

Stewardship 2007-08

1. Worship Plans-Sermons that will include stewardship ideas or points.

September 9 Worship Theme-Getting in Shape God's Way

Scripture Jeremiah 18: 1-11, Psalm 139: 1-6, 13-18, Luke 14: 25-33
Commitment to the ways of God which includes stewardship

September 23 Worship Theme-The Search is On!

Scripture Psalm 14, I Timothy 1: 12-17, Luke 15: 1-10
Stewardship and evangelism will be involved

September 30 Worship Theme-Getting Rich, God's Way

Scripture Jeremiah 32: 1-3a, 6-15, I Timothy 6: 6-19, Luke 16: 19-31
Do our riches own us or do we own them? Does God then own us and our riches.

October 7 Worship Theme-World Missions and Peace-guest preacher

Giving to missions will be part of this.

October 14 Worship Theme-Making the Best of Things

Scripture Jeremiah 29: 1. 4-7, 2 Timothy 2: 8-15, Luke 17: 11-19
Being thankful what God has given us and how we respond in thanksgiving.

October 21 Reformation and Memorial Sunday Worship Theme Pouring It Out for the Lord

Scripture Joel 2: 23-32, 2 Timothy 4: 6-8, 16-18, Luke 18: 9-14
Remembering those who gave memorials and their lives to Christ.

November 4 Worship Theme-Communion-Who Controls your Life and Money?

Scripture Habakkuk 1: 1-4, 2: 1-4, 2 Thessalonians 1-4, 11-12, Luke 19: 1-10
We need to trust God in the midst of evil days. A church that grows despite challenges to it. Tax collector Zaccheaus comes down out of the tree and is changed by Jesus

November 11 Worship Theme-Great Expectations-dedication of pledges

Scripture Haggi 1: 15b-2: 9, 2 Thessalonians 2: 1-5, 13-17, Luke 20: 27-38
What does God expect of us and we expect of God. Give out of thanksgiving

2. Minutes for Mission - from the different ministries to very briefly explain what they do and how money, volunteers and prayers help us. Sample invitation:

Dear Fellow Church Officers,

As part of our stewardship presentations this fall, I am asking the following from each session ministry, from the deacons and PW.

Please prepare a minute for mission for the following Sundays. Please prepare carefully to speak for only 1 minute. We will have other minutes for mission going on, so we must not take much time.

Below is an idea on how to share the minute.

I am _____ and I serve on the _____ Ministry or PW or deacons

In this ministry of our church we do the following: very briefly list what the ministry does.

End with: We are thankful for the tithes, prayers, time and energy you gave to support this ministry in 2007. With your increased help we hope to do even more ministry in Christ's name in 2008.

These are the Sundays I think will work best for each group. Each ministry may select who the speaker will be. Please let me know who this person is.

Christian Education-September 23

New Life-September 30

Missions-October 7

Worship and Music-October 14

Building and Grounds-October 21

Personnel-October 28

Finance-November 4

PW November 18

Deacons November 25, or December 2 or 9

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Bob Garrard

3. Look at pledge card in finance in September
4. Collect budgets from Ministries in September
5. Places to publicize:
 - a. Minutes for Mission
 - b. Newsletter
 - c. Website
 - d. Posters/charts
 - e. Letters
 - f. Announcements in groups
 - g. Sermons
 - h. Where else?
6. Plan on receiving pledges on November 11 and doing a dedication of them.
7. Finance will follow up in early December with looking at what we have received, and to whom we must contact to remind them.
8. Talk with Greg Dyekman and Maurice Brown about Associate Pastor Fund
9. Re-publish materials on will and bequests
10. Vows of membership and meaning of meaning of membership
11. A theme?
12. A check or itemized list idea.
13. Creative Budget list
14. Pictures of activities as in the directory on posters
15. Testimonies of members

An idea of a letter from the Pastor to the session, deacons and newsletter- next two pages.

From the Pastor

Why I give to the mission of God in Jesus Christ.

All I have, my life, my family, my ministry with you, my belongings, my past, present and my future were given to me by God. God gave all these relationships and things to me so that I might lift up his name and spread the good news of Jesus Christ. All that I have and have been given is grace-the freely given gift of love from God.

In a grateful response to all of this life and support from God, I give of my time, talents, money, mostly to the church as Christ's body.

Time-I work more hours than the call requires because I want to help move the mission of this church forward. I want to help inspire others to enthusiastically join in the work we do for the glory of God. As much as I am able, I want to help others know that God loves them and cares for them. This often includes service outside the church. Sometimes people do not have much money to give, yet their valuable time shared in service to the Lord can be priceless.

Talents-What talents I have I want to use and improve so that I can help our church be more effective in ministry to our members, our community and our world. Most often, however, it is in my many weaknesses that God is strongest and brings in the talents of others to make church programs go well. I also see people sharing their talents by lovingly making things to donate or providing their skills in services, in lieu of money.

Money-My goal each year is to give the church at least 10% of my total income before taxes. Some years this can be a great challenge. Since I see the church as the body of Christ, I believe this money goes to God's work. If I can, I also give beyond the 10% to other causes that do the work of God outside the church.

Having 90% of my income to take care of other aspects of life is a gift from God. Even in these other areas I try to be a good steward. Such giving requires careful

budgeting. Giving in this manner does not earn me any righteousness before God or others. It is just a joyful response to what God in Jesus Christ has done for me.

How does the Bible guide my giving?

The following verses are just a few that inspire my giving. They are offered to challenge your thinking on the subject.

John 3: 16-17. “16 **For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son**, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. 17 Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

II Corinthians 9:6-7. The Apostle Paul makes a plea to the Corinthian Church to give generously to the home church in Jerusalem.

“6 The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, **for God loves a cheerful giver.**”

Matthew 6: 19-21. One of Jesus’ teachings about living rightly before God.

“19 Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. **21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**”

Matthew 25:34-36. In the last judgment, Christ, the King, separates those who have done God’s will from those who have not.

34 Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; **35 for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.**’

The Tithe-There are many verses on the tithe to God and God’s mission. The tithe may include cash, treasures, livestock, fruits, vegetables, grain, wine, oil, and sacrificial meals. It could include time, too. The idea of a tithe being the first 10% is first found in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. This idea was common in the time of Jesus, too. However, a tithe can also be whatever a person is able to give back to God

The most challenging verses to me on giving to God’s mission work are found in Matthew 19: 16-22. 16 Then someone came to him and said, “Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?” 17 And he said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments.” 18 He said to him, “Which ones?” And Jesus said, “You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; 19 Honor your father and mother; also, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 20 The young man said to him, “I have kept all these; what do I still lack?” **21 Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.”** 22 When the young man heard this word, he went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

One more challenging quote is from outside the Bible, yet fits the Biblical teachings: a person whose name is unknown to me once wrote-“**Show me the last thing you will give up and I will show you your God.**”

A Season of Renewal

This is a good time of the year to review our membership in the First Presbyterian Church and renew the commitments we have made to God and each other. Please read these over and respond to them as God would have you do.

In our Vows of Membership we made the following commitments:

Trusting in the gracious mercy of God, do you turn from the ways of sin and renounce evil and its power in the world? **I do.**

Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Lord and Savior, trusting in his grace and love? **I do.**

Will you be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying his Word and showing his love? **I will, with God's help.**

Will you be a faithful member of this congregation, share in its worship and ministry through your prayers and gifts, your study and service, and so fulfill your calling to be a disciple of Jesus Christ? **I will, with God's help.**

Our Book of Order gives a good summary of what this membership means:

Membership as Ministry

A faithful member accepts Christ's call to be involved responsibly in the ministry of his Church. Such involvement includes:

- proclaiming the good news,
- taking part in the common life and worship of a particular church,
- praying and studying Scripture and the faith of the Christian Church,
- supporting the work of the church through the giving of money, time, and talents,
- participating in the governing responsibilities of the church,
- demonstrating a new quality of life within and through the church,
- responding to God's activity in the world through service to others,
- living responsibly in the personal, family, vocational, political, cultural, and social relationships of life,
- working in the world for peace, justice, freedom, and human fulfillment.

From the Book of Order G-5.0102a-i

A Church Stewardship Check List

1. Thanked God for my life and all God has given to me in Jesus Christ.
2. Renewed my vows of membership and acted on them.
3. Read the stewardship materials from the church.
4. Prayed about the time, talents and gifts to be given to the church.
5. Filled out and returned the pledge card to the church.

A Creative Approach to Budget Information

**Where does your monetary gift go
and
How is it used to help our church thrive and grow?**

Worship and Music-amount

Christian Education-

New Life-

Missions-

Deacons-

Comea House, Wyoming Coalition

Personnel-

Buildings and Grounds-

Administration-

Finance-

Archives-

Associate Pastor Search-

September 19, 2007

To Our Staff and Church Officers from Bob Garrard

Anxiety in a Time of Change

I realize that a lot has come at you in the last couple of months in response to the Congregational Survey and plans being proposed to help our church grow. I can see it in your faces, your eyes and in your concerns. I am overwhelmed, too, and have occasionally lost sleep in the anxiety of it all.

Please take a deep breath and realize with me that all of what we decide to do as a body of Christ does not have to be accomplished in one year. This is at least a five year process. As Officers and Staff, it is not all up to us to fulfill. We will need volunteers from the congregation to help us. Finding the volunteers will take time too. All this is even more reason to pray for God's wisdom, strength and patience.

When we gather on November 10th to further examine the survey and work on goals and objectives, please see this as a time out to catch our breath and try to get a handle on what we think we can do over the next couple of years. Let us ask, God to help us turn our anxiety into excitement and reason as God calmly works us through the process. Let us see that we are part of a large body of Christians working together for a God who wants to nurture us in every way, not drain the life out of us.

In the midst of the flurry of ideas and activity we are going through, God has reminded me of these verses from Colossians 3: 12-17. Let them help us take the time out to breath and calmly focus on what God wants us to be about now and in the future.

“12 As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. 13 Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

May The Grace and Peace of Christ Be With You!

To Each Officer and Staff Member of the Church from Bob Garrard. This letter is going into the October Newsletter. I hope you will take a few minutes to read it and find strength in it.

A Season of Renewal

This is a good time of the year to review our membership in the First Presbyterian Church and renew the commitments we have made to God and each other as members of Christ's body.

In our Vows of Membership we made the following commitments:

- **Trusting in the gracious mercy of God, do you turn from the ways of sin and renounce evil and its power in the world? I do.**
- **Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Lord and Savior, trusting in his grace and love? I do.**
- **Will you be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying his Word and showing his love? I will, with God's help.**
- **Will you be a faithful member of this congregation, share in its worship and ministry through your prayers and gifts, your study and service, and so fulfill your calling to be a disciple of Jesus Christ? I will, with God's help.**

**Our Book of Order gives a good summary of what this membership means:
Membership as Ministry**

A faithful member accepts Christ's call to be involved responsibly in the ministry of his Church. Such involvement includes:

- **proclaiming the good news,**
- **taking part in the common life and worship of a particular church,**
- **praying and studying Scripture and the faith of the Christian Church,**
- **supporting the work of the church through the giving of money, time, and talents,**
- **participating in the governing responsibilities of the church,**
- **demonstrating a new quality of life within and through the church,**
- **responding to God's activity in the world through service to others,**
- **living responsibly in the personal, family, vocational, political, cultural, and social relationships of life,**
- **working in the world for peace, justice, freedom, and human fulfillment.**

From the Book of Order G-5.0102a-i

This season of renewal is also a time to begin to pray about how we might share our time, talents and money in 2008 in response to what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. Our ministries have worked up budgets for 2008 based on programs we wish to continue and some exciting new ones we pray to add. We will have that information out to you soon.

With the approval of the Finance Ministry, I wanted to share with you this very personal two-part letter to stimulate your thinking about why we give to the Mission of God in Jesus Christ.

Why I Give to the Mission of God in Jesus Christ.

All I have, my life, my family, my ministry with you, my belongings, my past, present and my future were given to me by God. God gave all these relationships and things to me so that I might lift up his name and spread the good news of Jesus Christ. All that I have and have been given is grace-the freely given gift of love from God.

In a grateful response to all of this life and support from God, I give of my time, talents, money, mostly to the church as Christ's body.

Time-I work more hours than the call requires because I want to help move the mission of this church forward. I want to help inspire others to enthusiastically join in the work we do for the glory of God. As much as I am able, I want to help others know that God loves them and cares for them. This often includes service outside the church. Sometimes people do not have much money to give, yet their valuable time shared in service to the Lord can be priceless.

Talents-What talents I have I want to use and improve so that I can help our church be more effective in ministry to our members, our community and our world. Most often, however, it is in my many weaknesses that God is strongest and brings in the talents of others to make church programs go well. I also see people sharing their talents by lovingly making things to donate or providing their skills in services, in lieu of money.

Money-My goal each year is to give the church at least 10% of my total income before taxes. Some years this can be a great challenge. Since I see the church as the body of Christ, I believe this money goes to God's work. If I can, I also give beyond the 10% to other causes that do the work of God outside the church.

Having 90% of my income to take care of other aspects of life is a gift from God. Even in these other areas I try to be a good steward. Such giving requires careful budgeting. Giving in this manner does not earn me any righteousness before God or others. It is just a joyful response to what God in Jesus Christ has done for me.

How Does the Bible Guide My Giving?

The following verses are just a few that inspire my giving. They are offered to challenge your thinking on the subject.

John 3: 16-17. “16 **For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son**, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. 17 Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

II Corinthians 9:6-7. The Apostle Paul makes a plea to the Corinthian Church to give generously to the home church in Jerusalem.

“6 The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, **for God loves a cheerful giver.**”

Matthew 6: 19-21. One of Jesus’ teachings about living rightly before God.

“19 Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. **21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**”

Matthew 25:34-36. In the last judgment, Christ, the King, separates those who have done God’s will from those who have not.

34 Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; **35 for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.**’

The Tithe-There are many verses on the tithe to God and God’s mission. The tithe may include cash, treasures, livestock, fruits, vegetables, grain, wine, oil, and sacrificial meals. It could include time, too. The idea of a tithe being the first 10% is first found in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. This idea was common in the time of Jesus, too. However, a tithe can also be whatever a person is able to give back to God

The most challenging verses to me on giving to God’s mission work are found in Matthew 19: 16-22. 16 Then someone came to him and said, “Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?” 17 And he said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments.” 18 He said to him, “Which ones?” And Jesus said, “You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; 19 Honor your father and mother; also, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 20 The young man said to him, “I have kept all these; what do I still lack?” **21 Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.”** 22 When the young man heard this word, he went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

One more challenging quote is from outside the Bible, yet fits the Biblical teachings: a person whose name is unknown to me once wrote-“**Show me the last thing you will give up and I will show you your God.**”