



Steward Tips

Central/Southern Illinois Synod

October 2016

Part of our stewardship ministry is to assist individuals and congregations with the development of financial strategies that will help them to be good stewards of the resources that God has given them. This issue of “Steward Tips” focuses on growing stewards in your congregation, stewardship practices for you to consider, and Frequently Asked Questions about Mission Support.

20 Practices for Growing Stewards in Our Congregation



A free downloadable resource entitled “20 Practices for Growing Stewards in our Congregation” includes twenty statements to rate your congregation’s stewardship practices is available at www.ELCA.org/resources

Statements include such things as:

- ♦ We commit to growing generous givers of time, talent and treasure as a faith response to God
- ♦ Our vision and mission include a visible role for stewardship ministry
- ♦ We teach the faith practice of the joy of generous living and giving in Jesus Christ
- ♦ We strengthen personal relationships with others by sharing faith stories and the joy of Christ
- ♦ We identify and nurture spiritual gifts to help people to fulfill their calling and passions
- ♦ We have a mission endowment fund with a specific purpose and we educate people about it

If your congregation were to focus on improving its’ stewardship ministry in 1-3 of the twenty practices a year, over a period of time, you would notice a significant increase in the effectiveness of congregational stewardship practices. Use this resource to identify specific stewardship practices to grow in your congregation.

Would You Consider...?

Sometimes congregations receive many requests for financial assistance...

- ♦ The church council at **St. Paul’s, Altamont** selects a different “Mission of the Month” and promotes that project as “the cause” for that month. As a result, the congregation supports twelve different ministry projects over the course of a year.
- ♦ As **Grace, Springfield** celebrates its 175th anniversary, each month the congregation seeks to collect 175 items in support of a specific cause. In October, they are collecting 175 cans of vegetables and 175 cans of fruit for their food pantry. In November, they will collect 175 pairs of underwear and 175 pairs of socks for local school age children. Again, in December, they will collect 175 hats, 175 pairs of mittens and 175 scarves for local school children.
- ♦ **St. Paul, Peoria** has had a long history of providing support for global missionaries. Their “Missionary For a Day” project is one way in which they invite members to help support this effort. The congregation is invited to “honor, celebrate, or memorialize special people or events throughout the year” by giving a \$10 gift per person or date they choose to celebrate.



Frequently Asked Questions About Mission Support



What is "Mission Support"?

"Mission Support" are offerings congregations share with the synod and the ELCA churchwide organization as we carry out God's mission as partners. In the former days of the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America, mission support was known as the "District Fair Share" or "benevolence apportionment".

Who determines how much "mission support" is to be given by the congregation?

Prior to the formation of the ELCA, a specific formula based on budget needs and church membership was used to determine what each congregation "ought to give". However, since 1987, each congregation determines how it will share its offerings with the synod and the ELCA. Some congregations give a specific percentage of the current offerings they receive, e.g. 10-15%; while other congregations may give a specific dollar amount. It is the right and the privilege of each congregation to determine how generous they will be in sharing their mission support offerings.

How are mission support offerings used?

In the Central/Southern Illinois Synod, 44% of the mission support offerings received are used for synodical ministries, while 56% are forwarded to the ELCA for churchwide ministries. For example, if the synod receives \$1,000 as a mission support offering, \$440 is used for synodical ministries and \$560 is forwarded for ELCA ministries.

Synodical ministries include:

- ◆ Congregation and clergy services—assisting congregations and pastors with their ministry (congregational vacancies and pastoral mobility); staff salaries; continuing education; bishop's fund; scholarships and grants
- ◆ Agencies and institutions—Lutheran Social Services of Illinois; Augustana College and Carthage College; the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago; Wartburg Theological Seminary; Campus Ministry; Lutheran Outdoor Ministries; Illinois Conference of Churches; and Region 5 support
- ◆ Office administration—staff travel; operations; equipment; insurance; automobile; communication
- ◆ Program committees—Global Mission; Social Ministry, Justice & Advocacy; Professional and Lay Ministry; New & Renewing Congregations; Mission Support & Stewardship Education
- ◆ Synodical administration—synod assembly; synod council

ELCA ministries include:

- ◆ Domestic Mission—advocacy ministries; congregational centers for mission; ethnic specific and multi-cultural ministries; justice and poverty ministries; congregational renewal; new mission starts
- ◆ Global Mission—overseas missionaries; Young Adults in Global Mission; diakonia
- ◆ Mission Advancement—Living Lutheran (magazine); the ELCA Foundation; ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal
- ◆ Other ministries—Women of the ELCA; Lutheran Men in Mission; Lutheran Youth Organization; Augsburg Fortress; Portico Benefit Services; the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA

How can congregations support the mission of the Church through their mission support offerings?

- ◆ Congregations can approve their annual mission support intent at the annual congregational meeting.
- ◆ Congregational treasurers can submit an annual Mission Support form to the synod office.
- ◆ Congregations can remit their mission support offerings to the synod office on a regular monthly basis.
- ◆ In addition to mission support offerings, congregations may also remit other offerings designated for specific purposes, e.g. ELCA World Hunger; Lutheran Disaster Relief; etc.

If you have any questions about offerings remitted to the synod office, please contact Glenna Senters, the synod bookkeeper, at (217) 753-7915 or by e-mail at Glenna.Senters@csis-elca.org

Thank you for your partnership in God's mission and for your generous support in sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Because of you, we are able to accomplish many GREAT things!