

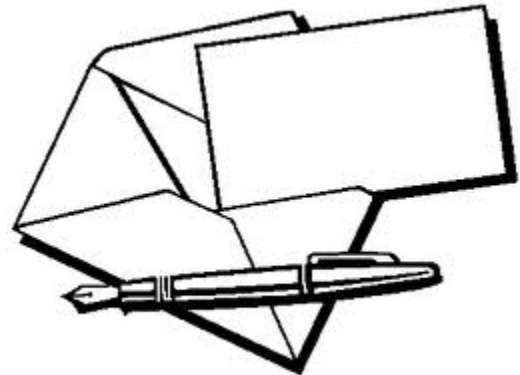
SURVEY RESULTS AND A BEST PRACTICE (“Mission Letter”)

by Dave Sonnenberg, Chair of Stewardship and Mission Table

Let me get to the point!

1) Below is the results of our Stewardship and Mission Survey from last fall.

2) The Stewardship and Mission Table wishes to lift up some **BEST PRACTICES** in the months to come. This month, we want to focus in on writing a Mission Letter that accompanies a giving update to your members.



ABOUT THE STEWARDSHIP AND MISSION SURVEY

In the fall of 2011, the Stewardship and Mission Table sent out an online survey to each Pastor of the synod; asking them to give us a glimpse of their congregations stewardship practices. Our Table felt that knowing some of the practices would show us how we can serve as a helpful resource.

We sent a lot of personal emails asking our partners in ministry to help with this cause. In my opinion, that extra personal “ask” helped us get so many responses. I want to say thanks to the 50 pastors who answered the survey- roughly $\frac{2}{3}$ of the synod’s churches.

*Thank
You*

Here’s the results:

(note- **Bold type indicates a best practice** we will be lifting up in future months)

1) Does your congregation prepare a **Narrative Budget**?

Yes- 40.4%

No- 59.6%

2) Do you ask your members to make a **financial pledge each year**?

Yes- 88%

No- 12%

3) If you ask for financial pledges, does everyone in the church get the same letter or do you send **different letters**?

Same Letter- 86.4%

Different Letter 13.6%

4) Do you send **Thank You Letters** if someone makes a pledge?

Yes- 52.2%

No- 47.8%

5) Does your congregation print the weekly giving and expenses in the worship bulletin?

Yes- 26%

No- 74%

6 & 7) Do you send “**individual giving updates**” to your church donors/members during the course of the year? If so, how often?

Monthly 4.2 % (2 churches)

Quarterly 66.1% (31 churches)

Bi-Annual 4.2% (9 churches)

Annual 4.2% (2 churches)

Never 6.4% (3 churches)

8) If you send an “individualized giving update” to your members during the year, do you send a **Mission Update Letter (ie- celebrating your ministry in some way)**

Yes- 27.7% (13 churches)

No- 72.3% (37 churches)

9) Does your congregation offer an **electronic giving** option?

Yes- 82% (41 churches)

No- 18% (9 churches)

THIS MONTH'S BEST PRACTICE- A Mission Letter with Giving Update

We feel that it is important to remind the individual giver how much they have contributed multiple times/year. Many of you already agree as 33 churches send at least a quarterly giving update (with 9 more sending a semi- annual update)

What we found was that many sent a giving statement to their donors listing the amount they have contributed but did not include other correspondence with it.

Here's what we'd like to suggest. **Send a well crafted, brief, one sided mission letter with your giving statement. (SAMPLE BELOW)**

- 1) Speak about your congregation's mission, how you are changing lives, or some ambitious goal that you are starting to tackle.
- 2) Be upbeat and hopeful but challenge people to grow in generosity.
- 3) Use pictures whenever you can as people are drawn to images.
- 4) *Ideally the person writing this should be the one who has the most influence over the mission of the congregation- THE PASTOR or Council President.* If you can, initial or sign all of these letters in blue ink. (The extra effort to show your members/donors you care is well worth the extra effort!)

****NOTE- If you need any assistance or would like an outside perspective on a draft you have written, please send a note to Pr. Dave Sonnenberg at (pastordave@goserve.net) or Pr. Phil Hirsch at (phirsch@metrodcclca.org) if you have any questions.***