

# **The Stewardship of Finances Year-round Ministry Campaign Start-up Basics (Spring)**

## **A. The Stewardship Program built on Stone – Introduction**

### **i. A Theology of the Stewardship of Money**

God has modeled a behavior of generosity to humanity by having given the gift of a world and its resources to us to care for. God also gave God's own self away on the cross as a symbol of detachment and self-offering.

### **ii. A Spirituality of the Stewardship of Money**

Humanity is in a relationship with a God who gives to us all that we have. God asks us simply to give a part of it back so that it is clear that we understand that everything we have is a gift from God. The foundation of our hesitancy to give a portion of our income to God through the church, may not be based in greed, but rather in fear. We are afraid that we will not have enough and so we hold back when we pledge. The healing of our stewardship programs will be based solely on our awareness that God loves us and that all we have is from God. Our pledge is merely a symbol of that awareness.

### **iii. Why this is about Jesus and not about money.**

The work we do in stewardship is not primarily about funding the budget of a church. Rather the work is about helping people have an open relationship with Christ, which does not have guilt as its shadow. Guilt comes from not having given a pledge. God rejoices in our enjoyment of most of our money and simply asks that a portion be returned as a symbol. Just as a large or long-maintained financial debt with a close friend can get in the way of the friendship and joy of relationship, so too can the stinginess of holding back on our pledge to God's ministry through our churches get in the way of our relationship to God.

### **iv. A word about the Puppy Syndrome (resistance)**

Too often the Puppy Syndrome kicks in and we race around putting together a badly managed and shallow stewardship program just so we can say we got it done. Although it is OK to acknowledge our anxiety about money in church, it is not OK to leave the people with a shallow and poorly managed stewardship program simply because the topic is not to our liking.

**v. A word about the Ostrich Syndrome (avoidance)**

Similarly, we can put our heads in the sand and simply spend the year avoiding the subject of money in church. The problem with avoidance is that the budget of a parish simply must be funded. The conversation simply must be had for the spiritual well-being of people of the church. By avoiding this conversation, we not only do an injustice to our budgets, we also do an injustice to our souls.

**vi. Why the Diocese of New Hampshire Stewardship Ministry uses the Pantocrator Icon of Jesus as its logo.**

The Pantocrator Icon is used as the logo for stewardship because our focus is always on the risen Christ. Christ is the image of God who gives himself away for the freedom of humanity. Similarly, our call to give a portion of ourselves and our bounty away is heard in the context of standing before Christ as ruler of all, giver of all and lover of all.

**vii. The Dynamics of Phil-anthropy (loving humans)**

The word philanthropy comes from the Greek word “to love humanity” and so we never forget that a part of giving our money to our parish is making it possible for the church to reach out to humanity in Christ’s name. Many in our churches argue that they would rather give their money directly to people in need rather than allow their parish to do so with part of their pledge. The problem with that philosophy of giving is that we Christians are not individuals but rather are part of a community. As part of a community we give to the community and the community decides how to disperse funds. This model of giving is directly from the book of Acts. The demand that we be able to control all of our money even after we have given it away is a decidedly American idea, but it is not a Biblical or even Christian idea. If one were a member of a YMCA, and used the facilities every day, but chose to give their membership fees to “other local agencies that also do fitness” then the YMCA would have a financial crisis on their hands not unlike the one under which the church currently labors. We give to the parish, in part, because that is our community of choice. When we give something away, we let go of it and trust in leadership and in God to do with it what needs to be done.

**viii. Strategic Planning**

Scripture says that where there is no vision, the people perish (Prov 29:18). To avoid effective strategic planning is to avoid getting the job done well. There is nothing particularly spiritual about avoiding strategic planning. This stewardship program has as its foundation the notion that when we plan a program over the course of a year with specific dates and specific responsibilities assigned to specific people, the job gets done better.

## B. Roles of Campaign Leadership

- i. **The Bishop** is responsible for the ministry of the Diocese and the care of the clergy. Part of this responsibility is for finances that make programs and ministries possible. The stewardship of the people of the Diocese as well as the stewardship of diocesan funds are of utmost importance to the Bishop.
- ii. **The Canon for Stewardship** provides resources that help the Rector and Wardens and Vestry of each parish manage the spiritual and logistical responsibility around the conversation of money and relationship with God.
- iii. **The Rector** is responsible for knowing and loving the people in his or her parish enough to help them boldly have the difficult conversation about faith and money. The Rector needs to strive towards the biblical tithe as a model of right relationship with money and God. The Rector needs to know of the bounty or scarcity in the lives of parishioners including bounty of love, bounty of grace, and bounty of resources. We do not separate money from other aspects of human life. **The Rector is responsible for knowing what people pledge and if people pay their pledge.** The Rector is responsible for a budget that is so infused with resources that profound ministry may occur. The rector cannot be made responsible for a budget; and at the same time remain blind to the resources which fund that budget. It is as much the responsibility of the Rector, Wardens and Vestry to ask boldly for the money needed to fund a vibrant budget as it is the responsibility of the people of the church to fund that budget with a portion of their gifts from God.
- iv. **The Wardens** have the primary responsibility of seeing to it that the people of the parish fund a budget that makes possible a vibrant ministry. The Wardens need to strive towards the biblical tithe as a model of right relationship with money and God. Priests will come and priests will go. The parish is the parish of **the people** and the **people** must take the **responsibility** of funding the parish budget. It is the responsibility of the wardens to make this happen and the responsibility of the clergy to see to it that the Vestry and Wardens do their job.
- v. **The Vestry** has the responsibility of making bold, leadership pledges to the Stewardship Program so as to set an example. The Vestry needs to strive towards the biblical tithe as a model of right relationship with money and God.

- vi. The Stewardship of Finances Campaign Ministry Committee Chairperson** has the responsibility of developing a strategic plan that charts the course for the stewardship campaign and the funding of a robust budget. The committee chair needs to strive towards the biblical tithe as a model of right relationship with money and God.
- vii. The Stewardship of Finances Campaign Ministry Committee** has the responsibility of managing the strategic plan of the Stewardship Program. This is not a quick-fix work done in haste in August and September. This is a year-round planning and strategy ministry. The committee members need to strive towards the biblical tithe as a model of right relationship with money and God.
- viii. The Staff** (if you have one) supports the Wardens, Vestry and Stewardship Committee work.

### **C. Before Getting Started**

- i. The Calendar (i.e.: the evils of procrastination)**

It is essential that the work of the stewardship committee be planned out in such a way that a 12-month calendar exists with deadlines and specific people made responsible for getting tasks accomplished on time. Procrastination is the primary enemy to stewardship programs.

- ii. The Campaign Ministry Plan**

The Campaign Ministry Plan works out of the calendar (see above) and sets out in writing what is to be done, at what time, and by whom. The smallest parishes as well as the largest parishes need a campaign plan even if the contents vary due to limitations in resources

- iii. Setting the goal and building the budget: a theology and praxis. (also in Step 7 of Campaign Planning)**

Ideally, the budget of a parish is set through prayer and other hard work based on a vision of what needs to be accomplished in the life of the parish. The Holy Spirit has a hope for your parish. The work of the Clergy and Vestry is to discern what the Hope of the Holy Spirit is and to make a budget which reflects that hope with courage. The budget should not be limited to “what we absolutely have to get done,” but should rather be reflective of the great optimism of life in God as we all say “thy Kingdom come.”

The problem with first raising money in the Stewardship Program and then setting the budget to match what has come in from pledges is that this way of living precludes the exciting vision of the powerful work God is doing in our lives and parishes.

The best, most successful strategy is (1) to establish what wonderful things need to be done by your parish, (2) to communicate that vision to the people of the parish (long before you ask them for their pledges) and then (3) to ask them to fund the vision.

**iv. The Campaign Notebook**

It is recommended that the Chairperson keep a notebook with samples, handouts, all minutes of meetings, notes, commentary on activities, and notations for how the program can be improved next year. This notebook is then passed on to the rising Chair when leadership changes hands. There is no sense in each person having to reinvent the wheel.

## **Part III: The Stewardship of Finances Ministry Campaign: Steps One - Nine**

**A. Step One: Discernment of Call and Strategic Planning (January – March)**

It is quite often the case that a parish's leadership will complain about a lack of financial support by parishioners. Parish leaders may be tempted to say "our parishioners are not investing in this parish and yet we know them to be generous givers in other places." Occasionally the problem is that parishioners are not pledging to the parish because the parish does not have a powerful vision in which to invest money.

**In the end, the parish may simply not deserve the money that they wish they had because they have not done the hard work of discerning and planning to make and fund a bold vision.**

There is a tired old phrase that says "God always pays for what God orders" and, although this can sound shallow and trite, it is indeed quite true. The problem however is that parishes are quick to ask for money but slow to ask God for a vision that directs the ministry and service of the church and into which contributions become investments.

It is too often the case in both the general nonprofit sector and in church leadership that the plan is simply to do what we did last year but with perhaps higher numbers. That is not a plan. And it is certainly not a vision. The people of a parish need to see that the leadership has taken time to intentionally pray about the future ministries of a parish. They also need to see that due time and consideration have been given over to self-study and demographic study. Having done this planning, the Vestry can develop a powerful vision for ministries that respond directly to the needs of one's town or city. For example,

a church budget that envisions the renovation of unused space to become used for child care in a town into which young families are moving could be something that inspires one to make a pledge.

**Too often we raise the money first and then set the budget to match whatever money has been pledged for the next fiscal year. We often do not see how narrow and flaccid such management is. The Holy Spirit has a vision for each parish and that vision must be prayerfully discerned before raising financial support. The old days of sending out a letter asking for pledges, hoping for the best, and then setting the budget based on what is raised is not only uninspired but it is also irresponsible to the power of the vision God has for God's Kingdom on earth.**

**All stewardship of time, talent, land, and especially finances involves as much advance work in creating the vision as there is in the follow-up work of funding the vision. We recommend that prayer and planning for the budget of the parish occur long before the money is raised to support it so that the people making their pledges will be making pledges in response to a powerful vision.**

What follows is a possible three month strategic plan for the development of program and budget:

**January:** The Vestry divides up the ministries of the church that deal with mission and outreach, each taking one or more outreach issues. In a small parish, where there may be fewer ministries, the Vestry may need to break up into small groups with each group taking on the self-study of the ministry.

The questions that need to apply to each outreach ministry might include the following:

1. What is currently being accomplished in the lives of the people who need this ministry, who is providing the ministry, and how much is this costing from the budget?
2. What more could we be doing in this area? What unmet needs exist and what would meeting those needs cost?
3. What do recipients of this ministry say about how they are being ministered to? What do we sense in prayer about what God may be calling us to do?

The Vestry may then choose to send one or two people to visit local town or city agencies (social services, etc) to meet with officials and ask what changing trends and demographics are occurring in our geographic parish. They might be shown the answers to the three questions above and asked what *different* things or what *more* the parish could be doing to meet basic human need.

**February:** One document would then be assembled as an executive summary for the Vestry. The document would provide the results of the outreach ministry

self study and the interviews with local service providers and city or town social service agencies. Since February usually includes part of Lent, this is an especially good month in which to intentionally pray. Include what the parish is doing, how the parish is spending its money, and to what extent more could be done to meet basic human needs as parishioners in your geographic parish serve with the hands and feet of Christ.

**March:** Parishes are very much encouraged to go beyond asking only civic leaders and social service professionals for their perspective on the outreach and ministries of your specific parish.

It is also recommended that the people in the pews, who will be making pledges to fund the budget currently under discernment, be given the opportunity to provide input as to what they see are important ministries to maintain and what additional ministries perhaps should be provided.

This exercise may not only bring new and exciting ideas to the awareness of the Vestry and Clergy, but will also accomplish the very important task of allowing those people who pledge to the budget feel that their voice has been heard. An example of such as survey can be found at **Appendix III.J.iv.**

By actively listening to the parish and to the Holy Spirit long before setting next year's program and budget, and before raising the time and money for each, the leadership of the parish will benefit from the creativity and perspectives of the people who populate the pews. Leadership will also communicate to the parish that the congregation's input is valuable and that their mark has been made in planning the program budget.

It cannot be overstated how important it is for people who give their time or their money to feel that their input has come first. When raising either money or time and talent, the primary reason that people do not give is that they do not feel personally involved. The second reason people do not give either time or money is simply because they are not inspired enough by the vision and mission of the organization to make their pledge. The sad thing however is that no matter how inspiring the mission and vision of a parish is, if the people are not included in the process so that they become aware of the power behind the mission and vision, their financial investment through their pledge will be minimal.

## **B. Step Two: Forming a Stewardship of Finances Campaign from Budgetary Needs (April)**

The primary enemy of any stewardship program, especially Stewardship of Finances, is procrastination. It is very important that the stewardship campaign develop an effective discernment program revolving around parish programs and parish budget. It benefits no one to force the Holy Spirit into a corner by

simply raising money in October, November and December and then in January, enforcing a budget based solely on pledges. Ideally, the Finance Committee and the Stewardship Committee should meet in tandem at least during the season in which the stewardship campaign is not fully active and the budgetary planning process is fully active.

We suggest that there be a transition month between the discernment of budget / mission and the development of a Stewardship Campaign design. In the experience of most churches, if the Stewardship Campaign Committee is not formed and has not begun planning by the spring, then effective planning and management of Stewardship of Finances programs will be tabled over the summer and will not be designed until early Fall. By that time the Stewardship of Finances campaign is in crisis mode. Although procrastination in the beauty of spring and the laziness of summer is tempting, nothing will do more damage to the Stewardship of Finances campaign than trying to make plans in a crisis due to a time crunch.

If a parish desires to run the six week Stewardship Program from mid-October through Thanksgiving (which is the suggested timeframe), then the committee must begin its planning in April and May. Printed materials and the recruitment of speakers must happen well in advance of the September rush to which most parishes are accustomed.

Activities in April regarding the Stewardship of Finances may include the following:

- ❖ Recruitment and confirmation of committee membership
- ❖ Definition of responsibilities
- ❖ Dialog with Finance Committee regarding budget, mission and vision
- ❖ Considering who, if any, are to be asked for major gifts
- ❖ Drafting a Stewardship of Finances timetable (May – December)
- ❖ Discernment of who will be asked to speak to the congregation as part of the ministry minutes program
- ❖ Recruitment of ministry minute speakers
- ❖ Drafting a campaign brochure and pledge card for printing during the summer
- ❖ Recruitment of and directions to special events group that will design and implement the kickoff dinner and the ending event.

### **C. Step Three: Overall Communications Strategy for Stewardship (May – August)**

Communication is as important to stewardship programs as rain is important to a garden. Often the largest disconnect between a congregation and a stewardship program involves poor communication.



If it is possible, we suggest that one person on the Stewardship of Finances Committee be responsible for communications. Ideally that person should have some background in the area of strategic communications either professionally or as a volunteer.

Issues of communication will inevitably be sprinkled throughout any effective Stewardship of Finances strategic plan. Of course, any communication that requires photocopying, printing or mailing will need special consideration due to the inevitable fact that these activities take money and volunteer time, and therefore need to be set up in advance.

There will be those who object, or who are even outraged by the use of a printed or photocopied brochure, insisting it is too slick and professional for use in a parish. The first answer to this thinking is the reality that these days, a one-page brochure folded twice can be done on an average personal computer by a person with average design skills in less than an hour and can be photocopied for a few dollars. The second answer is that, whether we like it or not, the church is not the only institution to which people are being asked to give money. Other organizations such as schools, hospitals, YMCA's, museums, and other nonprofits are busy providing effective and moving literature through which pledges are requested. The church can neither afford to stick its head in the sand and pretend that these other organizations are using ineffective communications nor can the church set itself above other organizations and say it is too spiritual to have to communicate well.

Some of the communications tools that are valuable over the course of the Spring, Summer and Fall for encouraging pledging during the Stewardship of Finances campaign may include:

- ❖ A standard campaign brochure
  - Signed statement of tithing by Clergy and Vestry
  - New and innovative mission and outreach initiatives
  - Photos and statements from the people speaking in the “ministry minutes” programs
  - A letter from the Vestry outlining the campaign
  - One or more photographs
  - A Collect that will help the congregation to pray about their pledge
  - An attractive announcement about the final event of the campaign so it is clear that the campaign has an ending date by which pledges are expected
  - A perforated panel for use as the pledge card
- ❖ Web site inclusion for pledging on-line
- ❖ Newsletter Articles
- ❖ Bulletin Inserts
- ❖ Posters
- ❖ Sermon or sermon series

- ❖ Reminder notices
- ❖ Campaign status Announcements
- ❖ Letters for gift acknowledgement and event promotion
- ❖ Invitations and save-the-date cards
- ❖ Campaign reports, pledge cards, etc.

**D. Step Four: Set up Design Work on Stewardship Campaign  
(March - August)**

**i. Select a Chairperson**

Characteristics of a good choice for Chair of Stewardship Campaign:  
(This is a very important choice.)

- ❖ An able person with proven leadership skills who attends Sunday services regularly and exhibits those charisms that scripture promises will emerge from the life of a person of prayer, love and balance.
- ❖ A person who gives generously and consistently to the parish and who is either a person from a family who tithes or is working towards a tithe.
- ❖ A person who is well-known to the congregation and who both likes and has a good relationship with the clergy and vestry.

(Note: Please do not use co-chairs! The Buck needs to stop somewhere!) .

**ii. Recruit Stewardship Committee**

- a. Consists of 8 - 12 people
- b. Business-savvy doers of the word and not hearers only, with positive attitudes, who pray, give, and gets things done
- c. People WHO WILL FOLLOW THROUGH with kindness
- d. A cross-section of the church population (emphasis on people in their 30's and 40's if you have them)
- e. Ideally, able persons with proven leadership skills who attend Sunday services regularly and exhibit those charisms that scripture promises will emerge from the life of a person of prayer, love and balance.
- f. This is not a committee for "nice" people: this is a committee for proven "effective and bold-faith" people.

**E. Step Five: Establish the Hope of the Holy Spirit:  
(Spring, Summer or....August...Now! – best done as part of Step One)**

- i. Stewardship Committee meets with the Finance Committee and the Vestry to discuss the next year's budget for clarification and vision-making.
  - a. What is God calling this parish to accomplish in \_\_\_\_ (year)?  
*(Note: Ideally this is done during Lent when planning for the next fiscal year's budget happens. Done early, we are able to hear God's call in plenty of time to*

*adjust the budget to set the pace for the stewardship campaign. The alternative is having to cut the budget when the stewardship campaign raises less than God is calling the parish to raise for ministry. See “Year-round Stewardship Plan” to be published in January 2007.)*

- b. How much will it cost to do what God is calling the parish to accomplish this year?
- c. How much of what God is calling the parish to accomplish this year will need to be raised from the parish as gifts returned to God as a stewardship pledge?
- d. Is it possible that God, the Holy Spirit will inspire the congregation to fund the entire budget, thereby releasing incomes such as endowment streams or rental income for unforeseen future needs?

*Note: A valuable exercise is to determine the average family income of the parish, multiply it by 5% and multiply the resulting number by the number of attending households. The resulting number is a powerful indication of what the parish could use for God’s ministry if congregants gave only half of what God has asked them to give (10%) as a symbol of gratitude for all God has given us.*

*Formula: Income X .05 X # of families = half the potential and usually twice the actual amount available.*

**F. Step Six: Establishing a Call to Inspire Giving: Pre-planning and advance communications (otherwise known as the “John the Baptist Phase”) (August)**

- i. Vestry and Clergy all make their pledges. In some churches, each Vestry member brings their pledge up to the altar in the main service as a symbol of the leadership “stepping up to the plate” first. In many churches, the Vestry will send a letter to the congregation (signed by all Vestry and Clergy) stating that they have all pledged and asking the parish to do likewise. Vestry and Clergy pledges should be

working towards a tithe. 100 % participation in pledging on the part of Vestry members and clergy staff is essential!

- ii. Last week of August: The Stewardship Campaign Plan has been established in detail. The plan includes:
  - a. Theme [Scriptural/Theological]
  - b. 6 week campaign schedule.
- iii. Pledge card brochures are designed, photos of ministry minute volunteers are taken and inserted, copy is drafted and collected and pledge card brochures are printed. Pledge card brochures are then placed in labeled envelopes for each family of the parish in alpha order to be picked up October 1<sup>st</sup> by parishioners who attend services. Those envelopes / brochure cards that remain after the final service on October 2<sup>nd</sup> are then collected – a letter from the Vestry is added to introduce the card and to encourage a pledge. Cards are then are mailed to remaining parishioners.

### **G. Step Seven: Stewardship Campaign Kick-off Sunday**

**Announce to Parish the Call to Pray for Stewardship**

**October 1**

#### **Pledge Card Distribution:**

Do not mail pledge cards until after the first Sunday – the physical action of searching for and finding one's pledge card is a valuable one. Things that arrive by mail get lost among catalogues and junk mail.

Pledge cards are given out after services and a liturgical element could be planned. (i.e., weekly stewardship collect, etc). Make this a special day and a joyful one! The largest and most effective barrier to effective stewardship campaigns is boredom! Make a splash. Have some fun. Do not combine the Stewardship Campaign (money) with the recruitment fair (time and talent). People need to focus on one thing at a time. Some parishes give costumes (around a theme) to their vestry or have special food or do some special event after the service (picnic or barbeque or concert).

**FOOD + FUN = ATTENTION AND INVOLVEMENT**

- ❖ Parishioners pick up their pledge card brochures (in alpha order in envelopes by church door) on their way out of services on this day. Parishioners are asked to NOT make pledges until they have prayed about the pledge for at least two weeks. Colored pledge cards could be included in envelopes for children to use and as a teaching tool for parents with a handout guiding parents in the conversation about giving.
- ❖ Remaining pledge cards not picked up on October 1 are mailed October 2

A Collect for Stewardship (or some form of one) is used regularly in liturgical norms for the fall season in addition to regular Collects prescribed.

***A Collect for Stewardship*** (see Appendix III.J.v for more collections of prayers)  
 (For possible secondary use in October and November)

***Gracious God, giver of all we have and hold as stewards; grant the people of this church a deep and abiding awareness that all things come from you – our health, our incomes, our jobs, our talents and our generous impulse. Send your Holy Spirit to help us as we swim against the rising tides of materialism, envy, individualism and greed in our culture. When we are tempted to think of money as a private matter, remind us that you have asked for part of what we are given, to be returned to you as a symbol of our awareness that you give all we have. And further, help us to help each other in this grace of giving, for you are the lover of our souls and call us to nothing less than transformation in Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN***

- ❖ The Adult Forum education hour(s) are used for conversations and education about money. (See Appendix III.J.ii)

*(Note: One possible education hour conversation to prepare for the stewardship campaign is to have attendees answer (as they volunteer) the questions pertaining to their money and their God. Parishioners may then take the questions home to answer as a family as they discuss their pledge and pray about it. Give parishioners copies of the Collect for Stewardship for their family prayer time. See Appendix III.J.i handout for collect and questions)*

### **H. Step Eight: The Stewardship Campaign**

<b>Week One</b>	<b>Ministry Minute #1</b>	<b>October 8</b>
October 9: Flyer #1 is mailed to the parish (sample: Appendix III.J.iii)		
<b>Week Two</b>	<b>Ministry Minute #2</b>	<b>October 15</b>
October 16: Flyer #2 is mailed to the parish		
<b>Week Three</b>	<b>Ministry Minute #3</b>	<b>October 22</b>
October 23: Flyer #3 is mailed to the parish		
<b>Week Four</b>	<b>Ministry Minute #4</b>	<b>October 29</b>
October 30: Flyer #4 is mailed to the parish		
<b>Week Five</b>	<b>Ministry Minute #5</b>	<b>November 5</b>
November 6: Flyer #5 is mailed to the parish		
<b>Week Six</b>	<b>Ministry Minute #6</b>	<b>November 12</b>
November 13: Flyer #6 is mailed to the parish		

**How to Manage Ministry Minutes:**

“Ministry Minutes” are presented as part of both services during the campaign. These Ministry Minutes are personal testimonies of how the parish has helped them in their life and Christian walk. Ministry minutes are 3-5 minutes and are written and presented by parishioners with help from clergy. The addition of Ministry Minutes demands that sermons are shortened by five minutes. Some suggestions:

- i. Clergy should identify the prospective “Ministry Minute” speakers (early August) based on the diversity of the message (youth ministry, visited in hospital, care of the elderly, inspired by music, cared for in crisis, inspired by formation, educated by formation, children cared for, moved by liturgical beauty, experienced or helped with ministry to the financially poor or marginalized, etc.)
- ii. Phone calls are made to ask prospective ministry minute speakers if they would be willing to speak on (pre-determined subject) and if they are free on (pre-determined Sunday) to speak at all services.

**Once all six speakers are recruited:**

- iii. Photos are taken for use in Stewardship Pledge Card Brochure
- iv. One sentence is drafted to go with the photo in quotes representing the summation of the message of the speaker and is sent to the brochure designer. (Note: often a simple brochure can be done by a volunteer on a domestic layout and design program such as Microsoft Publisher)
- v. A 3 X 5 card is written for each speaker so that key points are made in their talk, so that they are not caught in stage-fright, so that they do not ramble on and so that everyone is clear on what is to be said. (Note: Keep talks at each service to 5 minutes – this cannot possibly be over emphasized since a long talk can annoy a congregation, upset the schedule and affect other speakers and other listeners.)
- vi. Assign a different member of the stewardship committee each week of the six weeks to meet the “ministry minute” speaker, be sure they have arrived, inform the clergy before the service that they have arrived, and go over the service schedules to be sure the speaker knows when to rise, speak and sit, where to stand, and how to use the microphones.)

**Ministry Minute Flyers (See Appendix III.J.iii)**

These are one-page flyers, folded, sealed with a dot, and mailed bulk rate the day following each corresponding “Ministry Minute” Sunday. These are only effective if they go out on Monday morning, so the turn-around time is fast! The Stewardship Committee must schedule to stay after church each Sunday for an hour to count and produce the statistical information which, along with the photo and quote, encourages the parish to see the building momentum and the work of the Holy Spirit.

**A note about the use of fundraising thermometers:**

Unlike secular fundraising, the church does not employ fund-raising thermometers showing a goal (parish budget) with the red mercury-marker line that grows Sunday after Sunday to meet the goal. In the church, we do often use a secular thing for a sacred purpose (i.e.: a goblet is a goblet in a dining room and a chalice in a church), but in a stewardship campaign, the thermometer places the emphasis on the money raised rather than on the spiritual life of the giver. That is not the focus we want.

There is, however, one very useful place for a thermometer: the percent of the parish that has pledged. Many churches employ a thermometer to show what percent of the population of the parish (active and regular) have made their pledge to the parish.

*An Example: In my last parish we used an enlarged pen and ink drawing of the chapel tower (the icon of the communications in the Stewardship Campaign and a part of our parish logo) as the thermometer (see the attached brochure to see the tower!). The image was enlarged to six feet and placed on foam-core. The image was placed by the door to the church and each Sunday we figured what percent of the total parish family pledging units had dropped off or mailed in their pledge and raised the red line to show the percentage. This encouraged those who had pledged because they saw a visual sign of their part in the stewardship campaign. This challenged the not-yet pledgers to get their pledge cards in and it placed emphasis on participation rather than on money.*

**Cornucopia Consecration Sunday****November 19**

The parish is aware of and decorated for Thanksgiving. Ushers bring all pledge cards (those mailed in these last many weeks, those brought in this day and those from the pews that were filled in on this Sunday by those who had previously not yet pledged) to the altar with the plate offerings to be one of the many outward, physical signs of inward, spiritual stewardship grace.

*(Note: In addition, in many churches, the people in the pews are given apples as they enter the church. After the blessing of the pledge cards, the people move to the altar during a gradual anthem and place their apples and other signs of Thanksgiving bounty such as gourds, corn, etc. into baskets and onto the altar itself as a symbolic, physical act to link being thankful for bounty with pledging to God. Kids LOVE this and learn from it. Creativity is the essence of a vibrant parish program. Ours is a liturgical church that employs symbol. Please make use of symbols whenever you can!)*

**I. Step Nine: The Stewardship Campaign Follow-up****i. Report Sunday, Advent One (New Year) December 3**

Inform the parish about how things went in the Stewardship Campaign:

- ❖ percent of the parish who made pledges
- ❖ average gift
- ❖ amount pledged
- ❖ amount needed for next year's budget
- ❖ increase of average pledge over last year's campaign

- ❖ Increase of percentage of parishioners who pledged, etc.

Money is not an evil thing. Money is simply a tool. In a parish, money is used to extend the ministry of God through each of us, to the marginalized. Therefore, to discuss money in the parish is no more or less “holy” than discussing water or wine or electricity or prayer books. Report Sunday brings money out of the closet and into the chancel.

**ii. The Acknowledgement Process                      December 3 – 10**

- a. The Vestry writes and signs an open letter thanking the parish for the hard work, prayer, discernment and sacrifices and (hopefully) reports that pledges have met the needs of the parish as discerned for the ministry budget of the next year. (...and there is much rejoicing in all the land!)
- b. The Rector takes a few working days of quiet solitude (Advent one is a good time for this--SSJE's Emory House or some other retreat center or a friend's cabin might be a good place....) to write thank-you notes to parishioners, thanking them for their pledge. This personal touch is hard on the hand (I wrote 300 in my last parish) but the benefit is incalculable. People like to be thanked. People like to be thanked personally. People consider this to be a very generous act on the part of their Rector.