

Presbytery Center
192 Broad St. Bloomfield, NJ 07003-2606
973-429-2500 office • 973-429-2333 fax
www.newarkpresbytery.org • info@newarkpresbytery.org

August 1, 2011

TO: Newark Presbytery Teaching Elders
Congregation's Clerks of Session, Treasurers, and Ruling Elders
BY: Dr. Kevin Yoho, General Presbyter
RE: Whole Year—Whole-Life Stewardship Ideas

Dear Colleague,

I hope these resources on **Whole Year—Whole-Life Stewardship Ideas** are useful to you and your ministry. I am available to discuss these and other ministry funding resources with you and your session. Together, we can develop and nurture improved mission clarity and resources for our congregations. I welcome your comments and contribution to our learning together.

Sincerely,
Kevin

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Dr. Kevin Yoho,
General Presbyter
Newark Presbytery
192 Broad St., Bloomfield, NJ 07003
(973) 429 - 2500 (office)
(201) 207-1544 (iPhone)
kevin@newarkpresbytery.org
<http://www.newarkpresbytery.org>
<http://www.twitter.com/kevinyoho>



Year Round Stewardship The Annual Campaign

Stewardship is not a once-a-year church program or event. Christian Stewardship is a year-round focus on God's gifts and our response to those gracious gifts. Each edition of Stewardship is Discipleship will feature different emphasis on planning and implementing year round stewardship.



The Annual Campaign

In over 20 years of serving the local congregation I found that very few people will volunteer to lead the annual campaign or stewardship committee. There were a few years that I wanted to think that a couple of people were avoiding me because they knew I would ask them to lead the team. The annual campaign can be a significant and growing event of the life of the church but too many times this event is pushed to the last minute of the church calendar.

Donald Joiner (The Abington Guide to Funding Ministry) wrote, in the section The Annual Campaign, “There is a time in every church when the financial leaders approach the membership about funding the church’s ministry. In most churches, the decision of what to do and when to do it is postponed until the last minute. Somehow we don’t want to think about ‘doing’ a financial campaign. Maybe if we postpone the decision, it will take care of itself!”

Designing and implementing the annual commitment campaign takes time and often we short change the campaign but throwing things together at the last minute. Donald Joiner writes “ A campaign is not just a time to ‘fund the budget’, but a time to highlight the church’s purpose and vision, to project the church’s call for the future, and to celebrate the church’s response to ministry in the world.”

Types of Financial Stewardship Campaigns

There are many different types of Financial Campaigns and each has strengths and limitations. The Stewardship team or committee should review each type and chose the one that best fits their situation. The following list was developed by David Crittendon, associate for Stewardship, PCUSA.



Every-Member Visitation

*Strengths:*Materials are available; face-to-face discussions allow questions, answers, interaction; effective in allowing personal growth and acceptance; good starting point for stewardship education; updates membership roles; follow-up is usually included.**This is the most effective stewardship campaign.**

*Limitations:*requires lots of time, leadership and training; challenging to recruit enough visitors; follow up is difficult to complete; calls are interpreted as asking for money.

Small Group Meetings

Strengths: Allows for dialogue and discussion; organize members by areas, interests or availability; strengthens fellowship; creates high level of interest; allows personal input in program; provides setting for stewardship education.

Limitations: time consuming; needs telephone callers to set up and remind members; requires host/hostess training; requires careful organization; doesn't reach uncommitted; difficult for large congregations; negative voices can dominate; reaches only those who attend; requires follow up.

Sunday Worship

Strengths: places stewardship commitment in context of worship; emphasizes spiritual dimension of commitment; requires less time or training; low cost; can be combined with other approaches; single, focused presentation; requires little calling.

Limitations: may rise and fall on strength of sermon; offers no opportunity for dialogue; doesn't reach shut-ins, nonresidents, or uncommitted; reaches only those attending; requires much follow-up; offers minimal opportunity for involvement.

Direct Mail

Strengths: allows for creativity in writing; requires little time; includes all members; easy to manage; efficient use of effort; consistency in message; requires little leadership; non-confrontational; updates membership rolls.

Limitations: lacks face-to-face dialogue; materials must be top quality; ineffective if discontent is present in congregation; resembles secular appeals; requires efficient way to receive commitments; follow-up is difficult.

Congregational Dinner

Strengths: Can have several dinners to reach more members; requires less time; everyone hears same presentation; good use of audiovisuals; often low cost; strengthens fellowship; face-to-face contact; can distribute materials easily.

Limitations: doesn't reach shut-ins, nonresidents or uncommitted; large crowd can inhibit sharing; reaches only those in attendance; requires extensive follow-up.

Telephone Approach

Strengths: Requires less time; low cost; allows for questions, answers and interaction; easier to enlist callers than visitors.

Limitations: lacks face-to-face dialogue; materials being mailed must be top quality; often ineffective if discontent in the congregation; resembles secular appeals; requires efficient way to receive commitments; follow-up is difficult.

Consecration Day

Strength: requires little time or training; distribute materials easily; low cost; can be combined with other approaches; single-effective presentation; can use guest speaker; little calling; involves celebration.

Limitations: rise or fall on strength of speaker; no opportunity for dialogue; minimal involvement; doesn't reach shut-ins, nonresidents or uncommitted; reaches only those in attendance; may require follow-up; effective guest speakers are difficult to find.

Personal Delivery

Strengths: cuts down on travel time; little training; highlights confidentiality; involves large number of people; requires little time; fun- can stimulate creative, playful spirit; reaches uncommitted members.

Limitations: can encounter delays/breakdowns in delivery system; process can be more important than objective; difficult for shut-ins to participate; needs trained "trail bosses" or leaders; encourages little dialogue about work of church; includes no training for "riders"; little opportunity for stewardship education.

Share YOUR ideas online at www.newarkpresbytery.org in the Forums. Login and then look for **Whole Year – Whole-Life Stewardship Ideas**.