

STEPPING IN FAITH

NEW JERSEY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

LOCAL CHURCH ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN

horizons
STEWARDSHIP

OVERVIEW

GENERAL INFORMATION:

1. The *Stepping in Faith* stewardship program asks people in your church to take a spiritual journey in generosity out of a sense of gratitude in response to God's goodness and blessings in their lives.
2. *Stepping in Faith* teaches stewardship based on people's need to give generously to the work of God **NOT** to the church's need to fund a budget.
3. *Stepping in Faith* invites each person to ask the question, "What is God calling me to do?" as a response to God's goodness and grace. In the end, this is a spiritual growth experience **NOT** a fundraising effort.
4. *Stepping in Faith* teaches intentional generosity by encouraging percentage giving and the movement to tithing or even beyond tithing. We ask for an intentional and appropriate faith commitment empowered by God's grace and offered as an act of worship rather than an act of duty.
5. By asking people to complete Estimate of Giving Cards during a worship service, *Stepping in Faith* models the idea that giving and generosity is part of our worship of God, **NOT** a fundraising procedure.
6. *Stepping in Faith* conducts the stewardship emphasis separately from the budget building process for the upcoming year. No reference to raising funds for the church's annual budget will be made.
7. *Stepping in Faith* inspires renewal of faith resulting in significant progress in the spiritual journeys of the people in your church.
8. The greatest message that will be heard on *Stepping in Faith* Sunday is the response of the people to God's leading in their personal finances. Persons indicating they are not ready to complete an Estimate of Giving Card will be encouraged to continue to pray for God's leading, and the church leaders will continue to pray for and walk alongside those still in discernment.

KEYS TO SUCCESS:

- Use of the Giving Path to encourage people as they prayerfully consider taking the next step in faith
 - The Beginning Giver:** From not giving to beginning to give
 - The Intentional Giver:** From no plan for giving to an intentional plan to give
 - The Growing Giver:** From one percentage to an increased percentage, moving towards a tithe (10% of income)
 - Tither:** Begin to give a tithe (10% of income)
 - Extravagant Giver:** Giving beyond a tithe (more than 10% of income)
- Encouraging people to engage in a personal and prayerful spiritual journey to seek God's leading in the use of the financial resources that they have been entrusted with.
- Use of devotional guide. Bishop Robert Schnase's Practicing Extravagant Generosity has been particularly effective.
- A clear and consistent message presented during worship and small groups.
- Use measurable financial descriptions of giving, such as percentage giving and tithing. Eliminate all vague language such as "give what you can" or "give a little bit more."
- Don't limit God by using language such as "take one step." Encourage people to take the steps God leads them to take based on prayer.
- Use an Estimate of Giving Card **NOT** Pledge or Commitment Card.
- Ask for 100% percentage, people can respond without a number and indicate, "I will continue to pray for my church and my response to God."
- Plan for an effective follow-up process for collecting responses from people who did not turn in a card on *Stepping in Faith* Sunday.
- Do not use the word budget! Focus instead on ministries, mission and changed lives.
- Leaders must be willing to lead and publically share their next step and their spiritual intentional response to God's call in their life.

Task Lists and Dates

DATE: ASAP

1. Establish the date for *Stepping in Faith* Sunday.

- *Stepping in Faith* Sunday is the culmination of the 4-week sermon series and the day *Stepping in Faith* cards are received.
- Establishing this date drives all the other dates. When choosing this date you must consider: the pastor's personal calendar, the church calendar and the local school calendars.

Date of *Stepping in Faith* Sunday _____ (example-November 19)

2. Review, Assign, Recruit Your Leadership Team Positions

- Emphasize the importance of getting the right people on this team. This may be the people already on your generosity team.
- Discuss and identify by name the ideal candidates for each of the following positions.

CHAIRPERSON(S)

- Oversee all activities of the program.
- Present (or designate someone to present) *Stepping in Faith* chart one week before *Stepping in Faith* Sunday in worship.
- Work with the pastor to formulate presentation(s) to the congregation.

_____ (Names)

ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR

- Coordinate all mailings for the program.
- Oversee all administrative tasks and responsibilities.

_____ (Names)

COMMUNICATION TEAM LEADER

- Coordinate design and production of all promotional material to build interest and anticipation for *Stepping in Faith* Sunday.

_____ (Names)

SMALL GROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS TEAM LEADER

- Coordinate *Stepping in Faith* announcements for small groups, Sunday school classes and other small groups like choir, service groups, etc., in three weeks leading up to *Stepping in Faith* Sunday.
- Assemble and train (along with pastor) volunteers to make announcements and brief presentations.

_____ (Names)

PRAYER TEAM LEADER

- Coordinate all prayer emphasis activities for the program.
- Coordinate distribution of a devotional guide.

_____ (Names)

FINANCIAL RESULTS COORDINATOR

- Business Administrator (or Financial Secretary) will make arrangements for input and tally of estimate of giving from *Stepping in Faith* Sunday, so the preliminary total of the estimate of giving can be announced the following Sunday and letters can be sent to those families who were not in attendance and/or did not turn in an Estimate of Giving Card.

_____ (Names)

STUDENT AND CHILDREN’S TEAM LEADER (OPTIONAL)

- Coordinate stewardship program activities.
- Involve students and children in meaningful ways -- don't use as free labor.
- Use this as an opportunity to teach giving, generosity, tithing **NOT** an opportunity for fund raising

_____ (Names)

3. **Order the appropriate number of Robert Schnase books** for both the leadership team and one per church household. (Have a team member with Amazon Prime order the books.) Distribute to leadership team ASAP.

Next Steps to be completed prior to your next leadership meeting

- Have all small groups and leaders identified.
- Review all communication materials and determine the print and mail schedule.
- Determine how and when you will distribute the devotionals.

DATE: Leadership Meeting 1 _____ (Last week of August)

1. Carefully review the General Information and Keys to Success. Discuss.
2. Ask for comments about the Schnase devotional book Practicing Extravagant Generosity.
3. Review the status of all print materials.
4. Review listing of small groups and their leader.
5. Begin considering names for people to share their *Stepping in Faith* story.
6. Review the following calendar and checklist.
7. Prepare for the upcoming training with Scott McKenzie on _____.

Selecting people for sharing their *Stepping in Faith* story for Sunday 1,2,3,4.

Diversity of age, gender, marital status and longevity in congregation

They are telling their story of giving as a response to God's grace and love. They are encouraged to talk about their gratitude for how their life has been touched and changed because of God and the church. How are they planning on taking the next step in faith, be as specific as possible and encourage others to join.

Consider using video—you can edit!

Ask for a script or at least talking points.

No more than 5-7 minutes.

Based on a November 19 *Stepping in Faith* Sunday here are your calendar dates and tasks. If you need to move this date, adjust the following dates accordingly.

TBA

Attend training session with Scott McKenzie for small group training and training for the main worship presentation by Pastor and chairs.

Week of October 8

Conduct the small group leader training.

Sundays, October 15 and 22

Distribute Schnase devotional guide.

Begin program publicity using bulletins, emails, newsletters, Facebook etc. Sample provided.

Sunday # 1, October 29

Begin the small group announcements and announcement in worship. Explain the Giving Path and use The Invitation (edit for your church culture). Samples all provided.

- Have devotionals available again, encourage them to use devotional.
- Tell them they will receive a letter and a brochure, hold them up.
- Have someone tell their *Stepping in Faith* Story.

Monday, October 30

Mail letter #1 with brochure and prayer guide (prayer guide if applicable). Sample provided.

Sunday # 2, November 5

Continue small group announcements. In worship use the Giving Path and focus on being intentionally generous with percentage giving and have another giving story.

Sunday # 3, November 12

The Chairperson uses the step chart of members' giving in worship services. A copy of the chart should be placed in each worship bulletin. The stair-steps side of the chart should not have the figures from your church on the sheet. Full sample announcement provided.

Scott will go over this in the next training.

The Pastor (or guest preacher) continues the sermon series on Christian stewardship, with an emphasis on intentional generosity and percentage giving (the need for a decision to start somewhere, whether one, three, five or seven percent) -- not as a legalistic rule, but as a response to God's love for us.

Stepping in Faith giving story

Pastor should weave their giving story into the message.

Monday, November 13

Mail letter # 2. Sample provided. Include a sample card and the actual filled out step chart.

Sunday # 4, November 19 *Stepping in Faith* Sunday

Pastor leads the commitment service at the close of worship. The rest of the service should be abbreviated to allow for prayerful reflection as people fill out their cards. Step Up Chart will again be used. This chart will include the printed number. Chairperson will again go over the chart. You may again choose to have a *Stepping in Faith* witness.

Scott will give additional instructions at the next training event.

Monday, November 20

Begin to tally the Estimate of Giving Cards and be prepared to do more immediately following next Sunday's service.

Mail letter # 3 (sample provided) to people who did not turn in an Estimate of Giving Card. Include an addressed return envelope and another card.

Sunday # 5, November 26

Announce preliminary results.

Have Estimate of Giving Cards in the pews or chairs and invite them to be filled out during worship. Encourage 100% participation, even if no dollar amount but a note, *I will pray for the church.*

Monday, November 27

Mail personalized thank you letter, letter # 4. Sample provided.

Sunday # 6, December 3

Announce the ***Stepping in Faith*** results.

PRINT SCHEDULE

Item	Quantity Guideline		Quantity Needed	Date Needed	Date to Printer	Final Copy	Rough Draft
Letter #1 (Letterhead/envelopes)	A.						
<i>Stepping in Faith</i> Brochure	A.						
Prayer emphasis materials	A.						
Step Chart without numbers for worship bulletins the Sunday before SiF Sunday	B.						
Letter #2 (Letterhead/envelopes)	A.						
Step Chart with numbers for letter #2	A.						
Step Chart with numbers for worship bulletins on SiF Sunday	B.						
Estimate of Giving Cards for SIF Sunday	B.						
Letter #3 (Letterhead/envelopes)	A. X 60% (Estimated)						
Estimate of Giving Cards for Letter #3	A. X 60% (Estimated)						
Estimate of Giving Cards for response encouragement Sunday	B.						
Letter #4 (Letterhead/envelopes)	A. X 60% (Estimated)						
Letter #5 (Letterhead/envelopes)	A. X 30% (Estimated)						
Estimate of Giving Cards for Letter #5	A. X 30% (Estimated)						

For reference:

A. Number of households on church mailing list: _____

B. Number of worship bulletins printed weekly: _____

COMMUNICATION TEAM LEADER DETAILS

TEAM PURPOSE

Your role is to coordinate the communication process with the church regarding the stewardship program. Your responsibilities include all print material, electronic and social media and the use of video.

□ **A checklist of print items is provided for you on the previous page.**

Please visit the Online Client Resources available on the Horizons Stewardship website.

- There is a folder titled *Taking the Next Step Campaign Resources* with examples of print materials.
- To access these resources, go to www.horizons.net
Click on resources and then client login and enter
user name: **client**
password: **horizons92712**
- Please note that the samples are provided to offer ideas for the design for your church's stewardship program materials. The information in the sample materials, while useful in helping you and your team create the narrative for your particular stewardship program, will be **different** than the unique message created for your stewardship program.
- A trusted resource for stewardship program graphic design and cost effective printing can be found at www.catalystfaithworks.com. Costs for design and printing are available on the Horizons client resource page. Often, the cost of the graphic design can be offset by print cost savings versus printing locally.
- Outsourcing the graphic design for your logo and part/all of your stewardship program print material can be especially helpful if your design timeframes are short.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND:

- Every church will not employ all the communication techniques described in the following pages.
- Your church will create the best communication plan through collaboration of the Pastor, Chairperson, and the Communication Team.
- You have a number of deadlines that are absolutely essential.
- We must share information on multiple occasions and in a variety of ways.
- Pictures of people actively engaged in various ministries of the church will be useful in brochures, the church website and in videos. Consider collecting quotes connected to the impact of your project.
- Use your **website** as much as possible. Consider a link to stewardship program information. Also, if your church actively uses **Facebook** or **Twitter**, you will want to plug in.

- Enlist a team to assist you in areas such as copy layout and design, printing, photography, video editing and web design. You may want to immediately enlist an individual or team who will be solely responsible for the video.
- Choosing your printer is a very important task. Fees vary widely in printing and you may find one who will give the church favorable pricing. Be sure and review with him/her what he/she will be doing and what YOUR deadlines are. It is vital that each piece go out on time.

DEVELOP STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM LOGO

- **Develop the stewardship program logo** with the Pastor and Chairperson. The name of the stewardship program will be ***Stepping in Faith***.

DEVELOP THE BROCHURE AND PRAYER REMINDER

- **Develop the *Stepping in Faith* Brochure.**
 - This will be the first printed piece produced.
 - Often the Pastor writes the central message and you write the remainder.
 - This will be the first piece seen by the congregation. It will share purpose of the stewardship program.
- **Develop the Prayer Reminder.**
 - A low cost visual reminder of the stewardship program prayer is often mailed to each household with the *Stepping in Faith* Brochure. It may also be handed out in church, typically over three weeks.
 - Options include prayer tents, window clings, door hangers, magnets, etc., with the stewardship program logo and prayer.
- **Develop a plan to share the small group announcement with church members and regular attenders that were absent or do not participate in a small group** (Sunday school, small group, etc.).

VIDEO IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- **Develop a video implementation plan.**
 - A video is a highly effective means to communicate with the church.
 - It provides a means of communicating with the church, when played in worship (about 30% of members present on any Sunday) and then emailed to each email address (both spouses and youth members).
 - Examples are located on the Horizons client resource webpage. .
- **Consider developing testimony videos.**
 - Two to three-minute life change and stewardship testimonials are frequently used for the testimonies.
 - These videos will generally share:
 - ❖ passion for the purpose of this stewardship program.
 - ❖ the process by which the person is determining their level of commitment.
 - ❖ sharing what will be different personally (sacrifice) because of this commitment.
 - These testimony videos can also be used for people to share compelling stories about the transformation that will occur because of a successful stewardship program.

- Use people of all ages, income levels and length of time with the church.
- In churches with long-tenured members, consider interviewing as many as possible of your older active, faithful members. Let them talk about what this church has meant to them over the years. This footage can be saved in the church's archives for future use.

BEGIN DEVELOPMENT OF PRINT PIECES OUTLINED IN THE PRINT SCHEDULE (in addition to the *Stepping in Faith* Brochure and Prayer Reminder)

Develop print pieces.

- Letterhead with envelopes.
- Prayer Reminder.
- *Stepping in Faith* Brochure.
- Step Chart without numbers.
- Step Chart with numbers.
- Estimate of Giving Card.
- Devotional Guide (optional).
- Sermon Guides (optional).

STEPPING IN FAITH
STATISTICAL REPORT OF RESULTS

 (NAME OF CHURCH)

- _____ # increase
- _____ # stay the same
- _____ # decrease
- _____ Total # of commitments last year
- _____ Total # of estimates of giving this year
- _____ # of commitments on Commitment Sunday last year
- _____ # of estimates of giving on *Stepping in Faith* Sunday this year
- _____ \$ amount on Commitment Sunday last year
- _____ \$ amount on *Stepping in Faith* Sunday this year
- _____ Total \$ amount committed last year
- _____ Total \$ amount committed this year
- _____ Total \$ % increase over last year's commitments
- _____ # of new/first time estimates of giving, _____% of total
- _____ # of giving units in _____ (previous year)

Based on last year's giving records, we believe we can expect \$ _____ from households who have established giving patterns but have not turned in an Estimate of Giving Card yet. (Optional: If the weekly amount of loose plate offerings is significant, you might include that also.)

Please email a copy of this report to:

LETTER #1

Mail to: All members, regular attendees and friends of the church

Date: (DATE) (three weeks before *Stepping in Faith* Sunday)

Dear (NAME),

(Date for *Stepping in Faith* Sunday), will be *Stepping in Faith* Sunday for our *Stepping in Faith* stewardship emphasis at (NAME OF CHURCH). We urge you to plan now to be in church that day.

This will be a biblical, spiritual, inspirational program designed to enrich our understanding of Christian stewardship. The program is not built on the need of the church to fund a budget, but on the need of each person to contribute proportionately as a part of his or her own spiritual maturity and commitment to Christ. Sometimes, we have measured too much of our success on whether or not we could underwrite a particular budget. For this year and for years to come, we will measure success by how much the people of (NAME OF CHURCH) are willing to take the next step in their giving. Instead of strictly emphasizing commitments to the budget, we are asking each person to consider a personal, proportional commitment to the ministries of our church. This biblical approach to stewardship is an effective means of making progress in our spiritual journeys.

We believe that you, as part of the (NAME OF CHURCH) Family, are concerned enough to make every effort to come to church on *Stepping in Faith* Sunday to make your response. It will be a special time together! We look forward to seeing you there.

Grace and peace,

_____, Chairperson
Stepping in Faith stewardship program

Optional -- use where applicable

The process of commitment will be somewhat different than from previous years. We will not be mailing Estimate of Giving Cards to members in advance of *Stepping in Faith* Sunday. Instead, we will have the cards available in the service that day. Those who are not in attendance will have opportunities to respond during the two weeks thereafter.

LETTER #2

Mailed to: All members, regular attendees and friends of the church
Date: (DATE) (one week before *Stepping in Faith* Sunday)

Dear (NAME),

In our previous communications, we have mentioned that this Sunday, (DATE) is *Stepping in Faith* Sunday. Our hope is that everyone will make it a priority to be in church on this Sunday. Our goal is to have substantially all of our church households present.

We are asking all the members and regular attendees of our church to be prepared to respond this Sunday in worship. We will have a simple, easy to understand card for your response. A sample of the Estimate of Giving Card has appeared in our church newsletter the past two weeks to assist you in preparing to make your response. Our hope is that most, if not all, of our people will make their commitment to God's work at (NAME OF CHURCH) this Sunday. Those who are not in attendance will have opportunities to respond during the two weeks thereafter.

{This is an optional step. Our experience indicates this is helpful for people who were not in a worship service the previous Sunday.}

Included with this letter is a copy of a step chart that was explained in our worship services last Sunday. Please take a few moments to review it. The front of the chart is a snapshot of our giving as a church. The reverse side is a giving grid designed to help you make your decisions about how large a step you are willing to take in your stewardship of God's financial blessings on your life. I hope you will choose to step out.

The success of our church's ability to minister next year depends on your initiative and dedication. The extent of our ministry in the name of Christ depends on the willingness of each of us to do our part. We are asking each individual to make whatever sacrifices are necessary in order to be present on Sunday, (DATE).

Your servant in Christ,

Pastor

To the Pastor: This is a sample letter. Personalize it with your own words.

LETTER #3

Mailed to: All persons who did not attend *Stepping in Faith* Sunday services and those who attended the services but decided not to complete an Estimate of Giving Card.

Date: (DATE) (Monday after *Stepping in Faith* Sunday)

Dear Christian Friends:

Stepping in Faith Sunday was great! I was blessed that so many were able to be in church that day.

Our hope is that we can end our stewardship program the same way it started - - strong and orderly. We are encouraging all of the members of (NAME OF CHURCH) to help us bring the program to a prompt conclusion by turning in their Estimate of Giving Cards over the next two weeks -- before Friday, (DATE). We will announce the results of the stewardship program during the worship services on Sunday, (DATE).

At this point, there are three ways you can turn in your Estimate of Giving Card:

- You may place it in the offering plate this Sunday, (DATE) or on the following Sunday, (DATE).
- You may mail it to the church in the privacy envelope.
- You may drop it off at the church office during the week.

Choose the manner most convenient for you. Know that every response counts -- regardless of amount -- and every person makes a difference!

Thank you for your enthusiastic participation in *Stepping in Faith*. It is an honor and a privilege to serve as the Chairperson. I have been blessed beyond anything I could have imagined.

See you in worship this Sunday!

_____, Chairperson

Stepping in Faith stewardship program

(Note: The Estimate of Giving Card enclosed with this letter should have a label with the names and addresses on it. Typically, this will increase the return rate.)

LETTER #4

Mailed to: All persons who completed an Estimate of Giving Card.

Date: (DATE) (the week after announcing results of *Stepping in Faith* Sunday)

Mail a personalized “Thank You” letter to each individual or family who filled out an Estimate of Giving Card. The letter may or may not confirm the exact dollar amount of their commitment. If there will be giving amounts on the letter, exercise caution as to whose signature is on the letter.

Dear (NAME) ,

This has been a wonderful season of remembering and celebrating the work God has done at (NAME OF CHURCH) . What a grand celebration we shared when we dedicated ourselves and our gifts toward the investment for ministry in this year.

Thank you for participating in the *Stepping in Faith* stewardship program. There were many generous commitments made and everyone is appreciated. Because of your commitment, our program has been a wonderful success. We will now be able to proceed with full funding of our ministry priorities for this year.

As of the writing of this letter, we have received estimates of giving of \$. As thankful as I am for these responses, I am even more encouraged by the stories that have been shared with me about how God is working in your lives.

Though I have been privileged to see the list of who is participating in giving, it is only our financial secretary that has the specifics of the gifts. I have asked them to add a confirmation to this letter, acknowledging and confirming your estimate of giving in order to ensure that our records match yours.

Thank you for becoming involved in this important milestone in the life of our church. If at any time I can be of service to you, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Your co-laborer in Christ,

_____, Chairperson
Stepping in Faith stewardship program

INTRODUCTORY ARTICLE

(Newsletter or Other Media)

Stepping in Faith is the title for this year's stewardship program for the 2017 ministry support of (NAME OF CHURCH). It is an expression of what we believe should happen when God's people are asked to respond in a biblical manner to the ministry opportunities of the church.

In years past, we have prepared a budget and then asked the congregation to subscribe it. This year, we are changing the order. We are asking the church to respond with commitments and then the Finance Committee will prepare a budget, or spending plan, for those commitments. This approach takes the focus off the need of the church to receive funds and puts it where it rightly should be according to the Bible. The focus should be on the need of the giver to give.

When presented with this plan, the leadership of our church responded enthusiastically, and we hope you will too. It is a change, but we believe it is a healthy change. In fact, it is a natural expansion of what we have done for the past few years, and we plan to continue this approach in the future. For too long, we have been tempted to place too much emphasis on success based on whether we subscribed our budget. Success is better measured when God's people are given a chance to grow and respond in faith to do so. Transformation is the key.

How much do you need to give? That's between you and God. Prayer should be the focus as you seek the answer to this question. There are people in our church that can only grow one or two steps and there are others that can grow much more than that. But don't lose focus. It's not how someone else will respond or what the church needs you to do. The issue is what you need to do in the stewardship of what God has blessed you with -- to make an offering that would be pleasing and acceptable to Him. It is an exciting time in the life of (NAME OF CHURCH). Will you take the next step in faith with us?

STEPPING IN FAITH SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTIONS

What is being asked of you?

- **Introduce *Stepping in Faith in Generosity*** on (DATE) and (DATE) for Sunday school classes or the closest two weeks for small groups meeting weekly. If your assigned group meets less than weekly, please make the presentation at your next gathering.
- **Provide those present with the *Stepping in Faith Brochure* before each presentation.** Even though persons will receive a copy of the brochure in the mail, please hand out another copy to persons so they have it in front of them when you speak.
- **Week 1: Use the *Stepping in Faith Talking Points*.** Don't read the brochure or the talking points aloud to your group. Rather, familiarize yourself with the brochure and the talking points and summarize the information. You can use the brochure main points as your guide.
- **Week 2: Introduce the Giving Path.** Include with week one if your small group meeting schedule does not allow an opportunity for discussing twice before *Stepping in Faith Sunday*.
- **Encourage a short discussion (as time permits).** During each presentation, plan in advance several questions you might use as conversation starters about the material. For example:
 1. How do you feel about the statement that stewardship/generosity is primarily a spiritual issue rather than a financial one?
 2. Why do you think Jesus talked about our relationship to money and possessions so often?
 3. Why do you think the decision to become an Intentional Giver is so difficult for many of us?
- **Answer questions:** If you don't know the answer to the question, you can say "That is a great question, and I will need to speak with (NAME) to get you an answer." If time is short, offer to answer questions after the group concludes.
- **Encourage the use of the Devotional Guide:** Encourage everyone to participate in the corporate reading of the devotional guide being distributed by your Prayer Team. Be sure and provide details as to how they can acquire a copy.

STEPPING IN FAITH SMALL GROUP TALKING POINTS

What will persons experience during *Stepping in Faith* in Generosity?

- Teaching on stewardship from the basis of the need of the giver to give for his or her own spiritual benefit rather than for the benefit of the church.
- No reference to raising the church's budget (fundraising for the church) will be made. *Stepping in Faith* focuses on the question, "What is God calling me to do?" rather than on the question, "What does the church need in order to pay its bills?" Thus, the annual stewardship emphasis becomes a spiritual growth experience not a fundraising effort.
- A focus on tithing and percentage giving, not as a duty, but as an appropriate faith commitment for which God's grace empowers us.
- Persons will complete their Estimate of Giving Cards during our worship service on (DATE) , modeling the idea that stewardship is part of our worship of God rather than a fundraising procedure. Persons not in attendance will have cards mailed to them the following day.
- The greatest message that will be heard on *Stepping in Faith* Sunday is the response of the people to God's leading. There will be no arm-twisting. Persons that are indicating they are not ready to complete an Estimate of Giving Card will be encouraged to continue to pray for God's leading, and the church leaders will continue to pray for and walk alongside those still in discernment.

THE GIVING PATH

The Giving Path runs parallel to a Christian's spiritual journey. Progress along the Giving Path often reflects progress in a Christian's spiritual journey and vice versa. They are inseparable tracks. When we take a step along the Giving Path, we are moving forward in our spiritual journey. Jesus said that where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

In the *Stepping in Faith* stewardship program, church members will be encouraged to take the next step in faith or steps along the Giving Path with an increase in the percentage of their income that they will give to God through their church. These steps will create progress in the members' spiritual journey.

Steps Along the Giving Path:

First-Time Giver: Begin to give.

Intentional Giver: Planning, in advance, what percentage of income to give each year.

Growing Giver: Increasing the percentage of income toward a tithe.

Tither: Begin to give a tithe (10% of income).

Extravagant Giver: Give beyond the tithe, called an offering (10%+ of income).

THE INVITATION

The title of this stewardship program is *Stepping in Faith*. This title forms the basis of a simple invitation to all church attendees and members. The invitation is “Will you take the next step in your giving and in your faith?”

Every person is invited to respond freely, out of their own unique choice, to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. That initial choice of choosing Christ is really the beginning of many choices that a Christian will make in their lifetime. The choices are theirs, not someone else’s choice for them. To answer or not to answer the invitation of “Will you take the next step in faith” is a choice and both are clear, powerful answers. Choosing to begin to give or to increase personal giving is a choice to further align us with Jesus’s example of abundant living.

The choices that people make in answering the invitation of “Will you take the next step in your giving and in your faith” are uniquely personal. Our prayer and our work as a church is to cultivate an environment where the influence that moves someone is solely that of the Holy Spirit through prayer, Bible study and worship. It is solely your choice to accept or reject the invitation to the Gospel of biblical generosity. It too is your opportunity to move forward in faith.

The next step in giving is always before us. Progress in our spiritual journey is not when we stand still, become sidetracked or move backward. Progress is made one step at a time in a certain direction. These steps are often not huge steps, though they can be. Normally they are regular steps, consistent steps, steps with purpose and momentum that carry us forward to the next point in our journey. The next step in giving is always significant because it leads us closer to being like Jesus, the ultimate giver.

“Will you take the next step in your giving and in your faith?”

SCRIPTURE ON GIVING AND STEWARDSHIP

Genesis 1:26-28

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." [27] So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. [28] God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Genesis 14:17-20

After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). [18] Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, [19] and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. [20] And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand." Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

Deuteronomy 14:22-23

Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year. [23] Eat the tithe of your grain, new wine and oil, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks in the presence of the LORD your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name, so that you may learn to revere the LORD your God always.

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

When you have entered the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance and have taken possession of it and settled in it, [2] take some of the first fruits of all that you produce from the soil of the land the LORD your God is giving you and put them in a basket. Then go to the place the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his Name [3] and say to the priest in office at the time, "I declare today to the LORD your God that I have come to the land the LORD swore to our forefathers to give us." [4] The priest shall take the basket from your hands and set it down in front of the altar of the LORD your God. [5] Then you shall declare before the LORD your God: "My father was a wandering Aramean, and he went down into Egypt with a few people and lived there and became a great nation, powerful and numerous. [6] But the Egyptians mistreated us and made us suffer, putting us to hard labor. [7] Then we cried out to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our voice and saw our misery, toil and oppression. [8] So the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror and with miraculous signs and wonders. [9] He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey; [10] and now I bring the first fruits of the soil that you, O LORD, have given me." Place the basket before the LORD your God and bow down before him. [11]

And you and the Levites and the aliens among you shall rejoice in all the good things the LORD your God has given to you and your household.

Malachi 3:8-12

“Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, ‘How do we rob you?’ In tithes and offerings. [9] You are under a curse--the whole nation of you--because you are robbing me. [10] Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. [11] I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit,” says the LORD Almighty. [12] “Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,” says the LORD Almighty.

Matthew 23:23

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices--mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law--justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.”

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. [2] On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

2 Corinthians 8:1-7

And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. [2] Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. [3] For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, [4] they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. [5] And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will. [6] So we urged Titus, since he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. [7] But just as you excel in everything--in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us--see that you also excel in this grace of giving.



A BREAKDOWN OF
OUR CONGREGATION'S
ANNUAL GIVING PATTERNS



WHERE DOES
YOUR CONTRIBUTION
FALL ON THIS CHART

(Monthly /Annual Giving)

*Each of you must give
as you have made up your mind,
not reluctantly or under compulsion,
for God loves a cheerful giver.*

|| Corinthians 9:7 NRSV

Sample Church – Personal Plan for Generosity Growth –

Below is a table calculating suggested percentage of monthly giving options based on Annual Income.

Annual Income	MONTHLY GIVING														
	1%	2%	3%	4%	5%	6%	7%	8%	9%	10%	12%	15%			
\$10,000	\$8	\$17	\$25	\$33	\$42	\$50	\$58	\$67	\$75	\$83	\$100	\$125			
\$20,000	\$17	\$33	\$50	\$67	\$83	\$100	\$117	\$133	\$150	\$167	\$200	\$250			
\$30,000	\$25	\$50	\$75	\$100	\$125	\$150	\$175	\$200	\$225	\$250	\$300	\$375			
\$40,000	\$33	\$67	\$100	\$133	\$167	\$200	\$233	\$267	\$300	\$333	\$400	\$500			
\$50,000	\$42	\$83	\$125	\$167	\$208	\$250	\$292	\$333	\$375	\$417	\$500	\$625			
\$60,000	\$50	\$100	\$150	\$200	\$250	\$300	\$350	\$400	\$450	\$500	\$600	\$750			
\$70,000	\$58	\$117	\$175	\$233	\$292	\$350	\$408	\$467	\$525	\$585	\$700	\$875			
\$80,000	\$67	\$133	\$200	\$267	\$333	\$400	\$467	\$533	\$600	\$667	\$800	\$1,000			
\$90,000	\$75	\$150	\$225	\$300	\$375	\$450	\$525	\$600	\$675	\$750	\$900	\$1,125			
\$100,000	\$83	\$167	\$250	\$333	\$417	\$500	\$583	\$677	\$750	\$833	\$1,000	\$1,250			
\$110,000	\$92	\$183	\$275	\$367	\$458	\$550	\$642	\$733	\$825	\$917	\$1,100	\$1,375			
\$120,000	\$100	\$200	\$300	\$400	\$500	\$600	\$700	\$800	\$900	\$1,000	\$1,200	\$1,500			
\$130,000	\$108	\$217	\$325	\$433	\$542	\$650	\$758	\$866	\$975	\$1,083	\$1,300	\$1,625			
\$140,000	\$117	\$233	\$350	\$467	\$583	\$700	\$817	\$933	\$1,050	\$1,167	\$1,400	\$1,750			
\$150,000	\$125	\$250	\$375	\$500	\$625	\$750	\$875	\$1,000	\$1,125	\$1,250	\$1,500	\$1,875			
\$175,000	\$146	\$292	\$438	\$583	\$729	\$875	\$1,021	\$1,167	\$1,313	\$1,458	\$1,750	\$2,188			
\$200,000	\$167	\$333	\$500	\$667	\$833	\$1,000	\$1,167	\$1,333	\$1,500	\$1,667	\$2,000	\$2,500			
\$250,000	\$208	\$417	\$625	\$833	\$1,042	\$1,250	\$1,458	\$1,667	\$1,875	\$1,083	\$2,500	\$3,125			
\$300,000	\$250	\$500	\$750	\$1,000	\$1,250	\$1,500	\$1,750	\$2,000	\$2,250	\$2,500	\$3,000	\$3,750			

1. Find out where your current level of giving is on the chart (the intersection of your Annual Income row and Monthly Giving column).
2. Move to the right to determine how many steps you are willing to take on your personal giving path.



Please return this card
with your name printed,
even if you do not provide
a designated amount.

2017 ESTIMATE OF GIVING

Yes, I will pray for the ministry of sample church.

I estimate I will grow in my giving as follows:

My commitment is \$ _____ per week month year ...for an annual total of \$ _____

Name (please print): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone(s): _____ Email: _____

- I/We currently have our pledge drafted. Please continue to do so.
- Draft my bank account (Please complete back of card).

I understand this estimate of giving may be revised or canceled at any time at my request.



Thank You for your commitment to the mission and ministry of sample church.



Sample Church

Street | City, State | Church Office: xxx-xxx-xxx | www.samplechurch.org

AUTHORIZATION FOR DIRECT PAYMENT

I authorize and direct you to transfer \$ _____ each month beginning _____

from my account at _____ of sample church.

The account name is: _____. A voided check is attached.

Please circle the day of the month you would like your account drafted: **10th** **20th** **30th**

This authorization will remain in effect until you notify us by giving 15 days written notice.

Print Name

Signature