

Faith Aflame: 360 Degrees



Corporate Stewardship

Session Three – Case Studies

Case Study One: *Creative Stewardship*

“At council last night we discussed our budget woes and decided we need to do another stewardship drive. I couldn't stand the thought of another round of people standing up in church asking for people to hand over their money. So I suggested doing something a little more creative like having a pile of rocks in the narthex with different amounts of money on them totaling our current debt. People would take the rocks of amounts they want to donate and when the pile is gone, so is our debt. The idea went over great but then in the discussion of how to do this we got stuck. To use real rocks and boulders would be too heavy for some to carry out.”

- What are the stewardship issues involved?
- What counsel or advice would you give this member?

Case Study Two: *More Bang for the Buck*

“We have learned at our congregation that we simply get more evangelism ‘bang for our buck’ when we support missions directly rather than through synodical efforts. The latter has too much overhead, and wastes precious resources on inconsequential or even downright silly things rather than funding real ministry. Through our direct efforts, for example, our congregation has built a church in Siberia, given vital support to a seminary in Sudan, sponsors an orphanage in Madagascar, and built two schools in Liberia. Locally, we have baptized several adults and dozens of children, and had a large group of catechumens in our new member class last fall.”

- What are the stewardship issues involved?
- What counsel or advice would you give this pastor?

Case Study Three: *In God's Hands*

One congregation's experience:

_____ Lutheran Church increased its undesignated benevolence to the district as a way to place control of funding in God's hands. Just as individual members were urged to trust that God was able to work through the imperfect instruction of their local church, so the leadership of the congregation was called on to trust God's hand in the work of the greater church, even when they disagreed with some decisions. Each year the percentage of undesignated giving has increased as we strive to be a congregation that gives a tithe of our budget to the district.

- What are the stewardship issues involved?
- What about giving a tenth to the district?

Case Study Four: *Healthy Stewardship*

"Like many congregations, _____ Lutheran Church was filled with generous people who practiced bad stewardship. They loved to give money towards worthy causes. When funds were needed to purchase a large tent to house picnics and outdoor worship, monies were quickly donated. Each year at Christmas a van load of gifts and food were delivered to a needy family. When a 'face was painted' on a need, donations flowed freely."

"However, this kind of giving was not healthy for the life of the congregation. We seemed able to fund all kinds of new projects while unable to sustain long-standing core ministries, such as worship."

- What are the stewardship issues involved?
- What counsel or advice would you give this pastor?

