



AFTER THE HARVEST:
GATHERING THIS YEAR, PREPARING FOR NEXT YEAR

STEWARDSHIP, STABILIZATION, & SUSTAINABILITY

December 9, 2020



Agenda

Opening Prayer

1. Introducing the Project Resource Team
2. Stewardship Drive Follow-Up Activities
3. Sample Follow-up Communications
4. Reporting the Results
5. Year-End Fundraising Strategies
6. Preparing for 2021: What did we learn?

Closing Prayer

INTRODUCING THE PROJECT RESOURCE TEAM

Mo. Megan Ewing
St. Luke's Church (Ewing)

Fr. Bob Fitzpatrick
Grace Church (Merchantville)

Fr. Andrew Hanyzewski
St. Andrew's Church (Mount Holly)

Fr. Chuck Messer
St. John's Church (Salem)

Fr. William Ndishabandi
St. Augustine's Church (Asbury Park)

Fr. Dave Snyder
Church of the Good Shepherd (Pitman)

Tena Achen
St. David's Church (Cranbury)

Sergio Delgado
Christ Church-Cristo Rey (Trenton)

George Funk
Church of the Good Shepherd (Pitman)

Natalie Krauser
All Saint's Episcopal Church (Scotch Plains)

Eva Lesniak
Church of the Holy Spirit (Lebanon)



POLL

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING YOUR STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

UPDATES ON PROGRESS	As soon as early results are known, summary information should be shared with the congregation as a broad thank you and encouragement to those yet to respond.
THANK YOU LETTERS	Sending thank personal you notes from clergy and/or leaders should be the first and most important step. Make sure to recognize their faithful stewardship of the parish during these trying times.
PLEDGE CONFIRMATION	Different from the thank you letter; this letter from the treasurer or stewardship chair acknowledges the commitment that has been made and confirms the details of their pledge.
FOLLOW-UP LETTERS	These follow-up letters are sent to those who have not yet responded. These letters should be segmented to reference their past support (last year / some year / never).
REPORT TO VESTRY	Ideally, a report to the Vestry sharing the results and offering comparisons to prior years should take place in December, prior to a broader report to the parish.
REPORT TO THE CONGREGATION	Once the final results are tabulated, a final report should be shared with the parish offering overall results, statistical comparisons, and acknowledgement of pledgers and volunteers.

Prompt acknowledgement, accurate reporting, and persistent follow-up are critical to maintaining present levels of support and setting the stage for continuous growth.

UPDATES ON PROGRESS

The following are tips you should consider in your updates in the weeks following your Commitment Sunday:

- ✓ **Deliver the update during the announcements and in the bulletin** to ensure broadest reach.
- ✓ **Thank those who have responded.** Mention the number of commitments received so far.
- ✓ **Offer comparisons to last year.** If you have the information, share how the responses following the pledge weekend compare to previous years.
- ✓ **Encourage participation and give them a timeline.** Remind members of the importance of this year's stewardship campaign and ask them to respond prior to Christmas.
- ✓ **Offer a point of contact** should they need to discuss their commitment with a member of the committee or clergy.
- ✓ Above all, be **enthusiastic and grateful!**

PLEDGE THANK YOU NOTE/LETTER

Dear <personalize>,

Thank you so much for your commitment to (Parish) for 2021. This has been a trying year for (Parish) and our parish families, and the response we have seen to our fall appeal the past few weeks has been truly inspiring.

Our goal for this year's fall stewardship campaign was to receive commitments from #% of (Parish) families, and I am pleased to share that we are now at #%. As we head into the New Year, it is comforting to know that we will be able to invest in mission, ministry and programing with the faithful backing of so many great stewards.

Thank you once again for your commitment to (Parish) and for helping us enter 2021 with the resources necessary to furthering God's Work in (Town) and beyond.

PLEDGE CONFIRMATION LETTER

Dear <Personalize>,

Thank you for your financial commitment to (Parish) for the coming year. Our fall stewardship campaign was a success, and the results are being tabulated. A full report will be available after the first of the year.

According to your commitment form, your total financial pledge for the coming year is \$____, payable at (\$____per week), (\$____per month), (\$____per year). If this is not correct, please notify the church office as soon as possible.

Offering envelopes will be available beginning Sunday, (date). If you have not already done so, please consider using our online giving program or your bank's bill pay system to set up an automatic contribution.

We are delighted to know that you are actively supporting (Parish's) mission and ministry.

FOLLOW-UP LETTERS

Dear <Personalize>,

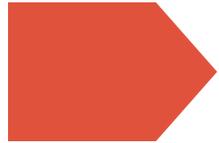
Thank you for your financial commitment to (Parish) in 2020. Our fall stewardship campaign was a success, and the results are being tabulated. A full report will be available after the first of the year.

We do not find a financial pledge recorded for you for the coming year. While we wish to assure you that whatever financial support you offer is appreciated, we also hope that you will consider making a pledge.

The Vestry does not prepare the budget for the coming year until it knows the financial resources it can expect. Our pledges provide the Vestry with this information. If every member of the parish makes a pledge, the Vestry will be able to prepare a budget that represents the most accurate estimate of what our parish financial resources will be. With those estimates in hand, we will be able to plan for (Parish's) mission and ministry next year with confidence.

We hope you will prayerfully consider making a pledge. I am glad that you are a part of (Parish's) mission and ministry. And do know that we are always here for you.

FOLLOW-UP LETTERS



For those who pledged last year but not this year, consider adjusting the second paragraph as follows:

We do not find a financial pledge recorded for you for the coming year. Thank you for your pledge of \$X,XXX last year, which helped [Church] continue to serve our community during this difficult year. While we wish to assure you that whatever financial support you offer is appreciated, we hope that you will consider making a similar pledge this year.



For those who have pledged in previous years but not in the past couple years, consider adjusting the second paragraph as follows:

We do not find a financial pledge recorded for you for the coming year. Thank you for your pledges in the past which has helped [Church] continue to serve our community. While we wish to assure you that whatever financial support you offer is appreciated, we hope that you will consider making a pledge this year. Your pledge is more important than ever as the needs in our community increase in response to this difficult year.

POLL

REPORTING THE RESULTS

WHO From Stewardship Chair and/or Priest-in-Charge to members of the congregation

WHAT Public “Thank You” and reporting of results

WHEN Following Commitment Sunday

WHERE

- During announcements
- On the website
- In the bulletin
- On social media
- At Annual Meeting / in Annual Report

WHY Celebrate the results and encourage others who have not participated yet to do so

HOW:

- Recognize committee and lay witness speakers
- Share goal and progress made toward goal
- Illustrate impact of their generosity
- Explain follow-up steps
- Prepare for wholistic Stewardship approach

REPORTS TO VESTRY/CONGREGATION

Total amount pledged

of commitments made

% of families pledging

Average pledge amount

of increased pledges

of decreased pledges

Progress towards goal

Comparisons to 2020

Recognize volunteers

Recognize pledgers

Encourage participation

Prepare for 2021

Above all, express gratitude for the 2020 commitments that sustained the parish during this trying year, and for the 2021 commitments which will enable the congregation to move forward in mission and ministry with confidence!

For 2019, the Stewardship Committee planned and carried out the annual campaign which began on Sunday, September 29 and formally concluded on Sunday, November 24 which we designated "Thanksgiving Sunday" in recognition of the many pledges we received from our faithful parishioners. Members of the Stewardship Committee include Dawn Carter, Florence Ellen Cowden, Jane Martin, Watson Barnes, and Bill Bivins. Assisting the committee were Cookie Cantwell and Chris Hamby. The committee chose the stewardship campaign theme, "Forward in Faith: A Time of Transition, A Time for Recommitment". This theme was chosen to emphasize the importance of stewardship in providing commitments of time, talent, and financial resources so that the parish can continue its mission and ministry during this time of transition. But the theme also emphasizes stewardship as an important part of our personal faith journey.

Our goal this year was to secure pledges from every parishioner or family, no matter the amount, so that we could have 100% participation in this important effort in support of the parish. At Sunday services during the month of October, stewardship homilies were delivered by our clergy and by guest clergy Jim Hanisian, and by Reid Murchison who presented three very thoughtful and inspiring sermons. We were also blessed to have stewardship messages in *The Grapevine* on the Sundays from September 29 to November 17 from parishioners Brenda Wolff, Coleman Burgess, Betsy McDonald, John Murchison, Jane Rippy, Sheila Osann, and Florence Ellen Cowden. Their stories and their inspirational words were very meaningful and much appreciated. Follow-up activities will include sending thank-you notes to those who have sent in their pledges, and further reminders to those parishioners who have not yet sent in their pledges.

If you have not yet sent in your pledge, it is not too late—we need everyone's participation. The Stewardship Committee would like to thank the clergy, staff, and parishioners who helped us with this campaign, with special thanks to the parishioners who have so generously contributed this year to the mission and ministry of this great parish.

REPORTING THE RESULTS

YEAR-END GIVING STRATEGIES

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS APPEAL

- Your members are being asked for year-end gifts elsewhere – make your ask!
- Consider funding specific needs (feeding program, home-bound parishioner support, snow removal, etc.).

APPRECIATED STOCK

- Stocks are up 30% since March and gifting them to charity can help donors avoid capital gains taxes.

CARES ACT TAX DEDUCTIONS

- The 2020 CARES Act incentivizes charitable giving by increasing tax deductions for itemizers to 100% of AGI for charitable donations (usually 60%).
- Even non-itemizing households can claim a \$300 deduction for 2020.



DISCUSSION: WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

What worked particularly well this year?

What would you do differently next year?

What did you struggle with most this year?

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