

**VISITING STEWARD MANUAL**

**YOUR INVITATION TO A MINISTRY OF  
STEWARDSHIP AND CARING**

Portraits of giving  
hang in the history of our  
church for God's people are  
gift-givers, ambassadors for  
the Lord.

Ann Weems

**“Stewardship Theme/Logo”**

Name of Church

Address  
City, State, Zip  
Phone

## **WELCOME...**

to a very important and fulfilling ministry for Jesus Christ and Christ's mission through your church!

You have agreed to serve as a visiting steward: to visit in the homes of the members of your congregation. What is this assignment?

A visiting steward is a committed disciple of Jesus Christ, an involved and enthusiastic church member, willing to share his/her faith and time to lead others to a new commitment to Christ and the church's ministry.

### **IN THIS MINISTRY YOU ARE INVITED TO BE AN **AMBASSADOR****

- **SHARING GOOD NEWS**...radiating your faith in Christ in a joyful, positive way...offering the exciting word that this church is an alive family of faith, touching many lives, where people serve and grow
- **LISTENING**...caring compassionately to hear the concerns and joys of fellow members, offering sincere love to those you visit
- **ENCOURAGING MEMBERS AND FRIENDS TO REFLECT ON THEIR CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT**...sharing your own commitment and leading others to consider the level of their own discipleship in Christ's mission here
- **OFFERING AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMIT**...freely sharing the goals and challenges of this ministry, encouraging a thoughtful generous response
- **SAYING "THANK YOU"**...affirm the unique gifts of every member and express gratitude for each member's sharing of time, talent and financial resources

***"We are now Christ's ambassadors, as though God were appealing directly to you through us"***

II Corinthians 5:20

## WHAT IS OUR STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT

We express the meaning and purpose of life by serving God and other people. Human need is limitless, calling on us to serve others as we are endowed by God. Our service is accomplished in part by our giving. We need to learn to give gratefully from the abundance we have received from God in response to God's love and grace in Jesus Christ.

***“They gave according to their means and beyond their means of their own free will, but first, they gave of themselves”***

II Corinthians 8:3

The scriptures teach and the Christian Church has practiced proportionate or percentage giving. The use of a self-assessed percent of our substance in the service of humanity as an expression of love and gratitude to God is stewardship commitment. As we grow in love of God and neighbor, we voluntarily increase the proportion.

The emphasis of this stewardship commitment program is the enlistment of every member of the congregation in the mission of Christ through the church. The need of everyone to give in proportion to God's blessings comes first. The church can always channel the use of the total amount we are willing to give.

***The important response to which we direct our efforts is encouraging everyone to give. What is important is not only what money does for the church, but also what giving does for those who give.***

This is how one should regard us

as

**SERVANTS of CHRIST**

and stewards of the mysteries of God

I Corinthians 4:1

“The stewardship question is not really how much will we give? The stewardship question is how we spend what we have been given.”

Ann Weems

### **STEWARDSHIP OBJECTIVES**

Every member of the congregation is being asked to consider prayerfully moving toward tithing. An important part of the visits will be sharing and interpreting this objective.

Of course, gifts of any amount will be gratefully received; however, if this congregation is to grow in its faith and in its ability to minister more effectively, members will need to give serious consideration to the challenge. For many, moving toward a tithe represents an opportunity to make a significant increase in commitment to Christ and the church.

Be eager to share the mission and ministries of the church and how lives are transformed by these good works:

(Share a copy of the church's vision and mission statements and a narrative ministry overview)

**MAKING THE CALLS**

1. Coordinate with your partner, if you are calling with another person. Which one of you will be prepared to take the lead? Who will respond to questions and add to the discussion?
2. Consider carefully the assignments you have been given. Ask yourself: what might I share with these people to awaken their interest and encourage their generous commitment? You have no “script,” but are encouraged to tailor your approach to each specific situation.
3. Call on those members first who you and the stewardship committee feel are the most likely to respond generously. Generally people who are regular attendees at worship and other church functions and who give on a regular basis are the people you will want to call on first.
4. See each individual or family in person. It is impossible to make a more effective call in any other way. A face to face discussion about the church and your personal commitment increases the positive outcome of every visit.
5. Pray. Ask to be an effective ambassador for Christ and the church.
6. Share your enthusiastic commitment. Why are you excited about this church and committed to its ministry both in principal and financially? Your commitment can have a substantial impact on the decisions of others.
7. Interpret the narrative ministry overview and reasons for giving. Most people will be able to give even more than they are currently. Do not be hesitant to discuss percentage giving, tithing and your own commitment to the church.
8. Offer to return at a specific time if an individual or family indicates an inability to make a commitment at the time of the call. If at all possible retain the commitment card and bring it back at the next visit.
9. Thank those you visit for the opportunity to meet with them, expressing your gratitude for each member’s commitment to Christ’s church.
10. Remember that this visit is being conducted for the Church of Jesus Christ. You have two things in common with each individual or family you meet: a common confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and membership in this part of Christ’s body, this church. Approach your calls with optimism, expectancy and prayer.

***“God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work...You will be enriched in every way for great generosity...”***

II Corinthians 9:8, 11

## SOME COMMON QUESTIONS

Church members will respond to your visits and the challenge to commitment in different ways. You will want to reply from your own convictions, but a few suggestions may be helpful.

1. “I can’t possibly commit that much.” Gifts of any amount are welcome; however, people need to be challenged in order to grow in their giving and their faith. Ask the person what they might be able to commit at this time. It is important to encourage them to make a commitment at some level.
2. “I don’t like being told what to give.” Proportionate giving is not intended to tell anyone what to give. Proportionate giving, moving toward a tithe, is designed to help us all grow in our faith and to adopt a theology of abundance and gratitude to God for all we have been given.
3. “I’m not ready to decide yet, but if you leave the commitment card, I’ll mail it to the church.” Try to avoid leaving the commitment card. Most will forget their promise amid the pressure of many responsibilities. Arrange a time to return to receive their commitment. Many people will respond positively to your willingness to return.
4. “I don’t believe in making a commitment.” All of us believe in making commitments in one way or another. Examples of our day-to-day commitments include mortgages, installment loans, and credit card purchases. Such commitments are essential to responsible planning by the church’s leadership. You may want to share why the discipline of making a commitment is important to you.
5. “I’m angry with the church about... .” In this instance it is most useful simply to listen and perhaps to correct any misunderstanding. Your role is not to defend the church but to be a caring friend from the congregation.
6. “We support many community projects and there is little extra for the church.” Most church members are involved in the community but the church can only turn to its members for support. Many members reconsider their other financial involvements when the church asks them to give priority to this ministry.
7. “I have some questions. Can you help me?” If members have specific concerns that you cannot address volunteer to get the information and report back to them and then make sure you do!
8. “I don’t know how much longer I’ll be in the community.” Of course none of us can see the future clearly. Remind this member that commitments can be adjusted if necessary but that it is important to commit.

5  
**IN SUMMARY**

1. **BE COMMITTED YOURSELF.** Make your own commitment first by offering it at the commissioning service during the Sunday worship service. Make your own gift a challenge and an example to others.
2. **BE PREPARED FOR EACH VISIT.** Think and pray about your approach. Study the narrative ministry overview and other materials. Most people will commit when they are convinced that a ministry is worthy and will accomplish something in which they believe.
3. **SEE EACH INDIVIDUAL OR FAMILY IN PERSON.** The best way to talk about the importance of the church and achieve the most substantial contributions is through a face-to-face visit. The success of this stewardship program is too important to the church and its members to solicit gifts in any other fashion.
4. **SHARE YOUR CONVICTIONS IN A FRIENDLY AND CONFIDENT MANNER.** Many people will be acquainted with the work of the church but will be seeking further information and a better understanding of why it's so important to give.
5. **CHALLENGE PEOPLE TO WORK TOWARDS TITHING.** The church's mission and ministry needs cannot be met by "out-of-pocket" donations neither can people's growth in their faith. Keep your sights high and invite everyone to participate fully.
6. **DO NOT APOLOGIZE BECAUSE YOU ARE ASKING FOR MONEY.** You are asking for a new commitment to Christ and Christ's ministry through the church. For everyone this is a wonderful opportunity.
7. **MAKE A SECOND VISIT IF NECESSARY.** Commitment cards that are left are rarely returned or often result in token gifts. Commit yourself to following through with your calls as necessary in person.
8. **REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE THE KEY TO SUCCESS.** Your willingness to work, commit generously and talk with others about this church and this opportunity can and will transform lives and enhance the mission and ministry of this church.

**GUIDE FOR VISITING STEWARDS**

(This sheet can be used as a work sheet for training visiting stewards. Ask each person to first individually write responses to each prompt and then to share his/her responses with a partner. The responses can help to provide a “script” for the visits.)

These are the ministries at \_\_\_\_\_ Church that my family and I particularly enjoy

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My hopes and prayers for the future of \_\_\_\_\_ Church include

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My family and I give regularly to \_\_\_\_\_ church because

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One way I have seen God working in my own life lately is

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