

**Metropolitan Chicago Synod, ELCA**  
**Stewardship Vision & Plan**  
*Passionately and Joyfully Sharing God's Gifts*

**Vision**

Called by the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit, we will inspire and equip congregations to nurture all people to passionately and joyfully share all their gifts throughout God's kingdom.

**Table of Contents**

Guiding Principles	Page 2
Goals and Outcomes	Page 2
Stewardship Strategies	Page 3
Growing Stewards (Education)	Pages 4, 5
Living Stewards (Lifestyle)	Page 6
Growing Leaders (Leadership Development)	Page 7
Using God's Gifts (Giftedness)	Page 8
Caring for Creation (Earthkeeping)	Page 9
Managing Money (Finances)	Pages 10, 11
Telling about God's work (Mission Interpretation)	Pages 12, 13
Responding to God's Gifts (Mission Support and Regular Giving)	Pages 14, 15

**Metropolitan Chicago Synod, ELCA**  
**Stewardship Vision & Plan**  
*Passionately and Joyfully Sharing God's Gifts*

**Vision**

Called by the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit, we will inspire and equip congregations to nurture all people to passionately and joyfully share all their gifts throughout God's kingdom.

**Guiding Principles**

- Everything belongs to God and is entrusted to us to be used collaboratively for the good of all creation. (Psalm 8:3-4, 6a)
- Through baptism God claims and calls us to lives of stewardship that transform us, our church and the world. (1Cor 4:1)
- God provides abundantly so we respond generously. (2Cor 9:8)
- God's grace sets us free from greed. (John 8:31-32)
- God's love sets us free to give fearlessly. (1 John 3:16-18)
- Faithful stewardship challenges us to be inclusive and nurturing, celebrating the gifts of all for the good of all. (1Cor 12)

**Goals and Outcomes**

- ▶ Establish and support an ongoing Stewardship and Mission Support Table.
- ▶ Develop a willingness and openness for everyone to talk regularly about personal stewardship.
- ▶ Study, teach and model biblically-based stewardship principles and practices.
- ▶ Network people, congregations and resources for God's work in the world.
- ▶ Grow new steward leaders in congregations and the synod.
- ▶ Develop and provide education and training resources.
- ▶ Attain growth in personal and congregational stewardship, including the giving of time, talents and financial resources.
- ▶ Live out a spiritual discipline toward and beyond tithing
- ▶ Double the number of tithers in each congregation.
- ▶ Increase the number of special and planned gifts within the congregation and synod.
- ▶ Identify, train and support a Mission Interpreter in each congregation.
- ▶ Expect all congregational pastors and steward leaders to attend a synodically sponsored stewardship event each year.
- ▶ Obtain 100% of parochial reports from congregations each year.
- ▶ Obtain annual Statement of Intent for Mission Support from each congregation.
- ▶ Increase ELCA Mission Support to 15% or more of congregational Current Operating Expenses, Debt Expenses and Mission Support.
- ▶ Sustain 55% or more Mission Support sharing with the ELCA.

## **Stewardship Strategies**

1. Practice individual and group prayer as a spiritual foundation for faithful stewardship.
2. Emphasize stewardship as a mark of discipleship and a spiritual discipline.
3. Model a life of faithful discipleship through healthy stewardship practices.
4. Actively use scripture to inspire conversations about stewardship.
5. Provide annual education and training opportunities for all ages, cultures, economic groups, races and stages of faith.
6. Use networks to connect and nurture relationships among people and congregations.
7. Use a cluster or group approach to events and activities.
8. Work with and through rostered and lay leaders to grow a healthy stewardship ministry in congregations.
9. Develop teams to implement this vision and plan based on passions, skills and availability of individuals.
10. Focus on God's abundance as evidenced through gifts and strengths of individuals, families and communities.
11. Develop methods of measurement and accountability for congregation and leader participation in stewardship education, training and events.
12. Emphasize first fruits and percentage growth giving.
13. Utilize the web and electronic media to teach, inform, connect and invite support for these stewardship efforts.
14. Utilize the synod assembly to increasingly engage people in stewardship awareness, education and participation.
15. Focus communication and education efforts on stewarding God's mission and work, while using budgets and spending plans as tools to do so.
16. Develop an annual mission support process that builds trust through open, honest and faithful conversation about mission, ministry and money.

# Metropolitan Chicago Synod, ELCA Stewardship Action Plans

## 1. Growing Stewards (Education)

### a. Goals

- ▶ Develop a willingness and openness to talk regularly about personal stewardship
- ▶ Study, teach and model biblically-based stewardship principles and practices.
- ▶ Develop and provide education and training resources.
- ▶ Live out a spiritual discipline toward and beyond tithing.

### b. Strategies

- Emphasize stewardship as a mark of discipleship and a spiritual discipline
- Model a life of faithful discipleship through healthy stewardship practices.
- Provide annual education and training opportunities for all ages, cultures, economic groups, races and stages of faith.
- Use networks to connect and nurture relationships among people and congregations.
- Use a cluster or group approach to events and activities.
- Work with and through rostered and lay leaders to grow a healthy stewardship ministry in congregations.
- Utilize the web and electronic media to teach, inform, connect and invite support for these stewardship efforts.

### c. Action Plan (12 – 18 months)

- 1) Ask pastors to self-identify needs
- 2) Ask congregations to self-identify needs
- 3) Facilitate groups and clusters to build relationships and share stories of faith; including informal, less traditional groups, and non-ELCA participation
- 4) Provide education and resources for First Call Theological Education
- 5) Provide education and resources for lay-leaders
- 6) Improve communications and establish networks of growing stewards and Congregations

### d. Guiding Principles

- Behavior is shaped by aptitude, motivation, attitude
- Increase aptitude by offering specific content aimed at different audiences
  - a) Consistent message
  - b) Biblically based
  - c) Variety of delivery mechanisms (skits, online, workshops)
- Provide motivation through exemplary stewardship leadership
  - a) Provide good role models
  - b) Develop generosity coaches
- Set and sustain a positive attitude towards stewardship
  - a) Communication campaigns
  - b) Reinforcing messaging

### e. Team Members

Jesus Martinez  
Tim Perlick

Kathy Young

**f. Action Steps**

1. Identify specific audience segments and learning needs
  - a. Pastors and seminarians
  - b. Lay Leaders
  - c. Congregation members
  - d. Seekers and new members
  - e. Young Adult
  - f. Children
2. Create message supporting guiding principles and goals
3. Develop high level content outline for each audience segment
4. Identify subject matter experts supporting content outline
5. Develop detailed content outline and content
6. Create learning activities aimed at specific audience segments
  - a. Skits and plays
  - b. Readings
  - c. Monthly or frequent quick lessons
7. Identify and deploy different delivery mechanisms
  - a. Online education
  - b. Blended education
  - c. Facilitated workshops
  - d. Bible studies and small groups
8. Offer multiple delivery channels for the same content and resources
  - a. Through the pastor
  - b. Direct to the audience
  - c.
9. Develop sustaining support structure for motivation
  - a. Inspirational leadership
  - b. Internet site
  - c. Messaging for rostered and lay leaders

**Metropolitan Chicago Synod, ELCA  
Stewardship Action Plans**

**2. Living Stewards (Lifestyle)**

**a. Goals**

- ▶ Study, teach and model biblically-based stewardship principles and practices.
- ▶ Develop and provide education and training resources.

**b. Strategies**

- Emphasize stewardship as a mark of discipleship and a spiritual discipline.
- Model a life of faithful discipleship through healthy stewardship practices.
- Use networks to connect and nurture relationships among people and congregations.
- Use a cluster or group approach to events and activities.
- Work with and through rostered and lay leaders to grow a healthy stewardship ministry in congregations.
- Utilize the web and electronic media to teach, inform, connect and invite support for these stewardship efforts.

**c. Action Plan (12 – 18 months)**

- 1) Introduce use of ELCA BOP wellness wheel to congregations
- 2) Introduce new stewardship resource: *Make It Simple* to congregations
- 3) Develop network of “resource” congregations already addressing topic

**d. Guiding Principles**

- Behavior is shaped by aptitude, motivation, attitude
- Increase aptitude by offering specific content aimed at different audiences
- Provide motivation through exemplary stewardship leadership

**e. Team Members**

Jesus Martinez  
Kathy Young

**f. Action Steps**

1. Explore ELCA BOP wellness wheel being used in congregations.
2. Explore new stewardship resource: *Make It Simple*.
3. Identify congregations who are already addressing this topic directly

**Metropolitan Chicago Synod, ELCA  
Stewardship Action Plans**

**3. Growing Leaders** (Leadership Development)

**a. Goals**

- ▶ Establish and support an ongoing Stewardship and Mission Support Table.
- ▶ Grow new leaders in congregations and the synod.
- ▶ Expect all congregational pastors and steward leaders to attend a synodically sponsored stewardship event each year.

**b. Strategies**

- Practice individual and group prayer as a spiritual foundation for faithful stewardship.
- Emphasize stewardship as a mark of discipleship and a spiritual discipline
- Model a life of faithful discipleship through healthy stewardship practices.
- Provide annual education and training opportunities for all ages, cultures, economic groups, races and stages of faith.
- Use networks to connect and nurture relationships among people and congregations.
- Use a cluster or group approach to events and activities.
- Work with and through rostered and lay leaders to grow a healthy stewardship ministry in congregations.
- Develop teams to implement this vision and plan based on passions, skills and availability of individuals.
- Develop methods of measurement and accountability for congregation and leader participation in stewardship education, training and events.

**c. Action Plan (12 – 18 months)**

- 1) Identify and train at least 12 Guest Leaders for Consecration Sunday in fall of 2009.

**d. Guiding Principles**

- Faithful stewardship challenges us to be inclusive and nurturing, celebrating the gifts of all for the good of all.

**e. Team Members**

Gene Meyers  
Tim Perlick

**f. Action Steps**

1. Identify at least one steward leader contact in each congregation.
2. Provide personal invitations to rostered leaders and steward leaders to attend at least two stewardship events in 2009.
3. Conduct two Consecration Sunday Guest Leader training sessions.
4. Develop a quarterly stewardship newsletter for steward leaders.

## **Metropolitan Chicago Synod, ELCA Stewardship Action Plans**

### **4. Using God's Gifts (Giftedness)**

#### **a. Goals**

- ▶ Develop a willingness and openness to talk regularly about personal stewardship
- ▶ Network people, congregations and resources for God's work in the world.
- ▶ Attain growth in personal and congregational stewardship, including the giving of time, talents and financial resources.

#### **b. Strategies**

- Practice individual and group prayer as a spiritual foundation for faithful stewardship.
- Emphasize stewardship as a mark of discipleship and a spiritual discipline.
- Model a life of faithful discipleship through healthy stewardship practices.
- Provide annual education and training opportunities for all ages, cultures, economic groups, races and stages of faith.
- Use networks to connect and nurture relationships among people and congregations.
- Use a cluster or group approach to events and activities.
- Develop teams to implement this vision and plan based on passions, skills and availability of individuals.

#### **c. Action Plan (12 – 18 months)**

- 1) Conduct at least one training event on effective approaches to Time & Talent in 2009.
- 2) Conduct at least one training event on effective approaches to gifts-based ministry in 2009.

#### **d. Guiding Principles**

- Faithful stewardship challenges us to be inclusive and nurturing, celebrating the gifts of all for the good of all.

#### **e. Team Members**

Melody Eastman

#### **f. Action Steps**

1. Identify congregations in synod who are currently using effective tools.
2. Explore available approaches to Time & Talent and gifts-based ministry, and provide comparative summary.
3. Offer two events to share information and provide training.

**Metropolitan Chicago Synod, ELCA  
Stewardship Action Plans**

**5. Caring for Creation (Earthkeeping)**

**a. Goals**

- ▶ People willing and open to talk about personal stewardship of creation.
- ▶ Create stewardship networks; people and congregations coming together to leverage resources for God's work in the world.
- ▶ All congregations would become Green congregations.

**b. Strategies**

- Model a life of faithful discipleship through healthy stewardship practices.
- Provide annual education and training opportunities for all ages, cultures, economic groups, races and stages of faith.
- Use networks to connect and nurture relationships among people and congregations.
- Use a cluster or group approach to events and activities.
- Develop teams to implement this vision and plan based on passions, skills and availability of individuals.

**c. Action Plan (12 – 18 months)**

- 1) Conduct at least one information/training event on Earthkeeping.
- 2) Establish initial network of Green congregations to support those in process.

**d. Guiding Principles**

- Everything belongs to God and is entrusted to us to be used collaboratively for the good of all creation.
- Through baptism God claims and calls us to lives of stewardship, to live in partnership with all creation that transforms us, our church and the world.

**e. Team Members**

Dick Schlake  
Joe Schultz

**f. Action Steps**

1. Identify congregations currently doing activities in earthkeeping or caring for creation.
2. Invite congregations to share their experiences and challenges in developing this ministry within a congregation.
3. Identify resources and websites that are helpful to congregations that reflect a sustainable (creation centered) lifestyle.
4. Design an event that would benefit both practicing and non-practicing congregations.
5. Offer sermon starters and resources for a creation sermon series.

## **Metropolitan Chicago Synod, ELCA Stewardship Action Plans**

### **6. Managing Money (Finances)**

#### **a. Goals**

- ▶ Develop a willingness and openness to talk regularly about personal stewardship
- ▶ Attain growth in personal and congregational stewardship of financial resources.
- ▶ Live out a spiritual discipline toward and beyond tithing
- ▶ Double the number of tithers in each congregation.
- ▶ Increase the number of special and planned gifts within the congregations and synod.
- ▶ Network people, congregations and resources for God's work in the world.

#### **b. Strategies**

- Model a life of faithful discipleship through healthy stewardship practices.
- Provide annual education and training opportunities for financial management for all ages, cultures, economic groups, races and stages of faith.
- Use networks to connect and nurture relationships among people and congregations.
- Use a cluster or group approach to events and activities.
- Focus on God's abundance as present through gifts and strengths of individuals, families and communities.
- Emphasize first fruits and percentage growth giving.
- Focus communication and education efforts on stewarding God's mission and work, while using budgets and spending plans as tools to do so.
- Teach the principle of 10-10-80.

#### **c. Action Plan (12 – 18 months)**

- 1) Conduct at least one planned giving event in 2009.
- 2) Conduct at least one training event on household financial management
- 3) Conduct at least one workshop for congregations on developing a congregational spending plan.

#### **d. Guiding Principles**

- God provides abundantly so we respond generously.
- God's grace sets us free from greed.
- God's love sets us free to give fearlessly.

#### **e. Team Members**

Peter Hellstedt  
Nancy Snell  
Lanny Wilson  
Hector Garfias-Toledo

**f. Action Steps**

1. Define key audiences for resources and training. (i.e., business administrators, treasurers, pastors, finance leaders, etc.)
2. Meet with ELCA Foundation and develop specific activities for congregation endowments and planned giving.
3. Identify approaches to household financial management and describe options to congregations.
4. Evaluate and improve current resources on developing a congregational spending plan.
5. Evaluate current approaches on tithing including Tither's Table and Try-a-Tithe Sunday.
6. Design and conduct events that would benefit both practicing and non-practicing congregations.

**Metropolitan Chicago Synod, ELCA  
Stewardship Action Plans**

**7. Telling about God's Work** (Mission Interpretation Ministry)

**a. Goals**

- ▶ Weekly share the story of how we, the ELCA, are doing mission in our congregations, our synod, our nation, and our world.
- ▶ Network people, congregations, synod ministry partners, ELCA and other resources for God's work in the world.
- ▶ Grow new leaders in congregations and the synod.

**b. Strategies**

- Identify, train and support a Mission Interpreter in each congregation.
- Provide annual education and training opportunities for all ages, cultures, economic groups, races and stages of faith.
- Use networks to connect and nurture relationships among people and congregations.
- Use a cluster or group approach to events and activities.
- Utilize the web and electronic media to teach, inform, connect and invite support for these stewardship efforts.
- Utilize the synod assembly to increasingly engage people in stewardship awareness, education and participation.
- Focus communication and education efforts on stewarding God's mission and work, while using narrative budgeting and spending plans as tools to do so.

**c. Action Plan (12 – 18 months)**

- 1) Form a sub-table to oversee and coordinate Mission Interpretation Ministry.
- 2) Develop and conduct at least two training events for Mission Interpreters in 2009.

**d. Guiding Principles**

- Everything belongs to God and is entrusted to us to be used collaboratively for the good of all creation.
- Through baptism God claims and calls us as stewards to lives that transform us, our church and the world.

**e. Team Members**

Mary Anderson  
Jeff Drake

Mark Larson  
Dawn Mass

**f. Action Steps**

1. Identify individuals to attend Mission Interpreter Coordinator training.
2. Identify potential people for a Mission Interpreter Table.
3. Provide orientation and training for table participants.
4. Recruit at least one MI in each conference.
5. Conduct two training events for Mission Interpreters.
6. Produce a Mission Interpreter brochure.
7. Distribute brochure and letter from the bishop to congregations.
8. Prepare a calendar of monthly focuses.
9. Recruit and train a team to prepare webpage, temple talks, sermon starters, etc.
10. Present Mission Interpreters plan at Dean's meeting.
11. Present Mission Interpreters at synod conference meetings.
12. Survey synod congregations and ministry partners to learn about local mission and ascertain interest in being in relationship and developing networks.

## **Metropolitan Chicago Synod, ELCA Stewardship Action Plans**

### **8. Respond to God's Gifts (Mission Support and Regular Giving)**

#### **a. Goals**

- ▶ Obtain 100% of parochial reports from congregations each year.
- ▶ Obtain annual Statement of Intent for Mission Support from each congregation.
- ▶ Increase undesignated Mission Support for synod and churchwide ministries to 15% or more of congregational total budget (Current Operating Expenses, Debt Expenses and Mission Support).
- ▶ Sustain 55% or more Mission Support sharing with the ELCA.

#### **b. Strategies**

- Model a life of faithful discipleship through healthy stewardship practices.
- Use networks to connect and nurture relationships among people and congregations.
- Use a cluster or group approach to events and activities.
- Focus on God's abundance as present through gifts and strengths of individuals, families and communities.
- Emphasize first fruits and percentage growth giving.
- Utilize the web and electronic media to teach, inform, connect and invite support for these stewardship efforts.
- Utilize the synod assembly to increasingly engage people in stewardship awareness, education and participation.
- Focus communication and education efforts on stewarding God's mission and work, while using budgets and spending plans as tools to do so.
- Develop an annual mission support process that builds trust through open, honest, and faithful conversation about mission, ministry and money.

#### **c. Action Plan (12 – 18 months)**

- 1) Conduct year-round congregational "Thank you and Discussion Gatherings" and congregation council "Thank you and Discussion Visits".
- 2) Increase Statement of Intent responses to 90% of congregations.
- 3) Increase Parochial Report responses to 90% of congregations.

#### **d. Guiding Principles**

- Everything belongs to God and is entrusted to us to be used collaboratively for the good of all creation.
- Through baptism God claims and calls us to lives of stewardship that transform us, our church and the world.

#### **e. Team Members**

Steve Homberg  
Bishop Wayne Miller  
Keith Mundy

**f. Action Steps**

1. Evaluate history of parochial report submission and make adjustments to improve response rate.
2. Evaluate history of Statement of Intent practices and make adjustments to improve response.
3. Review annual “consultation” process and develop a year-round process to thank, to challenge, and to listen to congregational leaders.
4. Review recommended practices to grow Mission Support and determine those most helpful for implementation in this synod.

SLH 4/25/09