

An Annual Stewardship Response Program

How to Improve Financial Stewardship – Must be Mission-Driven

Prepare the People – Stewardship Education

Ask for Commitment – People must be urged to commit to weekly giving

Ask Annually

Organize a Response Program – Select Leaders; Schedule and Plan; Prepare Mission-Driven Education; Plan Response Period; Follow-up

POSSIBLE RESPONSE METHODS

METHOD	TIME-LINE	PHILOSOPHY	BENEFIT	RATE	CONSIDERATIONS	WORKS BEST
COMMITMENT AT WORSHIP	6 weeks	Offering is an act of worship; therefore worship is a natural setting for making a financial commitment	Easy to plan; most popular; occurs in natural rhythm; does not need special event (though meal could follow)	Average to above average	Good attendance at the Commitment Sunday worship is critical. Follow up immediately.	Any size congregation
MEMBER RELAY	10 weeks	Contacts the most members with minimal volunteer training and time commitment	Easy to plan; little time and training; every household involved	Better than average	Key is to prepare the congregation w/good education and publicity.	Within easy driving distance of each other
FELLOWSHIP MEAL	8 weeks	Offers the opportunity to combine fellowship with education and commitment. Integrates the financial commitment component into a comfortable, fellowship setting	We're good at doing meals; morale builder; comfortable setting; minimal time and training	Average	Attendance is critical. Publicity and prior education are the keys to success.	Small congregations and in those that have a tradition of meals
SMALL GROUPS	13 weeks	Rather than grouping members randomly, this method brings together small groups of members who have some connection with each other.	Informal, relaxed settings; promotes listening and sharing; opportunity for education and interpretation: fosters member bonding	Average to below average	Training of the small group leaders is critical and the key to success. May be staggered throughout year.	In congregations with an established small group ministry
MISSION FESTIVAL	8 to 10 weeks	The church – congregations, synods and the church-wide organization – must be accountable for the income it receives. Providing visual representations or presentations of the ministries supported by the congregation is a concrete way of being accountable	Allows for ministry interpretation; fellowship and celebration; congregational cohesiveness; involves lots of people; High correlation between giving and understanding where money goes	Average to above average	Planning and execution are critical. Requires lots of people and energy. Time and work are worth the commitment. Allows creativity to bloom.	Most congregations of any size
SPECIAL EVENT	12 weeks	Helps members think more deeply about stewardship as an approach to the life of the church and goes beyond the usual annual commitment process	Works well at beginning or end of stewardship events; energizes members; involves all ages; provides for in-depth education	Average	Requires many volunteers and much time. Response rate increases with the number involved.	Any size congregation
PERSONAL VISITS	10 weeks	People give to people, not institutions or budgets.	Open discussion; less follow-up; uncovers information	Much better than average	Requires volunteers and education. High return.	Congregations with 50-400 households