

## STRENGTHENING CONGREGATIONAL STEWARDSHIP – THE BASICS

### MODEL IN THE CONGREGATION WHAT YOU WANT MEMBERS TO PRACTICE

- An attitude of gratitude – We are blessed by God, express that in worship, meetings, newsletters, etc. find ways to give thanks
- An attitude of sufficiency – God will give us enough for our needs AND to share with others (II Cor 8) Good stewardship is based on our faith in that promise from God and that faith is practiced by what and how we communicate about finances.
- First Fruits Giving – we want members to give first to God and to be confident they will still have enough for themselves. The congregation models this by giving first to Partnership Support, with confidence there will be enough for our ministry.
- Proportional giving that strives for Tithing and beyond. We encourage members to give proportionately – in accordance with what they have. We should model that and work to give at least 10% in Partnership support.
- Intentional Giving – we encourage members to make a commitment – for their sake, so that they can express their intent to God and plan within their budget to meet that commitment as they do for other commitments – mortgage/rent; food; car; insurance, etc. So our congregation makes a commitment for its Partnership support and for other benevolent giving.
- Regular giving – we encourage members to give weekly or monthly, knowing that is how we fulfill most of our budgeted expenses. Methods like Simply Giving, or an automatic bank payment are increasingly used. So the congregation should give its proportional share of Partnership support each month.

### DEVELOP A CONGREGATIONAL PLAN THAT LIFTS UP A CULTURE OF GOOD STEWARDSHIP

- Recruit a team that includes people who exhibit best practices of stewardship (see above)
- Include people in various areas of stewardship (time/talent; stewardship of the earth; financial management)
- Don't try to do it all at once – a culture of good stewardship will require 5-10 years of intentional planning/practice and a lifetime of reinforcement. Going step by step and trying a few things a year will be more productive.
- Include education – both for your team and for the congregation – go to workshops/events; read some good books; bring in local resources.
- Goals and specific plans to accomplish them are critical to accomplishing what you want.
- Stewardship involves many other areas of congregational life – work together with Education leaders, Worship team members, Outreach teams, and others to help them understand how stewardship is part of what they do and how they can be more intentional about best practices.