

Our Stewardship of God's Abundance

How to use these materials:

Please note: A Joint Statement on Our Stewardship of God's Abundance, the "Imagine" document, this sheet, and the DVD in web-friendly format are all available on the Minneapolis Area Synod website at: <http://www.mpls-synod.org/stewardship/jointstatement>

1. Show the DVD and share the Joint Statement and Imagine document at your congregational meetings. Entertain conversation about whether your mission support for 2011 fits with the invitation to be a generous congregation.
2. You can also show the DVD during worship (at announcement time, or as a Mission Moment, or as a launching point for preaching.)
3. Put a link to the DVD on your website.
4. Use the DVD and the supporting documents, along with two or three of the questions below for Council Meetings or Adult Education Classes or Forums or for devotions with other small groups in the church (choirs, circles, committees).
5. Show the DVD and discuss it and the supporting documents with your Stewardship Team.
6. Use the themes of the Joint Statement (our call to be generous and missional as the body of Christ in the world) as a Lenten series, involving your congregation in the discussion and creating outcomes. (A five session bible study guide, suitable for use during Lent or at another time during the year, will be available by January 20 at the URL above.)
7. Challenge the congregation to grow in at least one of the invitations (to be generous, missional, the body of Christ in the world) each year. Create outcomes for each invitation in your context.
8. Use the joint statement as a model for inviting your congregational members and friends into deepening stewardship.
 - Some examples: Invite members to discern how God is calling them to be generous by re-evaluating their current giving and consider switching to percent of their income vs. a dollar amount using a tithe or first fruits as a starting point.
 - Invite congregation members to be missional by including one local and one global mission in their designated benevolences and to put their commitment into service during the year.
 - Host an advocacy event for your members, partnering with an organization that can help you focus on a local, national or global justice issue. (e.g., Bread for the World, ISAIAH, Micah)
 - Create your own "imagine" document – What ministries could your congregation do if people shared at least 5% of their income with the church?

Possible questions for discussion:

1. Where does your joy intersect with the world's need? Where does your congregation's joy intersect with the world's need? Where does your joy intersect with the congregation's joy?
2. There are many different definitions of mission. What do you believe God's mission is for you? For your congregation?
3. What have you personally/your congregation given to in the past year that has given you great joy?
4. What outreach ministries are this congregation involved in that brings joy and comfort to the congregation and the community?
5. What local or global relationships does this congregation have that bring you great joy? If you can't name one, what would give you great joy?
6. Where does the ministry of this congregation intersect with the ministry of the ELCA?
7. What is your congregation involved in, that because we are part of the ELCA, we have a greater impact than you could have as an individual congregation?
8. Where do you see yourself/your congregation in the Joint Statement on Stewardship of God's Abundance?
9. What part can you play in bringing this statement to life? What part can your congregation play?