

Uniting Presbyterian Church in South African

Stewardship Program of Action 2009 - 2012

1. Introduction

This is a denominational Stewardship programme of action, which spells out how the stewardship work will be carried for the stated period above. It describes the strategic goals, objectives and desired outcomes. It also outlines the motive for stewardships as well as the purpose of the stewardship committee.

2. The Vision and Strategic Goals of the Programme

Stewardship is a key dimension of the programme of renewal of the UPCSA community through its mission priorities. In this manner the goal of the Stewardship programme at the level of the denomination is to contribute to renewal and the establishment of a giving, sharing, caring, just, reconciling and uniting community of the UPCSA in which all resources are managed equitably to the glory of God and in celebration of our diversity.

The programme has identified, among others, the following objectives to attain its Vision:

- *Awareness campaigns, targeting major gatherings of our denomination.*
- *Training of trainers*
- *Leadership development*
- *Working closer with our Church councils*
- *Developing a program that will assist in teaching about the importance of assessments.*
- *Management and Administration*

2.1. Desired outcomes

The success of the Stewardship programme will be measured against the following outcomes:

- *A renewed, UPCSA community that is aware of stewardship teachings.*
- *A UPCSA community with plenty of trainers at all levels of the Church.*

- *A UPCSA community with identifiable and vibrant leadership.*
- *A UPCSA Community that is able to provide tools for the understanding of assessments.*
- *A UPCSA Community that has improved management and administration systems*

There could be more other desired outcomes, the point however is to underline the fact that our output must be measured against clear outcomes.

The first phase should be about Education and Training – “**New life through Planned Giving**” is to be our theme.

General Assembly Stewardship Committee

The purpose of the committee is as follows:

- Endeavour to make Christian Stewardship a major area of concern for the entire denomination by providing valuable teaching and training material for use by Presbytery Sessions and Church Associations.
- Embark on Leadership Development
- Provide tools for the understanding of assessments and improving overall management and administration systems.
- Develop a program that will assist in teaching about the importance of assessments and Christian giving.
- This committee has also been tasked as one of its main priorities to produce a manual for Stewardship Training and education.

This will be done through the following activities:

- Training sessions – **Training the trainers**
- **Training Stewardship Promoters**
- Use leaflets and other educational reading materials to promote Christian Stewardship.
- Introduction of Pledge Cards and Envelopes
- Commend to congregational membership the principle of “**Give as You Receive or Give as you are blessed**”
- Teach the **Simplicity of Living**.
- Challenge them to consider the Church when making **Wills and Bequests**.
- Remove false ideas about **Giving- (We give because we have been given)**
- Building confidence/ accountability – **Annual Reporting - Appreciation**.
- Fundraising principles: People are more likely to give when asked. If you want money you must ask.
- Rectifying faulty methods of handling church money.
- Visitation: People are more important than money, in the Life and Mission of the Church.

An approach to Stewardship Ministry

- Encouragement and motivation through constant communication
- Introduction of Twelve keys to an Effective Church
- Introduction of the Basic Principles of Stewardship to Sunday school members and converts.
- Develop Promotional Programme – Testify about the church and congregation’s story so that members can understand how their giving helps to continue and expand that work.
 - Tell the story many times and in ways that are interesting and personal.
- **Determine Commitment Sunday:** People to be given the opportunity to pledge their support publicly.
- **Special Sermons by Ministers:** Sermons reflecting upon Mission of the Church, Stewardship and Attitudes to the giving of money can be particularly helpful at this time.

SUGGESTIONS

- Congregations to be encouraged to observe an ‘**Annual Thank Offering Day**’, where members offer what they have determined as a thanksgiving to God that particular year.
- Set a date in September every year – (To mark Union) – embark on a fundraising project for **Mission and Service Fund**.

NB: *The words Mission and Service are used to remind the Church that all of its work is about Mission, and that it provides a means of Service remembering that we are meant to be serving God’s people.*

The meaning and motive of stewardship

- It is an integral part of Christian teaching that has been neglected for far too long.
- It has been practiced as far as giving money is concerned.
- However, money is by no means its only or indeed its main concern
- The motive of stewardship is that we do not give of our resources simply because the Church is in need, but in glad response to God’s amazing gifts to us (e.g. the gift of life).
- It is a Christian responsibility over the whole area of life.

Aims of the Stewardship Program

- To develop a deeper ‘one to one’ relationship with our God
- To be open to change in our understanding of Church – to experience being part of the ‘body of Christ’
- To grasp a ‘vision’ for what God requires of us and our congregation/church community.
- Look at our role in the Church community
- Honour God in establishing a firm economic basis to enable His Church to effectively function.
- To proclaim the Kingdom of God in every possible way we can, in every area of life.

Responsibilities of Presbyteries and Congregations

To ensure positive communication and smooth sailing of process Presbyteries and Congregations are urged to

- Elect of Stewardship Conveners
- Elect Stewardship Committees in Presbyteries and Congregations.
- Identify people with passion for stewardship program to be Stewardship Promoters
- These people will be trained through clusters and Presbyteries to be Trainers and to spread the messages of the Stewardship Program.
- Stewardship Promoters in Congregations, to work closely with Ministers.

NB: - If possible these should be people who have an overall vision of the Church's Mission of outreach, who will be able to propose new challenges and to deepen commitment to the causes of Christ's Church!

For further information you can contact

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