

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.

