



20 Practices for Growing Stewards in your Congregation

	Stewardship Practices	Reflections	Resources and Activities
1	Make a commitment to grow generous givers as a faith response to God and the congregation's overall ministry. Recognize generous gifts of time, talents and treasure.	<i>How do your members practice being good stewards? How do your members share their stewardship stories? What impact does this have on other members?</i>	Form a Stewardship Team or Task Group. Read the book <i>Generous People</i> by Eugene Grimm or <i>Ask, Thank, Tell</i> by Charles Lane. Both are available from Augsburg Fortress.
2	Define a clear congregational vision , mission and purpose that includes a visible role for stewardship ministry.	<i>How is stewardship reflected in the congregation's vision, mission and values statements? How do you tell others?</i>	Take a look at <i>Discerning Your Congregation's Future</i> by Oswald and Freidrich from Alban Institute. Talk about attitudes toward stewardship in your congregation.
3	Teach good stewardship as a faith practice that helps others discover the joy of generous living and giving in Jesus Christ.	<i>What stewardship practices guide your living and giving? How do you explain the difference between financial stewardship and fundraising?</i>	Use 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 to teach about principles of good stewardship. Refer to the ELCA guidelines on commercialism and fundraising at www.elca.org .
4	Foster a regular prayer life as a spiritual discipline that connects faith and generosity.	<i>Stewardship is a spiritual matter, not a financial matter. How have you found this to be true? How have others in your congregation found this to be true?</i>	Refer to monthly <i>Prayer Ventures</i> in the Action Packet, then develop specific prayers for your congregation.
5	Encourage the practice of firstfruits and proportionate giving by members and the congregation.	<i>What portion do you return to God? What portion do others your congregation return? How does your congregation model first fruits and proportionate giving?</i>	Use a proportionate giving chart as part of your annual response process. Grow Mission Support 1% per year.
6	Invite members to practice 10 - 10 - 80 .	<i>10% to God, 10% to savings, 80% to live on. Where are you?</i>	Look at the website www.10-10-80.com . Introduce this practice to youth and others.
7	Share an increasing percentage of congregational income with ministries beyond your congregation.	<i>Congregations with an outward focus to their giving usually have a stronger ministry. How have you found this to be true?</i>	Use <i>Making Christ Known</i> magazine. Consider the StewardShop "A Story to Tell."
8	Strengthen personal relationships with others by sharing faith stories and the joy of Christ.	<i>What have you learned from the faith stories of others? Invite others to share their faith stories through writing, song and art.</i>	Refer to the Stewardship Assessment Tool, "Stewardship Stories" provided at www.elca.org .
9	Identify, explore and nurture the spiritual gifts of others to help them fulfill their calling and passions.	<i>What are the assets of your congregation? How can you build on these and not just the tasks that need to be done?</i>	Refer to <i>Discovering the Gifts of the People</i> provided at www.elca.org .
10	Develop an "asset-based" climate , using the assets of people rather than focusing on needs.	<i>How does your congregation see the glass? Is it half full or half empty? What factors influence your perspective?</i>	Read books <i>The Great Permission</i> and <i>The Power of Asset Mapping</i> available from Augsburg Fortress.
11	Provide a multitude of service opportunities to people of every generation.	<i>How has your congregation moved from Time & Talent to Volunteer Ministry to Gifts-based Ministry? How does your congregation teach whole life stewardship?</i>	Look for opportunities to serve on a Ministry Team or as a Community Volunteer, Mission Interpreter or Mission Partner.
12	Develop a year-round approach to stewardship that includes lifestyle, earthkeeping, planning, education and giving.	<i>How does your congregation live this by example? How does your congregation celebrate what God has created?</i>	Go to www.elca.org and look at "Stewardship Resources." Develop a year-round stewardship calendar.
13	Separate the annual financial response from the budgeting process.	<i>How does your congregation separate the invitation to respond from the annual budgeting process? Look at the possibilities.</i>	Read "Stewardship is about money, but it is not ONLY about money" from <i>Step by Step</i> at www.elca.org .
14	Develop a program budget in addition to a line item budget. Present both to the congregation.	<i>How does your congregation highlight ministries and not the operating costs of building or staff?</i>	Refer to "Learn the Value of a Program Budget" in <i>Step by Step</i> (page 20) at www.elca.org .
15	Engage in an annual financial response for commitments, pledges or an estimate of giving.	<i>Every congregation should be familiar with at least three response methods and rotate. What has been most effective for you? Why?</i>	Read <i>How to Improve Financial Stewardship</i> . Look at response methods and ideas at www.elca.org/resources/stewardship .
16	Ask boldly for tithes, offerings, bequests, commitments and participation.	<i>How are you personally inviting members to make a commitment? How do you recognize the different motivations of donors?</i>	Consider offering the StewardShops "Asking Words," "Asking for Contributions" and "Thanking Six Times."
17	Provide quarterly reports to people thanking them for their giving and informing them about congregation income.	<i>How often do you say thanks? What ways do you thank others for their generosity? How can this be done more effectively?</i>	Provide a written statement of year-end giving with a cover letter highlighting ministries touching others.
18	Provide regular opportunities for special offerings and Second Mile Giving.	<i>How often do you have special offerings? What ministries do your members feel called to support? Why these?</i>	Select at least four opportunities during the year: Global Mission, World Hunger, Campus Ministry and others.
19	Encourage individuals and families to write a will or living trust as part of a Legacy Plan .	<i>How do you encourage Legacy planning? How often do you invite people to review their plan?</i>	Contact the ELCA Foundation at www.elca.org . Consider offering two workshops each year.
20	Establish a mission endowment fund with a specific purpose and educate people about it.	<i>What special ministries does your congregation want to make happen inside and beyond your walls?</i>	Start an Endowment fund. Invite people to be Willing Witnesses. Contact the ELCA Foundation at www.elca.org .

For more information on stewardship, please call 800-638-3522.