

ORDINARY PEOPLE, EXTRAORDINARY LIVES

Sample Letter 1

Sample letters are provided as a guide for you to create your own personalized stewardship letters. This letter is meant to be sent one week prior to the kick-off of your stewardship effort to introduce the program.

Dear Friends,

Over the next few weeks our congregation will participate in *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives*, a stewardship emphasis that will help us understand and respond to God's expectations of us as stewards. This letter is your invitation to participate in the program emphasis as fully as possible, because I think it will be a blessing for your life.

During the four-week *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives* emphasis, we'll explore what it means to be servants and stewards through four mission behaviours: Accompanying Jesus, Introducing Jesus, Following Jesus, and Serving Jesus. I invite you to ponder these behaviours over the next few weeks as a way of articulating the extraordinary life Jesus has called you into. .

As you look forward to a gathering with a small group of believers from _____ Church, take some time to consider these mission behaviours. Think particularly of the extraordinary ways:

God changes people.

Changed people change churches.

Changed churches change the world.

This is an exciting time with unimagined possibilities for our congregation. When we come together to hear God's word, to share the sacraments, to confess our sins in the assurance of forgiveness, and to worship God with joy and thanksgiving, we are strengthened and blessed. And when we gather together our gifts of money and time along with our capabilities to love and care for each other and the world in order to do God's work in the world, the Spirit blesses those offerings and ordinary people lead extraordinary lives.

That's why I want to encourage you to participate in the small group session and to join in our congregation's *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives* celebratory Commitment Sunday worship service[s] on Sunday, [date] at [time(s)] when you'll have an opportunity to commit to how you will respond to our merciful and generous God by living an Extraordinary life.

In Christ Jesus' name,

[Pastor and/or stewardship chair]

Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives

Sample Letter 2

These sample letters are provided as a guide for you to create your own personalized stewardship letters. This letter is meant to be sent at the kick-off of your stewardship effort to introduce the *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives* program.

Dear Friends,

When we love someone, we hold ourselves accountable to that person—to honor the relationship, to act in ways that nurture and care for the person and the relationship, and to place our own desires in the context of the needs and desires of the one we love. When ordinary people are in love, they do extraordinary things. How has your life become extraordinary because of your relationship with our Lord Jesus? How will you use your time, abilities, strengths, and resources in joyful gratitude so that others will know the gospel message through the continued work of this congregation, our synod, and the body of Christ in this world? How will your life be extraordinary?

On Commitment Sunday, [Date], you will have an opportunity to address those questions through a commitment to the work and life of this congregation. In the next several days, take time to pray and meditate on how your life demonstrates the mission behaviours of Accompanying Jesus, Introducing Jesus, Following Jesus and Serving Jesus. How will you answer God's questions about your extraordinary life and choices?

Listen and respond to God's voice. God asks only that we live and give in ways that assure others will know the peace and assurance of salvation. It is that for which we are accountable. It is evident in our choices, in our caring for others, and in our witness to the gospel. The ultimate question God through Christ asks is this: Who do you say that I am?

On this coming Sunday, we'll praise and thank God for all the gifts and blessings we enjoy. We'll share our needs and sorrows with God and ask for care and sustenance. We'll remember the needs of others. And we'll commit to how we ourselves will assure the work of the church and the sharing of the gospel.

God be with you as you pray and meditate on the commitment you will make. Be bold! Our salvation is assured through Christ's sacrifice. What sacrifice will you make for Christ?

Joyfully,

[Pastor and/or stewardship chair]

Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives

Sample Letter 3

These sample letters are provided as a guide for you to create your own personalized stewardship letters. This letter is meant to be sent immediately following the *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives* program.

Dear Member(s) of _____ Church,

During the recent Commitment Sunday worship, many members of our congregation gathered under the theme, *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives*. During the worship, we turned in our stewardship commitments and financial pledges for this year, which will enable our congregation to carry out its mission. We on the Stewardship Committee are pleased by the response so far.

We want everyone to be a part of the exciting mission of _____ Church. If you attended the Commitment Sunday worship but did not fill out a Commitment Form, we hope you will do so now. If you were unable to be at this worship, we've provided a Commitment Form in this mailing. We want to be certain you have the opportunity to make a financial [and time and ability] commitment to support the ministries of our congregation.

You are asked to prayerfully consider your commitment. Consider the great gift of salvation and then ask yourself, "How will my gift reflect my extraordinary life?"

We are confident that your prayer and meditation will lead you where God calls. Please indicate your response by completing the enclosed card, and returning it to the church office in the enclosed envelope. You may also bring it to worship and drop it in the regular offering. Thank you for your prayerful consideration of this important matter in the life of _____ Church. The joys of being a faithful and trustworthy steward await you.

In Christ,

[Pastor and/or stewardship chair]

Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives

Sample Letter 4

These sample letters are provided as a guide for you to create your own personalized stewardship letters. This letter is meant to be sent as a thank you following the *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives* program.

Dear Friends,

Thank you for participating in *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives*. This year's stewardship effort asked us to address important issues with a joyful and positive response and you have done just that. When we gather as the body of Christ, we have much to celebrate: the many blessings God has given us, the words of promise and hope that come to us from of God, and the Lord's Supper, in which we enter into Christ's passion and resurrection. These are gifts we cannot repay, but that we must make known to the world so that others can experience the new life they bring. We exhibit the key mission behaviours of Accompanying Jesus, Introducing Jesus, Following Jesus and Serving Jesus.

Your commitment helps to assure that _____ Church will continue to make God's gifts known in the world. It strengthens us to continue as a community as we learn of and experience God's love and forgiveness, in which we care for and support each other in life and faith, and in which we are strengthened and equipped as individuals and a congregation to share God's love and the message of salvation with others. Your commitment helps ordinary people to lead extraordinary lives.

Thank you again. When we lead an extraordinary life filled with generosity, our faithfulness fills us and spills over in ways that resonate far beyond the walls of this congregation. What an extraordinary mission is ours to embrace.

In Christ's name,

[Pastor and/or stewardship chair]