful hidden treasure!

Would you consider giving the cash saved in a Certificate of Deposit to establish a Charitable Gift Annuity? By making a gift with a CD, you can receive a guaranteed annuity payment

each year for the rest of your life. Call our office for the current rates.

Another “pocket” often overlooked is real estate. You can turn assets of property or stock into a Charitable Remainder Unitrust. The trust will pay you 5-8% of the market value of the fund *each year* for the rest of your life. And, the church and any other qualified non-profit charities you designate will receive a significant gift at the time of your death.

Call us for details on how we can help. That’s our ministry!

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Helps for the Stewardship Chair

Biblical Stewardship Principle:

Giving is an expression of love and gratitude.

Quotes for Bulletins/Newsletters:

“The measure of our commitment is not in how much we give, but in how much we hold back.” *Bradley Call*

“Giving is the lifeblood of happy living.” *Todd Parrish*

“The joy of giving is often overlooked as the giving of joy.”
David Barton

“Giving is an investment in pleasure.” *Cecil Green*

July 2011
A STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE FOR YOUR CHURCH

#268 To give is to Respond Gratefully.
“...they gave themselves first to the Lord.” 2 Cor 8:5b (NRSV)

This summer is shaping up to be a roller coaster ride of temperatures, with at least two weeks so far where we have a 40 or more degree swing in the temperatures. Unfortunately, the summer also tends to be a roller coaster ride of church attendance and income as well. We tend to put family, fireworks and food ahead of worshipping God on our priority list. The 4th of July is when we celebrate our independence as “one nation under God.” There is nothing wrong with family, fireworks and food. But isn’t it a bit strange that this Sunday is traditionally the Sunday with the lowest average worship attendance all year!

Our church giving shows our priorities as well. If we plan to put God first, let’s choose to say thank you to God with the first check we write each week, month, or pay period. If we give 5% or 10% or more of everything we have back to God, we still have 90-95% to care for our needs and wants.

When the weather is too hot for comfort, we can rest assured that the offerings we make in thanks for God’s love are changing lives. They are helping bring smiles to the faces of hundreds of children and youth who participate in our conference camps. They are helping countless children and leaders know the love of Jesus whether it’s hot, cold, or just right during Vacation Bible Schools in June, July and August. And they are offering a helping hand to those in need who are suffering from tornadoes, earthquakes, floods, and wild fires.

So even if you are busy with family, fireworks and food on July 4th this year, take the risk of putting God first in your life this summer. Make the first check or payment you write payable to the church to help you say “thank you” for the blessings you’ve received. You might also consider making your gifts through online banking or setting up an automatic payment through your church. Or go to our website at www.wumf.org and make your donation online. We’ll send 100% of your donation to your church or any other ministry you choose.

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Helps for the Stewardship Chair

Biblical Stewardship Principle:

To give is to Respond Gratefully.

My dad would sit down at the kitchen table on Saturday evenings, write a check, and put it in the envelope. Then he would set it on the corner of the kitchen counter next to his car keys. That’s it. He never said anything to my brother and me about stewardship, about giving to God, about the importance of sharing. He just did it. He never missed. He still does it every Saturday night. It’s a powerful memory, and it continues.

I did not inherit my dad’s organizational skills, nor more honestly, his faithfulness. I have been known to search my purse for a pen while the ushers were coming down the aisle, or to fill out my check for the offering while the pastor was recapping the Gospel lesson. If by some chance the plate went by before I finished - more times than I care to admit - that week’s offering never made it anywhere.

But I still remember that envelope sitting by the car keys. And some weeks I lay my own witness on the kitchen counter for my kids to see. I might even write a bigger check to “catch up.” It’s not a have-to it’s a want-to something from my past that allows me to be faithful.

- Barbara DeGrote

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August 2011
A STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE FOR YOUR CHURCH

#269 "Well done, good and faithful servant!
You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" (Matt. 25:21-28)

We've often heard that generosity is contagious! On May 22, 2011 an EF-5 tornado, the single deadliest tornado in more than 60 years, struck Joplin, MO killing 150 people and leaving total devastation in its wake. When Andy Steger of Waupun, WI saw the images on the news he said, "It looked like an atomic bomb went off in there. I was sobbing and I've never gotten that emotional about an event like that... I think it was God calling out and saying 'Hey Andy, you need to do something here buddy.'"

Andy and his wife, Amie, were inspired by God's call to do something for these people. Andy made several arrangements, including finding a relief agency that would accept the various donations they secured. Originally they planned on taking a U-Haul down to Joplin. Instead, they collected enough to fill a full-size semi with clothing, bedding, water bottles, toys, soap, and other supplies as well as \$7,500 in cash donations. Andy and Amie never imagined their efforts would result in such a miraculous outpouring of hope. Yet from the beginning they trusted God would bless their gifts and use them to perform miracles of Christ's love.

How is God calling you to give and serve? What is your passion? What moves you to tears and pushes you to the point of knowing you just have to make a difference?

Never underestimate what Christ can do through you. And if you feel called to give a gift to assist the Joplin Tornado Relief through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (or 2011 Flood Relief), you can make a gift through your church or go to www.wumf.org and click the DONATE button now. 100% of your gifts will go to assist persons in need. Remember... Generosity is contagious!

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Helps for the Stewardship Chair

A growing congregation needs so many things. Just like toddlers or teenagers who keep growing out of their clothes and need bigger shoes. We need updated equipment for study, a variety of experiences for spiritual growth, and opportunities to reach out to the world around us.

Sometimes we hear folks say, "The church should do that!" or "The church will take care of that!"

But who is the church? We are.

When it moves forward, we are a part of that movement. When it stalls, we are part of the slow-down. When it achieves victories, we are victorious. The church is not "they".

The same fact applies to the church's financial strength. Our financial commitments and gifts are the primary tools and resources the church has for doing the ministry of Christ in the world today.

We... You and I... All of us together are the church. What is God calling us to give so the church can grow?

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September 2011
A STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE FOR YOUR CHURCH

#270 The amount you give should be in proportion to what you receive. *"Teach your children right from wrong and when they are grown they will still do right."* Pr. 22.6

School has started, again, and children everywhere are learning the wonders of addition and subtraction. These are lessons that begin in the earliest grades and carry us through the rest of our lives. They are also lessons we use as we live our faith through our financial giving. Do you teach the children around you about how to say "thank you" to God by giving a portion of everything you have back to God?

Consider: Do you manage your finances or do your finances manage you? One of the keys to becoming a good steward is learning to manage your money. Call it a budget or whatever ... you must plan how you spend, or you will continue to be a victim of marketing, commercials, and impulse purchasing. Good stewards start by setting aside "God's Share", then the necessities of life, and finally discretionary items. Poor stewards do it in the exact opposite order. Good stewardship brings peace and contentment. Poor stewardship leads to chaos and crises.

Listen and pray. Try to find out what God is calling you to do and model for the children around you!

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Helps for the Stewardship Chair

Ten Rules for Happier Living

I wish I knew who penned these rules for happier living. They've been repeated often, but they are wise words for us as we seek to live in the spirit of generosity.

1. Give something away - no strings attached.
2. Do a kindness - and forget it.
3. Spend a few minutes with the aged - their experience is priceless guidance.
4. Look intently into the face of a baby - and marvel.
5. Laugh often - it's life's lubricant.
6. Give thanks - a thousand times a day is not enough.
7. Pray - or you will lose the way.
8. Work - with vim and vigor.
9. Plan as though you'll live forever - because you will.
10. Live as though you'll die tomorrow - because you will, on some tomorrow.

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October 2011
A STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE FOR YOUR CHURCH

#247 Giving involves your whole self; including all you have and all you accumulate in your lifetime. "Zaccheus said to the Lord, 'Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much.'"
(Luke 19:8 NRSV)

Zaccheus quickly learned the meaning of the teachings of Jesus is that it is "more blessed to give than to receive." Like children who "Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF", he experienced the joy of being able to give to others who are in need. Donors who establish a Charitable Gift Annuity through the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation also experience this joy.

A Charitable Gift Annuity allows you to make a gift to your favorite United Methodist ministry or local church and receive a fixed annuity payment for the rest of your life, or for the duration of your life and the life of your spouse. The payment you receive is a fixed percentage of your gift and is based upon your age. You can also receive a charitable deduction for a portion of the gift you make. At the time of your death, 80% of the remaining funds in your account will be sent to the church or charity you designate.

Examples of the 2011-2012 single life rates are:

Age 55 - 5.0	Age 65 - 5.5	Age 75 - 6.4	Age 85 - 8.1
Age 60 - 5.2	Age 70 - 5.8	Age 80 - 7.2	Age 90+ - 9.5

Charitable Gift Annuities can be established with gifts of as little as \$2,000. For more information, please call our office. Please have information regarding your age, the age of your joint annuitant (if applicable) and your income tax bracket ready to share, in confidence, with a member of our staff.

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Helps for the Stewardship Chair

Giving Is ... sharing.
It is an acknowledgement that God owns everything.
We are simply stewards.

Getting ready for Halloween usually means finding a costume, appropriate make-up and the biggest goodie bag ever. Halloween celebrations can also be a time to teach children (and adults) about giving, when you invite them to "Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF"

Children become very excited about this opportunity to help less fortunate children to have clean water to drink, medicine, and warm blankets. Once they've been invited to turn the rather greedy tradition of trick-or-treating into a way to help "the least of these", children seem grateful for the chance to give. And those they visit on Halloween tend to respond with enthusiasm and gratitude as well. Let's not overlook the ways our children can be encouraged to be good stewards and leaders in living the gospel of Christ among us, throughout the upcoming holiday season.

In order to make Halloween count this year, visit the following website <http://youth.unicefusa.org/trickortreat> where you can order collection boxes, or to print out a canister wrapper to create your own collection container. Then go door-to-door on Halloween and "Trick or Treat for UNICEF", or create your own fundraiser.



Ask everyone to help you raise money for kids around the world!

Once you've collected the money, send it to UNICEF to help save kids' lives. Print out a [donation form](#) off the website and then send it with a check or money order to:

Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF
125 Maiden Lane,
New York, NY 10038.

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Giving Is ... sharing. "God's gifts and God's call are irrevocable." Romans
11:29 NIV

November 2011
A STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE FOR YOUR CHURCH

#272 Giving breaks the temptation of greed. *"The one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind." (2 Corinthians 9:6-7a)*

Are you 70-1/2 or older?
Or do you know someone 70-1/2 or older?
If you are, what ministries are you most passionate about?
Don't pass up the chance to make a special gift this year!

Don and Sandi always wanted to see a youth minister in place at their church. When they learned they could make a distribution directly to their church from their Traditional IRA to provide the seed money to start this ministry, they decided to tithe their IRA. A few other members of their church joined them in this effort, and now the youth ministry position is funded for the next five years.

The IRA Rollover is a special giving option that is only available through December 31, 2011 to persons 70-1/2 and older. Call your IRA administrator today and request to have your Required Minimum Distribution for 2011 *(or a gift of your choice up to a maximum of \$100,000)* sent directly to your local church *(or other charity)*. This gift will benefit the ministry you have designated and will NOT be included in your gross income for tax purposes.

What types of IRAs qualify? Only Traditional and Roth IRAs qualify.

When? Now through December 31, 2011.

Where can I make Qualified Charitable Distributions from my IRA? Only to qualified public charities. All United Methodist Churches and United Methodist Ministries are qualified public charities: UMCOR, any of our Health and Welfare Ministries, UM Camps, or Advance Specials. You may make an outright gift or make a gift that establishes a permanent endowment fund. For more information, see the sample letter on the reverse side or contact us at:

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1-888-903-9863 or wumf@wumf.org

Sample Letter/Email to IRA Custodian – Valid through Dec. 31, 2011

Date _____
Name of IRA Custodian _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____

Dear IRA Custodian,

The Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010, effective from Jan. 1, 2010 to Dec. 31, 2011, permits a rollover directly from an IRA to a qualified public charity. As the owner of IRA account # _____ that is in the custody of your organization, I request that you transfer from that account the sum of \$ _____ to _____ United Methodist Church located at Address _____ City/State/Zip _____. The Treasury Tax ID Number for _____ United Methodist Church is ____-____-____.

It is my intention to make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) to _____ United Methodist Church from my IRA. It is also my intention that this distribution ____ will / ____ will not *(choose one)* fulfill part or all of my IRA required minimum distribution for this year.

This letter is sufficient authorization for you to make this QCD gift. However, if you require any further documents, please promptly send those to me.

Cordially yours,

Name of Donor _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____

December 2011
A STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE FOR YOUR CHURCH

#273 Give to Grow Spiritually - "For a child has been born -- for us! ... and there'll be no limits to the wholeness he brings." (Isaiah 9:6-7, *The Message*.)

Jesus is counting on us - all of us - to care for all the children of the world this Christmas season. How do we as United Methodists do that best? A) By ringing bells in our community for the Salvation Army red pots. B) By providing items for the food pantry. C) By paying our apportionments in full this year... or, D) *all of the above are great ways to live our faith this holiday season!*

When we place our holiday gifts in the church's offering plates, 84.6 cents of every dollar, on average, will remain in our local church to provide for utilities, building maintenance, pastoral and staff salaries, children's and youth ministries, etc.

Another 12.7 cents out of every dollar we give will provide signs of hope to children, youth and adults who participate in the ministries of Northcott Neighborhood House, United Methodist Children's Services, Harbor House Crisis Shelters, our United Methodist camps, Jr. and Sr. High Youth CONVOs and campus ministries on ten different campuses.

Signs of hope are shared through over 1,000 mission personnel supported through the General Board of Global Ministries in over 150 countries, for just 2.7 cents out of every dollar given.

As United Methodists we are connected. We are called to *Give, Live, and Love.....Beyond all Expectations!* We see that vision come alive when our people respond to disastrous events and the ongoing need to share the hope and love of Christ throughout the world. Even as energy costs continue to rise and the economy remains uncertain, we have the sure and certain hope that our God is with us and gives us the grace we need to share the love of Christ with the world. As United Methodists let's *celebrate* the many ways hope is shared through our connectional giving this holiday season.

Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation
750 Windsor Street Ste 305, P.O. Box 620
Sun Prairie, WI 53590-0620
1-888-903-9863 or wumf@wumf.org

Helps for the Stewardship Chair
Ways to Grow in Generosity with Children

During Advent, give them each a "charitable certificate" for a certain amount per day (\$1.00/day = \$25, \$2.00/day = \$50) or whatever sum feels right. Ask them to decide by Christmas what good cause to give it to. Then give it in their names. You get the deduction but they get the thank-you note. It could help them to see how fortunate they are, and to spark in them the joy of giving. Here is a sample:

Happy Birthday, Jesus!

As we wait for Jesus' birthday this year, your Christmas gift to him includes a gift of \$_____ per day from December 1-25, for a total of \$_____.
And you get to decide who this gift will help!

Please decide by Christmas, which good cause you want to receive this gift. We can talk about it together if you want. It is up to you how you will help others know the love of Jesus through this gift.

Merry Christmas, with Love

FROM:

TO:

Websites to Consider when choosing a charity -
Heifer International (www.heifer.org)
The Advance at (www.advancinghope.org)
UM Committee on Relief UMCOR Gift Catalog
(<http://new.gbqm-umc.org/umcor/give/gift-catalog/>)