

GIVING
What Is God Calling Me To Give
December 2019

¹⁰Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing. (Psalm 72:12-14)

Congratulations to **Reedsburg UMC** that, in one campaign this fall, **increased annual giving by 32 percent**. Yes, by nearly one-third.

They did it by using the Stewardship program **New Consecration Sunday (NCS)**, which emphasizes tithing and proportional giving. According to our denomination, tithing, giving 10 percent of income to the church, is “*God’s standard of giving*”. The **NCS** program emphasizes giving a proportion of income moving toward and then, perhaps, beyond tithing.

Moreover, **New Consecration Sunday** focuses on the question, “What is God calling me to do?” rather than on the question, “What does the church need in order to pay its bills?”

The pastor and lay leadership of **Reedsburg UMC** carefully and enthusiastically followed the steps laid out by the **NCS** program. They started planning two months before Consecration Sunday and invited a guest leader (full-disclosure it was this writer).

In recent years, **Reedsburg UMC** has not emphasized pledging. So, it was a pleasant surprise when 40 giving units completed a commitment card. Of these, 25 pledged an amount greater than their giving over the previous year. This accounts for the 32 percent increase.

Pastor Vicki Brantmeyer told me that the church has passed a budget for 2020 that not only is balanced, but also has a five-figure surplus.

What is God calling you to give in 2020? One percent of income more could mean increasing your giving as little as \$5 to \$20 per week.

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

Visit the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at
www.wumf.org or Facebook/wumf.org
Or call 1-888-903-9863

Helps for the Stewardship Chair

New Consecration Sunday
in 2020

Do you want to use the New Consecration Sunday program as your Stewardship program in 2020? The Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation can help.

The **New Consecration Sunday Program** is a Stewardship campaign that takes about 6 weeks; uses a guest leader; requires four weeks of publicity; holds a catered luncheon on Consecration Sunday; and has the Guest Leader distribute and collect *Estimate of Giving* cards on Consecration Sunday. Giving can be expected to increase 15 to 30 percent if all steps are followed.

1. **We can provide a guest leader free of charge.** You may use any guest leader, but you should pay their mileage and give them an honorarium. Our staff can serve as guest leaders at no cost to you. They will have their own *Guest Leader Guide* and will bring the needed *Estimate of Giving* cards. (We schedule on a first come first served basis, so do not wait.)

The guest leader comes to your church three times: a) to meet with the **New Consecration Sunday** team six weeks before Consecration Sunday, b) to present to the entire church leadership at a dinner the week before Consecration Sunday, and c) to preach on Consecration Sunday and lead the commitment session at the end of the service.

2. **We can help defray the costs of the program.** Apply for the Foundation’s **Stewardship Challenge Grant** and receive \$500 - \$700 (see wumf.org/stewardship-grant/). Undertaking the **New Consecration Sunday** program meets three of the grant’s required activities. You can expect to pay about \$150 for materials (books and *Estimate of Giving* cards) in addition to the Celebration luncheon, so the grant award will come in handy.

In the following year, you are likely to have enough in increased giving to cover your Stewardship activities.

If you have questions or want to learn more, contact:

Jim Wells, Director of Stewardship & Capital Campaigns, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at 608-837-9582 or jwells@wumf.org.

GIVING
Year-End Giving
November 2019

¹²For he delivers the needy when they call, the poor and those who have no helper. ¹³He has pity on the weak and the needy, and saves the lives of the needy. ¹⁴From oppression and violence he redeems their life; and precious is their blood in his sight. (Psalm 72:12-14)

In our charitable giving, we strive to assist our God in aiding the poor and in helping the oppressed. In doing this, we share a mission with other churches and many worthy nonprofits. Now, as the year is nearing its end, we will be receiving from them many appeals for year-end giving. You may be surprised to learn that nearly one-third of annual charitable giving occurs in December.

The Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation urges you to plan your giving and remember the poor and needy during this season of giving thanks and sharing gifts. Your church and local agencies may have a number of opportunities such as giving trees and so forth.

The Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation has a year-end appeal for four charitable targets plus any you choose to designate:

- **Wisconsin United Methodist Health and Welfare Programs**
- **The Scholars Award Program**
- **UMCOR Disaster Relief**
- **The Bishop's Relief Fund**
- **You Own Special Interest** (you designate the recipient)

You can find more information about each of these charitable targets and make an online donation at - www.wumf.org/year-end-giving-ideas/. Remember, we can help with stock gifts.

Please prayerfully consider your plans for charitable giving this holiday season and give generously to the charities of your choice.

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

Visit the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at
www.wumf.org or [Facebook/wumf.org](https://www.facebook.com/wumf.org)
Or call 1-888-903-9863

Helps for the Stewardship Chair

Year-End Housekeeping for Stewardship Teams

1. Plan a year-end appeal

Nearly one-third of annual charitable giving occurs in December. Everyone else will be asking members of your congregation to donate at year's end. They will be primed. You should remind them that the church could be a target of their charitable giving, as well. Here is how:

Identify targets of Giving - What will you be asking donors to support? Choose one or two programs or funds to support. For example, a few years ago in my church, we needed to hire nursery attendants (we just couldn't get enough volunteers). We included funding the nursery program—toys and consumables like hand sanitizers as well as attendant pay—as part of a year-end appeal.

Note: Balancing the budget is never an appropriate request of an appeal (at any time of the year). Choose needs of the church's ministry and missions.

Connect with donors. You may want to talk to some of your major givers in person and ask for their support. Others can receive a special year-end appeal letter. Send this after November 1 or after Commitment Sunday whichever is later. Emphasize how their giving can help, more than how great the need is.

Ask for the Needed Level of Support. If \$10 and \$20 gifts are not going to meet the goal, then suggest the right giving amounts such as \$50, \$100, or \$200. You may appropriately increase these amounts when meeting with your major givers. You also may want to tell donors what their gift will buy. A \$20 gift will pay for needed hand sanitizer, \$50 - a booster toilet seat, \$100 - one Sunday of attendants' salaries. Include a stamped return envelope.

Thank Your Donors. Send a handwritten thank-you to everyone who contributes.

2. Send a Giving Statement through the End of November.

Send a giving statement for the year-to-date through November as early in December as possible. This reminds givers of where they stand in their giving. Pledgers especially appreciate this reminder near the end of the year.

If you have questions or want to learn more, contact:

Jim Wells, Director of Stewardship & Capital Campaigns, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at 608-837-9582 or jwells@wumf.org.

GIVING
The Virtue of Giving
October 2019

³⁵"In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" (Acts 20:35)

I recently came across a quotation by David Starr Jordan, founding President of Stanford University: "Wisdom is knowing what to do next; Skill is knowing how to do it, and Virtue is doing it." It caused me to think about how this applies to generosity.

Knowing That I Should Give: God calls us all to worship God and support the church. Stewardship is faithful management of all God gives us so that God can use our gifts to transform us spiritually and extend Christ's transforming love to others. We are told in Scripture that "God loves a cheerful giver" and that "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Knowing How to Determine What I Should Give: Scripture informs us to love God and love others. Thus, we should divide our giving between the two. The amount to give to God through the church is the tithe, ten percent of our income. In order to reach the tithe, we should prayerfully consider what proportion of income to give, then strive to increase toward the goal of tithing, usually by about one percent of income per year. Although some of our tithe will go to the needy, we should consider another proportion of income to give to those in need.

The Virtue of Giving: The real issue is not whether we give 10%, but what we will do with the entire 100%. John Wesley believed in the spiritual discipline summed up as "earn all you can, save all you can, give all you can." Wesley believed that after earning money honestly and spending only what we need on our families and ourselves, we should give the rest away. Surely, using this approach, he would anticipate that our giving would be much more than the tithe of ten percent. His was.

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

Visit the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at
www.wumf.org or [Facebook/wumf.org](https://www.facebook.com/wumf.org)
Or call 1-888-903-9863

Helps for the Stewardship Chair

Leading Your Congregation to Give

Here is some wisdom for the Stewardship Team from the **New Consecration Sunday Stewardship Program**.*

People do not drift into good giving patterns.

This is especially true when we base our appeals on the need of the church to balance its budget rather than on the need of the giver to give for his or her own spiritual benefit. The stewardship leadership team needs to be intentional about providing the knowledge, skills, and opportunity for inspired giving.

People decide into good giving patterns.

Giving people the opportunity to decide to support the church with their gifts requires keeping a focus on the mission and ministry of the church. Most people will decide to give when moved by the **good** that the church is doing.

People decide into good giving patterns because someone asks them to decide.

One of the most important acts of leadership in the church is to **ask** others to support the mission and ministries of the church. This includes financial support. However, leadership in the church also means asking others to love God and to grow in their faith. This is especially important in the context of Stewardship, because offering gifts to God is a form of worship as well as support for God's church. The stewardship leadership team owns the task of growing faithful disciples through giving. The act of asking is spiritually important both to the leader and to the potential giver.

* Herb Miller, **New Consecration Sunday Stewardship Program**, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007.

If you have questions or want to learn more, contact:

Jim Wells, Director of Stewardship & Capital Campaigns, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at 608-837-9582 or jwells@wumf.org.

GIVING
What's Your Plan for Giving
September 2019

"But blessed is the one who trust in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit. (Jeremiah 17:7-8)

Now that fall is here, perhaps you are making plans: plans for home projects and family get-togethers, plans for work and school projects, plans for a trip or vacation. What about your church plans such as volunteering, Scripture reading, and regular prayer? Right now, I am planning a retreat with my spouse, so we can recharge our spiritual batteries. And we are planning our giving for the coming year.

Do you have a plan for giving? If not, how will you know you have been successful in being generous? We set aside a percent of our income for church and charity, most recently about 13%, and judge our year as successful if we have given it all away.

The giving plan is a spiritual discipline in that we think of God first, before we even have earned the money. By settling on a proportion first, we know exactly how much to pledge when the church's stewardship campaign comes around in the fall.

Also, we never have to ask whether we have the money. It is set aside for the Lord. So, when there is a disaster, we are not wondering where to find a little extra. We have already designated it to the Lord's work.

There is much freedom in deciding on percentage giving ahead of time. You are free of the anxiety over whether there is enough to share when the needs of others are raised up—backbacks for needy students, scholarships for seminarians, missionaries overseas, etc.

Pray for direction on your giving percentage for the coming year.

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

Visit the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at
www.wumf.org or [Facebook/wumf.org](https://www.facebook.com/wumf.org)
Or call 1-888-903-9863

Helps for the Stewardship Chair

**Elevate the Practice of Giving
to a Spiritual Discipline**

- 1. Seek to develop a program of church finance that will be focused on the soul and not on the purse.**

Christian stewardship at all points is primarily a matter of aligning the heart with Christ. It is a part of the church's call to full Christian commitment.

- 2. Seek to develop a program of church finance that will be focused on what the Lord wants and not on what the church needs.**

We are not concerned with your share of the church budget! What matters is God's share of your income. It is not helpful to say, We want you to be a percentage giver so the church will prosper. Or If everyone will increase their giving 5% then we will meet our budget.

- 3. Develop a program which will be projected over a long period and that is not limited to the requirements of a yearly budget.**

This is not an emergency fund drive or campaign. It avoids crash tactics. A continuing process of repetition replaces emergency appeals. It may take 20 years to reach the goal!

- 4. The church member may become a follower of Christ in that moment when she makes her first commitment, but to become a full follower may take a full lifetime.**

This program moves away from demands for set amounts to calls for growth in grace.

Selected ideas from Charlie W. Shedd, *How To Develop a Tithing Church*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1961.

If you have questions or want to learn more, contact:

Jim Wells, Director of Stewardship & Capital Campaigns, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at 608-837-9582 or jwells@wumf.org.

GIVING
The Impact of Our Giving
 August 2019

Be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For ... those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing. (James 1: 22-23; 25)

Much of what we read about stewardship is exhortation to give to the church and to missions. It often answers **how** and **what** without answering **why**. What is the impact of our giving on the mission of the church?

Often, the church describes how it uses our gifts like this. In the table, we see that across all our Wisconsin United Methodist churches a third of our giving pays for clergy, 19% for other staff, 27% for building and utilities, and so on.

	Clergy	Staff	Bldg	Apport	Prog	Mission	Loans
Annual Conf	33%	19%	27%	9%	4%	4%	4%
Main St UMC	50%	9%	22%	14%	1%	4%	0%

Bldg=Building Costs; Apport=Apportionment Costs; Prog=Program Costs

A second line shows these same costs for “Main St” UMC. Clergy costs are a higher percent of budget, while staff, programs, and loans are less. The table below, in contrast, shows MSUMC’s costs **by areas of ministry**. Worship receives the greater proportion of gifts given to the church, while missions is second and spiritual formation is third.

	Worship	Spiritual Formation	Congregational Care	Hospitality +Outreach	Missions
Main St	38%	21%	11%	8%	23%

Do you love to give for loan principle and interest, or for worship? For staff benefits, or for congregational care? Ask your finance team to produce an impact budget, so you can see the good your giving is doing.

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

Visit the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at
www.wumf.org or Facebook/wumf.org
 Or call 1-888-903-9863

Helps for the Stewardship Chair

Come to the Stewardship Retreat, August 9-10

It is not too late to bring a team or yourself to the Stewardship Retreat @ Pine Lake Camp, 2019, presented by the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation.

Registration is still open. Come for one day on Friday August 9 (Drive-in Day) or come on Friday and stay overnight through lunch on Saturday (Full Retreat). Accommodations are in the beautiful air-conditioned Rader Retreat Center with single or double rooms.

All churches leave with a multi-year stewardship plan. Topics addressed will include:

Drive-In Day Activities

- The Importance of a Stewardship Plan — Jim Wells
- Mission-Related Fundraising – Rev Barbara Wells
- Developing a Year-Round Stewardship Plan – Glenda McCracken
- How River of Life Plans for Stewardship — Rev David Carlson
- WORK TIME for Your Year-Round Stewardship Plan
- The Annual Budget Pledge Campaign — Jim Wells

Full Retreat Activities (in Addition to Above)

- The How and Why of Planned Giving — Rick Churan
- Help with Stewardship Planning — Retreat Staff
- The Role of Special Fundraising – Jim Wells
- Creating a Narrative Budget — Jim Wells
- OR
- Stewardship Tools — Rick Churan
- Digital Tools for Stewardship — Rev Krystal Goodger
- OR
- Helping Your Congregation Save & Give More – Todd Jahnke

Registration: <https://wiumcamps.campbrainregistration.com/>.
More Info & Agenda: <https://www.wumf.org/upcoming-events/>.

If you have questions or want to learn more, contact:
 Jim Wells, Director of Stewardship & Capital Campaigns, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at 608-837-9582 or jwells@wumf.org.

GIVING
Integrating Missions with Other Giving
July 2019

It is by the grace of God that a congregation is permitted to gather visibly in this world to share God's Word and sacrament. Not all Christians receive this blessing. The imprisoned, the sick, the scattered lonely, the proclaimers of the Gospel in heathen lands stand alone.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Life Together, 1938.

Mission giving is a principal way we, the visible fellowship of Christians, stay connected with the invisible fellowship of Christians. We support local outreach such as food pantries or homeless shelters, conference projects like flood relief, national or international projects like elimination of malaria. Special Sunday collections support UMCOR, international peace, social justice, world communion, and minority ministries. The Golden Cross Sunday collection supports Wisconsin health and welfare ministries. We also support specific missionaries.

Regrettably, we have gotten away from integrating mission giving into our church budget and planning, relying instead on individual giving and pass-throughs. I think this is a mistake and that we should intentionally embrace mission giving as a percentage of our budget (10 percent has a nice ring to it). If our overall budget were \$160,000, then the mission budget would be \$16,000. We should allow perhaps half the mission budget to be accounted for by pastoral salary, office staff salary, office supplies and building costs related to mission planning and activities (i.e., things we already pay for). However, the other \$8,000 would come from annual pledged giving and special appeals. This approach would result in more mission giving than most churches are now doing.

Encourage your congregation and leaders to integrate mission giving into the annual budget. In this way, you will be able to intentionally give and communally celebrate your mission support.

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

Visit the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at
www.wumf.org or Facebook/wumf.org
Or call 1-888-903-9863

Helps for the Stewardship Chair

How to Integrate Mission Giving

We recommend integrating mission giving into our church budget and planning instead of relying on individual giving and pass-throughs. In this way, you will be able to intentionally give and communally celebrate your mission support.

Agree to tithe from annual budget toward missions. Lead the congregation toward a greater commitment to mission giving. It should not be a hard sell to argue that Christians should be spending more on others, even if it means spending less on themselves. As with individual tithing, you may want to start at a smaller number, like 5 percent, and work your way up.

Determine how much of the tithe to attribute to overhead (see narrative budget). We should allow things we already pay for—pastoral salary, office staff salary, office supplies and building costs related to mission planning and activities (i.e., things we already pay for) to account for perhaps half the mission budget. This means that we are not simply adding 10 percent more to the budget. We recognize current spending already supports mission planning, special appeals, and resource distribution. Now give yourself credit for it.

Count special appeals in the general budget offering (i.e., give yourselves credit for the pass-throughs). This works best with a narrative budget where the congregation can view the whole impact of mission-related giving.

Celebrate mission giving. It is important to be public and intentional in describing your mission aspirations and celebrating mission giving. For example if the congregation supports a missionary, mention it in a mission moment twice: once when you write a check and 6 months later just to remind everyone of the ministry you are supporting.

This approach will have a positive impact on overall generosity in the church because sharing the good you do draws support.

If you have questions or want to learn more, contact:

Jim Wells, Director of Stewardship & Capital Campaigns, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at 608-837-9582 or jwells@wumf.org.

GIVING

Are You Giving In All the Ways You Should?

June 2019

Are you giving to the church in all the ways you could or should be giving? You may be supporting this year's budget, but what about the future of the church, missional support, and special projects? Are you providing for these as well?

I think of the church's assets and giving as an ice-cream cone. The church's assets such as the building, parsonage, and endowments as the cone. Essential, but not very appetizing all by themselves.

Annual budget giving is the first scoop. It is needed and provides basic support and flavor to the church. However, too often, this is where we stop thinking about supporting the church. What about other scoops?

What about missions? Mission-related giving can include apportionments (sometimes paid with the annual budget, sometimes not), conference projects, Special Sundays, UMCOR, national and international advance projects and support of individual missionaries. Are you thinking about your offering for missions this year? These are usually donations over and above what is collected for the annual budget.

What about planned giving? Planned giving provides for the future of the church when you are no longer around. Have you included the church in your will or as a beneficiary to your investment accounts or life insurance? Ten percent is a good number, leaving plenty for your family.

Finally, what about special projects. Capital fundraising can support new ministry, ministry growth, new building or renovation and maintenance of existing structures. Remember the Imagine No Malaria campaign a couple of years back that raised over one million dollars?

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

Visit the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at
www.wumf.org or [Facebook/wumf.org](https://www.facebook.com/wumf.org)
Or call 1-888-903-9863

Helps for the Stewardship Chair

Who is Competing with Your Church?

At the recent Bishop's Clergy Days Apart, we heard from Clif Christopher, President of Horizons Stewardship. Clif emphasized the importance of understanding that our churches are competing with other organizations for the financial support of those in our pews.

These other organizations are colleges and universities, health care organizations, humanitarian aid groups and many others. For the most part, unfortunately, they are very good at fundraising. They do all the right things; things that churches mostly fail to do:

They put mission first: They focus on their mission, not on their budgetary needs. If it is a college, they ask for support for educating students and perhaps some special new educational program. If it is a humanitarian aid organization, they tell us about the lives they can save.

They make it easy to give: They are prepared to accept gifts of cash, check, credit card, or bank transfer via mail, phone, or Internet.

They send an immediate (48 hours or less) personal thank you: We talked about this last month. The thank you is the thing that cements continued loyalty and support.

They are in continuous communication: They usually connect in some way on a monthly basis. These organizations, who spend a great deal of effort looking for supporters, are very envious of churches that they see as having a captive audience. They also see that churches mostly fail to take advantage of this.

In this competition, the other organizations are winning and our churches are losing. In share of total charitable giving, churches are losing ground to other nonprofits and have been for several years. Religion used to receive close to 60% of charitable gifts, we now get 32%. Clif's message was that if we want to be around to compete with other nonprofits in the future, we need to imitate their practices.

If you have questions or want to learn more, contact:

Jim Wells, Director of Stewardship & Capital Campaigns, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at 608-837-9582 or jwells@wumf.org.

GIVING

Who Should Know What I Give?

May 2019

^{1b} I exhort the elders among you ²to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight ... as God would have you do it ... ⁴And when the chief shepherd appears, you will win the crown of glory that never fades away.
(1 Peter 5:1b-4)

The answer to the question, "Who should know what I give?" is simple and straightforward: **100% of the people who need to know and 0% of the people who do not need to know.**

I have donated to a number of nonprofit organizations and have never wondered who sees my donation. Nevertheless, I would certainly expect that the number who do see it includes those needed to process the gift, and those who would solicit the gift and thank me, including the CEO who is also gift solicitor-in-chief. In addition, there would be auditors who would need to have access to all financial records.

In our churches, it is the same. The financial secretary and counters process gifts. During the week, office staff may process checks that come in and produce reports on giving from the church database. The Stewardship team needs to see giving records in order to make plans for stewardship campaigns, say thanks, and to guide asking for future gifts. Finally, the Pastor needs to know in order to participate in financial Stewardship of the church as well as congregational care.

The 2016 General Conference confirmed what the pastor's role was already by amending the Book of Discipline to read, "*To ensure membership care including compliance with charitable giving documentation requirements and to provide appropriate pastoral care, the pastor ... shall have access to and responsibility for professional stewardship of congregational giving records.*" [Emphasis added.]

During the annual church audit, the church may share giving data with the auditors, as well.

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

Visit the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at
www.wumf.org or [Facebook/wumf.org](https://www.facebook.com/wumf.org)
Or call 1-888-903-9863

Helps for the Stewardship Chair

Are You Maximizing the Power of Thanks?

At the recent Bishop's Clergy Days Apart, we heard from Clif Christopher, President of Horizons Stewardship. As part of an educational event, called **Academy of Faith and Money**, Clif witnessed throughout to the importance of saying Thank You to donors.

Failure to thank donors is a principle difference between most churches and other nonprofits. And, it shows up on the bottom line! In share of total charitable giving, churches are losing ground to other nonprofits.

Here is the point: The donors to the other nonprofits in the areas of higher education, health care, social services and the arts are the same donors as yours. These nonprofits are aggressively soliciting members of your congregation; they are well organized and never miss an opportunity to thank donors for their support. Our churches mostly look like poor performers in comparison.

Joe Park, Managing Partner of Horizons Stewardship, has made a five-minute video on "**The Power of Thanks**" (<https://horizons.net/the-power-of-thanks/>). In the video, Joe provides four suggestions for thanking donors.

1. Thank first time donors within 48 hours. The finance or stewardship team can prepare a list of first time donors and have it ready for the pastor on Monday morning. A hand written note is best. A first-time giver has said something to your church, what are you saying back?
2. Better yet, phone any first time donors on Monday or Tuesday.
3. In addition, send a thank you note to anyone who has given a noteworthy gift or who has given after not having given for quite a while.
4. Finally, send thank you notes to those who have reached 25%, 50%, 75% or 100% of their annual or capital pledge.

If you have questions or want to learn more, contact:

Jim Wells, Director of Stewardship & Capital Campaigns, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at 608-837-9582 or jwells@wumf.org.

GIVING

Why Do I Give? Part 2

April 2019

¹Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ²then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves. (*Philippians 2:1-3*)

The folks at **Network for Good** remind us that giving is a human transaction; we usually give for reasons of the heart (emotionally) rather than for reasons of the head (rationally). Here are some reasons that donors have given for their contributions:

- Someone I know asked me to give, and I wanted to help them
- Felt emotionally moved by someone's story
- Want to feel I'm not powerless in the face of need and can help (this is especially true during disasters)
- Want to feel I'm changing someone's life
- Feel a sense of closeness to my church
- Want to memorialize someone
- Was raised to give to church—it's tradition in my family
- It makes me feel connected to other people and builds my social network
- Want to have a good image of myself/my family
- Want to leave a legacy that perpetuates my support for the church
- Feel fortunate and want to give something back to others
- My faith teaches me to support the church
- Want to be seen as a leader/role model

Why do you give? The stewardship leaders of your church should be asking this question of you on a regular basis. If they don't, ask *them* why not?

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

Visit the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at
www.wumf.org or Facebook/wumf.org
Or call 1-888-903-9863

Helps for the Stewardship Chair

Are Your Appeals Donor-Centric

Network for Good tells us that the secret to giving is to inspire donors. To do this you need to make a meaningful connection by showing them why they matter and how they can make a difference. When you understand why your donors give, you will be able to make a more effective appeal.

It is important to sit down with donors, especially the 30 to 40 percent who provide almost the entire budget, to ask them why they give. Their stories matter and sharing them inspires others to follow their example. Ask your best donors to witness in person or on video if they are shy or wordy. (Video also allows you to share the witness again in the future or on your Website and on social media.)

Remember, says the **Network for Good**:

- People act from the heart, not the head:
Yes, your church has to show that it is a good steward of donor money and you need to impart where all that generosity is going, but your appeal must contain more than budgets and needs.
- Giving is a personal act:
Your appeals need to be donor-centric. Make sure to tell your donor why they should care, and why they matter to your church and those it serves. Learn more about crafting your case for support and making personal appeals.
- The act of giving is immediate:
Give your donors the opportunity to act here and now. Your relationship with them will be long-term, but their willingness to give is now—let them act on it.
- People who give personally need to be thanked personally.

If you have questions or want to learn more, contact:

Jim Wells, Director of Stewardship & Capital Campaigns, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at 608-837-9582 or jwells@wumf.org.

GIVING
Why Do I Give?
March 2019

²² The wicked borrow and do not repay, but the righteous give generously.
(2 *Psalm 37:21*)

People give to the church for a variety of reasons that form a hierarchy of motivations. Where they fall on the hierarchy is related closely to how much, proportionately, they give; how willingly they give; how they respond to being asked to pledge their support to the mission and ministry of the church, and how openly they talk about their giving. What motivates you to give?

Some people feel **called** to give out of their faith. Giving generously feels right and natural. It is a part of their discipleship. In turn, they are grateful for their own blessings including a place in the church where they can contribute.

Some people feel **fulfilled** by giving. They derive joy, energy and good feelings from giving. They value the church in their lives and want to support it so it is there for others.

Some people **value** giving as a duty. It is the right thing to do and creates good in the world. Giving influences the community for good and connects the giver with the community.

Some people would feel **guilty** if they did not give. They feel giving is something they should do, even if they would rather not. Alternatively, that fear they will be shamed if they do not give.

Finally, some people feel **coerced**. They feel their situation compels them to give.

Which of these describes why you give? Which do you think would be most pleasing to God? Next month, how to move up the hierarchy...

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

Visit the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at
www.wumf.org or [Facebook/wumf.org](https://www.facebook.com/wumf.org)
Or call 1-888-903-9863

Helps for the Stewardship Chair

Giving 365 Resources

There are many resources for Stewardship available on the Internet and in publications. One source is **Horizons Stewardship** (horizons.net), an organization that provides tools and information to encourage congregations to be more generous as part of their discipleship journey.

Horizons provides a number of resources on its Website under the heading **giving365**. Among the resources provided are:

- Articles (24)
- Blogs, categorized by topic (102)
- eBooks (5)
- Videos (Giving Intelligence Video Series) (10)
- Webinars (10)

Note: The Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation is sponsoring speakers from Horizons Stewardship, Clif Christopher and Joseph Park, to present their Academy of Faith and Money to Wisconsin clergy at the Bishop's Day Apart, in Green Lake, WI, March 25-28, 2019.

The topics covered by **giving365** (sign-up free at horizons.net/giving365-resources) include:

- Annual giving
- Capital campaigns
- Communication
- Debt
- Discipleship
- Electronic Giving
- First-time donors
- Generosity
- Giving
- Giving data
- Leadership
- Major donor
- Millennials
- Vision

If you have questions or want to learn more, contact:

Jim Wells, Director of Stewardship & Capital Campaigns, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at 608-837-9582 or jwells@wumf.org.

GIVING

Prayer & Gratitude
February 2019

⁴⁵*Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! (2 Corinthians 9:15)*

Henri Nouwen has said, "As our prayer deepens into constant awareness of God's goodness, the spirit of gratitude grows within us." This implies a cause and effect relationship: prayer causes gratitude. Therefore, it seems that just saying, or praying, "Thanks" is not enough.

What does prayer do to grow gratitude?

Focuses us on God. Prayer moves our focus from ourselves to God. It reminds us that we are not intended to be self-sufficient, rather, God provides us with we need, sometimes, even with the gift that moves us toward God's grace.

Reminds us Who is the Giver. God is the giver of all good gifts and graces. All of our blessings come from God. Through prayer, we come to recognize that we have so much to be thankful for... just pray for the most important people and blessings in your life and you will find that the list gets very long very quickly.

Keeps us Positive. With our eyes on our blessings, we have little room for complaining and negativity. One cannot be thankful and negative at the same time.

Moves us closer to God. Debbie McDaniel has pointed out that prayer, "opens up the door for continued blessings. It invites His presence. Our spirits are refreshed and renewed in Him. God loves to give good gifts to His children. He delights in our thankfulness and pours out His Spirit and favor over those who give honor and gratitude to Him."

This is what Stewardship looks like in the Kingdom of God. Let us pray ourselves and our churches into the Kingdom.

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

Visit the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at
www.wumf.org or [Facebook/wumf.org](https://www.facebook.com/wumf.org)
Or call 1-888-903-9863

Helps for the Stewardship Chair

How Do I Know My Giving Makes a Difference?

Last month we reminded you that the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation has a booklet entitled, *Ideas for Year-Round Financial Stewardship* (www.wumf.org/year-round-ideas). It proposes that the church take up a Stewardship Topic of the Month. Here is one:

How Do I Know My Giving Makes a Difference?

This is a central issue that any Stewardship program needs to address for its potential donors. People do not like to waste their money. Regrettably, my experience is that our churches do a bad job at conveying how giving to the church makes a difference.

For example, after my own children were grown, I moved and changed churches. In my new congregation, I became involved in adult Sunday school, lay speaking, adult classes and the music program. Yet, this church had a Sunday school for children downstairs and a robust Youth program with a puppeteering group. It was the better part of a year, before I ever ventured downstairs or found out about the puppet group.

Church leaders sometimes mentioned these activities for children and youth in announcements, but never promoted them as fine examples of ministry and mission in the church. The announcements addressed those involved in the activities (leaders, parents and kids), but not those of us asked to give to the church to support them.

It is surprising how much goes on in a church about which most members are unaware. Yet they would be proud and faithful supporters, if only they were aware!

The Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation suggests that your Stewardship program create a list of 52 ministries of your church **through which lives are being changed.** You might think this seems like a large number of ministries, but you will be surprised. Then lift up one of these ministries each week at worship. Soon, your donors will know how their giving is making a difference.

If you have questions or want to learn more, contact:

Jim Wells, Director of Stewardship & Capital Campaigns, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at 608-837-9582 or jwells@wumf.org.

GIVING
Invitation
January 2019

"Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. (Matthew 7:7-8)

Henri Nouwen has said, "Asking people for money is giving them the opportunity to put their resources at the disposal of the Kingdom."

If God wants us to build the Kingdom of God, then he wants us to invite others to support it. This is evangelism because the good news is that God has faith in us to build the Kingdom.

There are a number of steps in the asking process and asking is a later step, not the first:

Ask God First! We must first trust in God that we can succeed in soliciting support for the missions and ministries we seek to support. We come to God in prayer to ask God for support before asking anyone else.

Love the person you are asking. We must also love the person we are asking for support, giving them the means to become a brother or sister in Christ through their support of the Kingdom. We must trust that the Spirit of Christ that is guiding us is also guiding them.

Ask on behalf of the Kingdom of God. We are asking potential donors to invest in the work of God. Whether their ability to give is great or small, what matters is that they are making their gift available to God.

Be grateful for the answer. Whether the answer is yes or no or maybe or someday, we must be grateful that the person listened and gave us an honest answer. We have offered something of great value and that is what is important to us.

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

Visit the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at
www.wumf.org or [Facebook/wumf.org](https://www.facebook.com/wumf)
Or call 1-888-903-9863

Helps for the Stewardship Chair

Getting It Right at the Starting Line

In the 6th century BC, the Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu noted, "the journey of a thousand miles begins with one step." The Stewardship Journey is one that the Stewardship Chair and Team travel every year. It is important that the first step be a good one backed up by thought and intention.

The time to take that step is now! People give when they are convinced that their giving will result in something good happening. That message cannot be told only once a year! Stewardship is not an annual financial campaign, but a way of life.

The Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation has written a booklet entitled, *Ideas for Year-Round Financial Stewardship* (www.wumf.org/year-round-ideas). The ideas in this booklet are tools your team 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!

We suggest you use this booklet with your stewardship team to make a concrete plan for the coming year that specifies annual, quarterly, monthly and weekly stewardship activities.

- 1) Mark the items in the booklet 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.

If you have questions or want to learn more, contact:

Jim Wells, Director of Stewardship & Capital Campaigns, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at 608-837-9582 or jwells@wumf.org.