

## STEWARDSHIP AND MISSION TABLE

Report for 2014 Synod Assembly

Pastor Chip tells the story of how, early in his ministry, a man named John (who was the chair of the church Elders) took him out to lunch. It wasn't a simple lunch but a rather fancy one. In the course of their conversation John revealed 3 things to Chip:

- 1) I have a desire to help poor and hurting people.
- 2) You are in contact with poor and hurting people daily.
- 3) I want you to be my eyes and ears and help them as God leads you.

John proceeded to take out his checkbook and write a \$5,000 check to be used to bless others in whatever way Chip saw fit. Every few months, John would invite Chip to lunch and Chip in turn would tell stories about people he'd been able to help because of his generosity—church members facing hard times, people who were behind in their bills, young folks getting started, ministries that needed a jump start, scholarships to summer camp, etc. Chip would spend lunch telling stories about people he'd been able to help. John would smile as he listened and with each story, he'd utter the words "praise God." And as the meal drew to a close, he would smile and say, **"Let's do it again!"** He'd pull out his checkbook and write another check and fill this fund for mission. Several times a year this cycle was repeated.

John understood that his life and all he had was a gift, a gift to be shared. Specifically, he wanted to share those blessings with the church that its mission would reach out would be enhanced, strengthened, and boosted. Chip discovered the importance not only of reaching out but also of sharing with others how their gifts were changing lives. And as a result of being a good steward and a good storyteller, John continued to be excited about giving over and over and over again. "Let's do it again!"

How wonderful it would be if we, as the congregations that make up the Metropolitan Washington DC Synod, would tell our story in such a way that inspires folks to ongoing generosity. Wouldn't we all love to have people give generously and then celebrate each time with those words – "let's do it again."? If that is to happen, it won't be accidental. We truly need to be better storytellers of how generous giving is changing lives by our church's ministry. That's something we talk about as part of the Stewardship and Mission Table.

As a reminder--The Purpose of the Stewardship and Mission Table is to 1) be a Resource to Help Congregations with their Stewardship Ministry (Financial) and 2) to grow support for the Larger Church/Synod

### **TASK 1 - BE A RESOURCE TO HELP FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY**

In the past few years we have lifted up some Best Stewardship Practices for Ministry. Many of those suggestions are listed on the Stewardship and Mission Page on the Metro DC Website. Go to [www.metrodcelca.org](http://www.metrodcelca.org) and click on "For Congregations" Tab. Go to Stewardship and Mission.

A year ago, we developed a Stewardship Resource for Metro DC Congregations called "EMBRACE GENEROSITY". We encouraged you to utilize this resource as part of your annual campaign last year. It included a simple way to plan a year round Stewardship Campaign. It gave some suggested new practices you might implement as part of your year round ministry of Stewardship. It gave some advice on crafting a narrative budget to help you tell your members the story of how your ministry is changing lives (think back to Chip telling his story about John). It spoke of how to lead a Commitment Sunday and the steps to get there. That resource would be good to give to your Stewardship Chair if they have not already seen it.

***We are working on updating a resource to help with your fall 2014 Stewardship Campaign; however it will not be ready to be posted by the time of the Assembly this weekend. As soon as it's complete (within the next few weeks), it will be posted to the Metro DC web page and we will proactively be reaching out to the Pastors and Stewardship Chairs of the Synod.***

Please note that many congregations have reached out for support and guidance on Stewardship issues over the last year. Feel free to reach out at any point and we will gladly provide advice or support.

## **TASK 2 -GROW SUPPORT FOR THE LARGER CHURCH/SYNOD**

### Statement of Intent (S.O.I)

As you challenge your church members to grow in their financial generosity and tell your ministry story, we want to keep pulling together as a synod. As we ask our members to think about increasing their proportional giving, let it be the same for each church in our synod. Let's keep stepping forward for the sake of helping our Synod grow and prosper.

### Gifts of Hope

The Gifts of Hope Ministry falls under the umbrella of the Stewardship and Mission Table. We give thanks for the ongoing and faithful ministry of Carolyn Sowinski (Gifts of Hope Coordinator), who helps raise funds (and awareness) for the 10 Lutheran-sponsored social service agencies, 2 church camps, 2 educational institutions, and 3 global Companion Synods that Gifts of Hope supports.

### ELCA FOUNDATION

One of the greatest resources in our Synod is Alice Benson, Regional Gift Planner for the ELCA foundation. Alice is a trusted colleague and one who works closely with individuals on legacy giving issues as well as supporting the work of congregational planning and Endowments. Alice's work within our synod has resulted in many people leaving portions of their estate to support the ministries they love. Alice serves with

great joy and her enthusiasm is contagious. See <http://www.elca.org/Give/ELCA-Foundation/Regional-Gift-Planners>

### **ELCA CAPITAL CAMPAIGN**

You will hear more about the ELCA Capital Campaign from Pastor Phil Hirsch, Director of Evangelical Mission. Our Table will be committed to working to support the efforts of the campaign in the coming year(s).

### **LET US BE OF SERVICE**

If you would like assistance or support for your congregation's Stewardship Ministry, please contact the Stewardship and Mission Table. You can contact me, Dave Sonnenberg at ([pastordave@goserve.net](mailto:pastordave@goserve.net)) or Phil Hirsch at ([phirsch@metrodcelca.org](mailto:phirsch@metrodcelca.org)) if you have any questions.

### **STEWARDSHIP AND MISSION TABLE MEMBERS\***

Pastor Dave Sonnenberg (Chair); Pastor Phil Hirsch (Director of Evangelical Mission); Pastor John Kidd; Pastor Travis Kern; Alice Benson; Ruth Manchester; Robert Sargeant; Carolyn Sowinski; and Rose Beeson

\*If you'd be interested in serving with us, we meet 4 times a year (face to face) and conduct regular online discussions using the collaborative tool "Basecamp". Let me know if you are interested in serving at [pastordave@goserve.net](mailto:pastordave@goserve.net)

Submitted by Pastor Dave Sonnenberg, Chair (with additional information supplied by Pastor Phil Hirsch)

\*Opening Story from The Genius of Generosity by Chip Ingram