

## Twenty Stewardship Best Practices by Thriving Congregations

1. They foster spirit-filled giving and prayer development and they emphasize the connection between faith and money. Make a connection to stewards and growing stewards as a faith response to our congregation's overall ministry and mission. How is generosity a spiritual matter, not a financial one? How can we help others discover the joy of giving?
2. They give away a growing percentage of their income for ministries of the whole church. How do we decide how much to grow in Mission Support in preparation for our annual meeting? What percent does a new mission congregation have as a guideline for Mission support?
3. They ask BOLDLY. Ask boldly for tithes, offerings, bequests, commitments and participation. "Invite" them to grow. The more personal the invitation, the more likely a response. What are our expectations of worshippers? How often do we discuss the difference between financial stewardship and fundraising?
4. They provide multiple opportunities for giving and serving. Provide regular opportunities for special offerings and Second Mile Giving. How often do we have special offerings? What are our four primary giving opportunities for worshippers during the year?
5. They thank givers profusely and often. How often do we thank worshippers? In what various ways do we thank donors? How can we do this more effectively?
6. They identify, explore, and nurture the spiritual gifts of worshippers, helping them to fulfill their passions. What would happen in our congregation if everyone were involved in their area of passion according to their spiritual gifts?
7. They have a mission endowment fund. Establish a mission endowment fund with specific purpose and educate worshippers. What outside missions do we want to make happen "beyond our walls?"
8. They use envelopes & electronic transfers. What are some of the benefits of using envelopes and electronic transfers such as "Simply Giving"? Are these benefits for our congregation or for the worshipper?
9. They know the value of a Program Budget. Develop a program budget in addition to a line item budget. How does highlighting the ministries of the congregation encourage giving more than giving to the operating costs of the building and staff?
10. They think outside the box. What one thing in our congregation would most improve the atmosphere for someone to share an idea? What have we dreamed of trying?
11. They encourage the practices of firstfruits and proportionate giving by everyone in the congregation. How much do we give off the top? Does our congregation give the firstfruits of the congregation regular income to Mission Support?
12. They encourage worshippers to practice 10-10-80. How do we practice 10% to God, 10% to savings and live on the remaining 80%? Where are we in our spiritual journey?
13. They build personal relationships with worshippers through personal contact and by sharing life experiences. What have we learned from the faith stories of others? How do our worshippers share their stewardship stories?
14. Develop an "asset-based" climate, using the assets of worshippers rather than focusing on needs. What ways does our congregation see a glass filled to the midpoint as half full rather than half empty? What are the assets of our congregation? How can we build on our assets and not just on tasks that "need" to be done? What's wrong with using the word "need?"
15. Develop a year round approach to stewardship that includes evaluation of potential, planning, education and giving. Define a clear vision, mission and purpose. Include a visible role for stewardship ministry. How is stewardship reflected in our congregation's vision, mission and values statements? How might we teach stewardship of life?
16. Separate the annual financial response from the budgeting process. How can we separate the invitation to respond to God's blessings from the financial requirements of a budget?
17. Engage in an annual financial response for commitments pledges or an estimate of giving. What are the three most effective response methods in our congregation?
18. Provide reports to worshippers about their individual giving and congregation income. How often do we send giving reports to worshippers? Would monthly be too often?
19. Encourage worshippers to write a will or living trust as part of a Legacy Plan. How do we encourage worshippers to have a Legacy Plan? Do we review our will every five years?
20. Make stewardship of finances and life a matter of intentional daily prayer. How often do we pray about our giving in worship? How often do we pray about our giving at home?