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New Jersey Synod Stewardship Conversations Fall 2009



Where We Are Going

- Prayer
- Leadership in Challenging Times
- 12 Practical Stewardship Ideas
- How to Discuss First Fruit Percentage Stewardship in a fragile economic climate
- How to keep the conversation about mission even when the dollars are flat.
- Where to find resources



LEADERSHIP IN HARD TIMES

- Leaders keep the culture.
- Culture is based on values and the behaviors that support them.
- If you want to know what normative behaviors are in your congregation, ask this question: “If a new person were folded into your congregation tomorrow, what would you tell her she needs to do to be faithful?”

JOHN 12:3-5, 8

Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them* with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, ⁵'Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii* and the money given to the poor?' ... ⁸You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.'



12 Practical Stewardship Ideas

- Consider the following items.
- How might they begin to reflect the values and behaviors needed to support the Mission and Stewardship culture in your congregation.

REMAIN MISSIONAL AND ENJOY THE MOMENT



New Jersey Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



DON'T OVER REACT OR PERSONALIZE

- Fear will choke off generosity
- Don't act precipitously.
- Stay ahead of the conversation.
- Speak words of hope.
- Remain generous: 10-10-80
- A few words about frozen (or reduced) salaries and underfunded programs.



PRAY

- Seek God's voice in the midst of the challenges.
- Add 15 minutes of prayer time to meetings, and studies.
- Start a new Bible study/prayer group.
- Focus on Scripture Study, Prayer, Faith Conversation



CALL EARLY

- Declining markets, job loss, operational costs have shortened many congregation's horizon for institutional survival.
- Call the Assistant to the Bishop who relates to your congregation
- Early intervention provides the best opportunity to explore options and to be proactive.



CRUNCH THE NUMBERS

- Be diligent in tracking giving.
- Early identification of families in financial trouble will often happen by monitoring giving patterns
- Demand clear and timely financial reports at every council meeting.
- Do not overspend the congregational budget.



GO GREEN

- Control energy costs
- Seal-up fix-up facilities. Use 7 day, 24 hour clock thermostats.
- (including the parsonage).
- Be prudent in scheduling events and allocating space. Move meetings, worship and gatherings into smaller space or homes.
- www.greenfaith.org



CONDUCT FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMS THREE TIMES THIS YEAR

- Difficult to make a year long pledge.
- Walk with your people through difficult times.
- Run Stewardship programs in February, June, and October.
- Looking ahead 120 days may be all that some families can do.



CLOSE 3 AND START 2

- Take 3 traditional programs off the agenda in the coming year
- Add 2 new ministries

- Controls spending
- Creates space, time, and resources for innovation
- Creates momentum in a time when stagnation is all too common.
- It is your own incentive program!



ENGAGE IN ASSET MAPPING

- Rely on creativity, imagination and the gifts of your members to add excitement and innovation to your ministries.

- Invests new people with purposeful work.
- Affirms giftedness and generosity in new ways.



REALLOCATE 6 HOURS OF YOUR TIME

- Asset mapping and “close 3, start 2” gives rostered leaders the option of redirecting their time investment.
- Engage the council in designing specific goals and benchmarks.
- Work specifically in the areas of:
 - Evangelism
 - Stewardship



PLAY FINANCIAL DEFENSE

- Review each budget line and make faithful and significant changes.
- The Budget is a mission document, bring spending into line with God's purpose for the church.
- Set a plan in place and stick to it!
- Pay as you go.
- Do not pick up new debt if at all possible.



HUG THE STAFF

- Employees will likely be asked to do more with less.
-
- Let them know they are appreciated.
 - Communicate that they are a valued part of the ministry team.

BUCKETS AND BLESSINGS

- How to lead in First Fruits ~ Percentage Giving
- 10-10-80 Share 10%, Save 10%, Spend 80%

- Divide into 4 buckets:
 - Share
 - Save
 - Providing
 - Consuming

- BUCKETS AND BLESSINGS PROGRAM



MISSION CATEGORIES

Remain in the mission conversation knowing that you were save to serve!

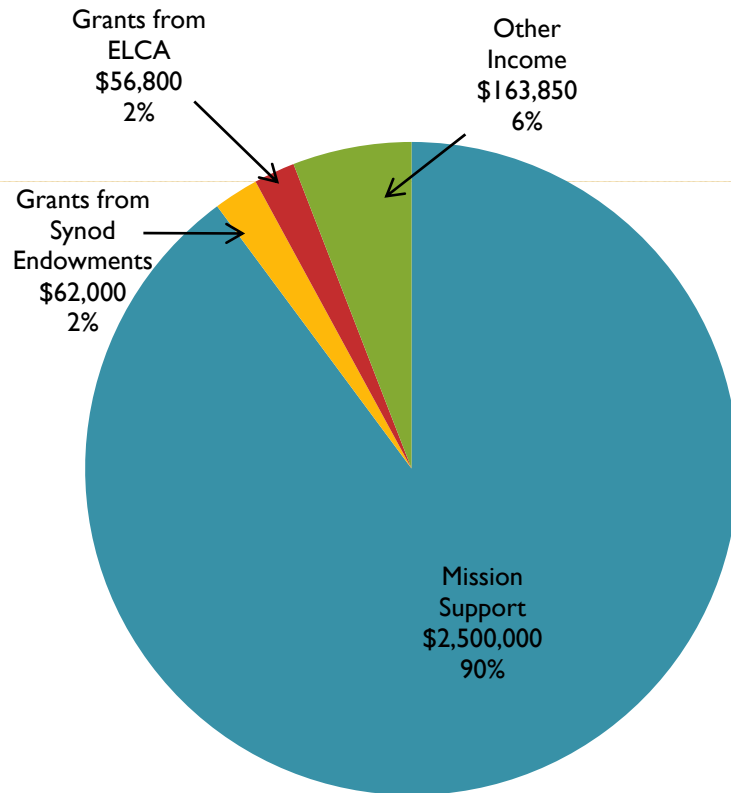
- ACCOMPANY JESUS
- INTRODUCE JESUS
- FOLLOW JESUS
- SERVE JESUS

ENDING THE 2009 YEAR

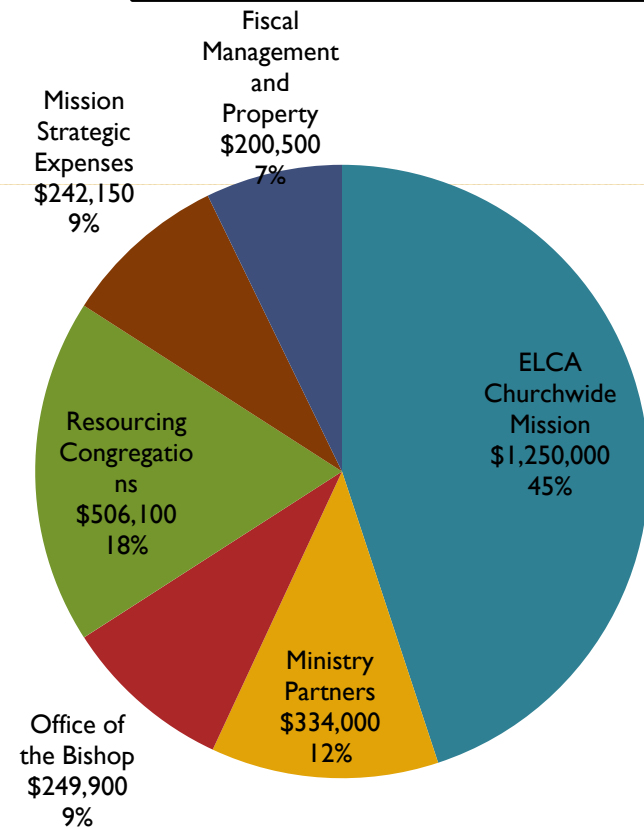
- Almost a quarter million dollars was cut from the original 2009 budget. The amended spending plan of \$2,732,000 requires \$2,400,000 in Mission Support contributions to be fully funded.
- Projected Mission Support income for 2009 will likely total in the range of \$2,343,000 to \$2,411,000.
- How are you doing in your congregation, in your home?

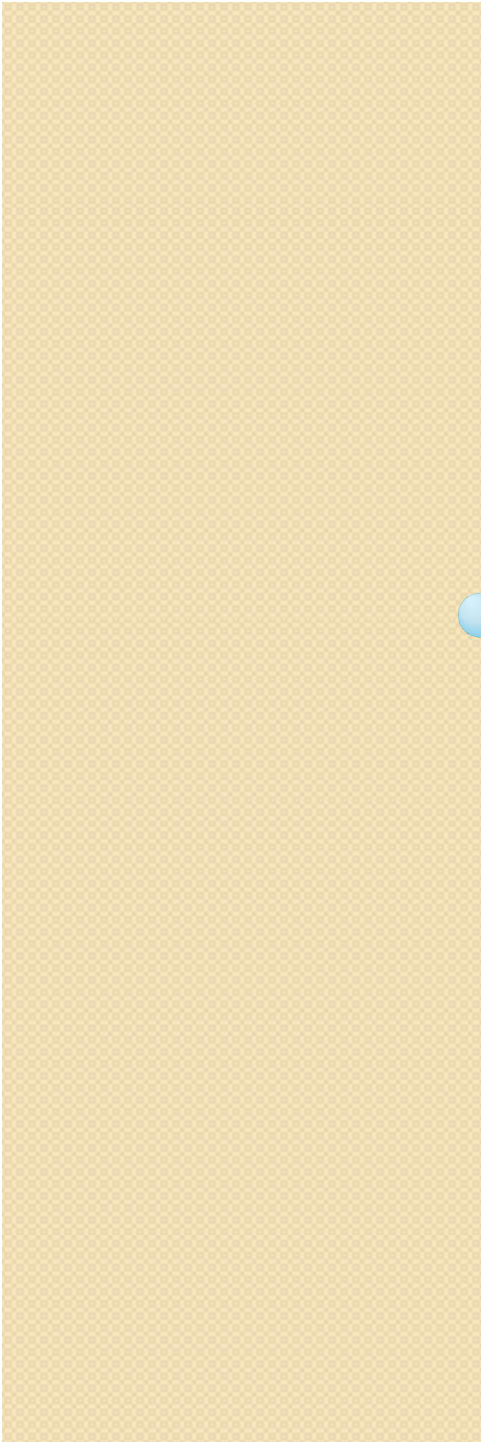
FALL ASSEMBLY & SPENDING PLAN

**New Jersey Synod
2010 Operating Income
\$2,782,650**



**New Jersey Synod
2010 Operating Expenses
\$2,782,650**





November 14, 2009
United Methodist Church
323 George St.
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

9:00 AM – 12:25 PM

FALL NEW JERSEY SYNOD ASSEMBLY

REGISTER ON LINE AT:

WWW.NJSYNOD.ORG

A Few Final Thoughts

- Everyone is talking about money. Make certain that God's voice is heard in the conversation.
- Preach and teach about Stewardship
 - October 11, November 8, Thanksgiving
- Model Biblical Stewardship
- Provide for regular ministries.
- Care for the most vulnerable among us (poor, homeless, immigrant, children, etc.) and build relationships as a regular extension of our offerings to God and love of neighbor.

LET'S TALK



Buckets and Blessings Financial Stewardship program can be downloaded from the stewardship page on the New Jersey Synod web site: www.njsynod.org

Stewardship for the 21st Century is a Luther Seminary stewardship ministry providing articles, videos, Bible studies, book reviews, illustrations, humor, letters, links, quotes, sermons, stories and worship resources. www.luthersem.edu/stewardship

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provides excellent array of resources at: www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Discipleship/Stewardship.aspx

The Stewardship of Life Institute's weekly newsletter is an exceptional source of well written and thoughtful articles. Investigate this site by clicking on: www.stewardshipoflife.org

Stories of Faith in Action Download bulletin inserts, dynamic stories of God changing lives through the ministry of the ELCA, resources on mission support, budgets and more. <http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Stories-of-Faith-in-Action.aspx>