

Stewardship Ministry Wheel introduction

For pastors and congregational stewardship leaders

Introduction

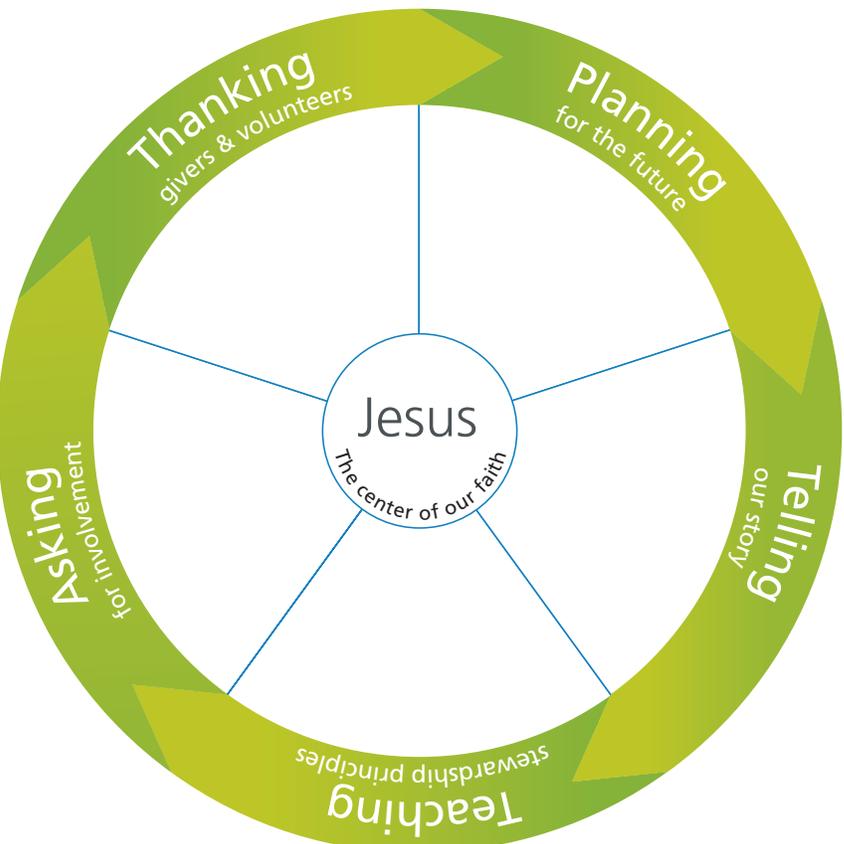
Everence® has developed a model, a Stewardship Ministry Wheel, to help churches think more systematically about this ministry and exploring its main areas. The wheel is adapted from the Lake Institute seminar, *Cultivating Generous Congregations*.

It's in the shape of a wheel because stewardship ministry tends to follow a kind of annual cycle, year in and year out (budgeting, asking, thanking, etc.). We've identified five basic parts on the wheel, even though you may not cover each part equally each year, and you may not exactly follow this sequence.

Five parts of wheel

Now let's look at the wheel in a little more detail. It helps churches to review how many ways people can give to their ministry.

- **Planning for the future** usually involves evaluating the past, reviewing how things are going and planning for what we need to do going forward.
 - It may involve other leadership groups as well, such as the church board, to review the vision and mission of the congregation.
 - It can also involve reviewing capital needs at the church (does the roof



need to be replaced?), the use of an endowment and setting staff salary and benefits.

- What topics do you include in your planning discussion?
- Has your leadership group ever used a resource, like reading a book or attending a seminar on generosity, to stimulate its thinking?

- **Telling our story** is about how you share your vision for ministry with your congregation.
 - It can include preaching, testimonies from people whose lives have been touched by the ministry of the church, etc.
 - This can also include the use of narrative budgets, using stories to promote our ministry budget



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rather than just a line-item listing of accounts.

- Has your church explored narrative budgets? How did it work?
- How often do you preach about money?
- **Teaching stewardship principles** often happens in Sunday school classes, small groups or other settings. It can include classes on money management (such as *Financial Peace* by Dave Ramsey), estate planning for Christians, youth and money, etc.
 - Have you had classes in this area during the last several years? On what topics?
 - What classes do you think would be helpful?
 - We recommend a money management class be offered at least every two or three years because of new people in the church, etc. It can also be an outreach to the community. Everence can help with this.
- **Asking for involvement** is an area we encourage churches to think about differently. Are there multiple ways people can give to the church?

How many channels are open for money to come in? (Weekly offerings, electronic giving, special events, capital projects, etc.)

- Does your church use an annual commitment program, such as pledges? How do you ask people to support the ministry?
- Does your church invite people to leave bequests to the church in their wills/estate planning?
- Do your older members know how to give from their Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) and experience possible tax savings?
- **Thanking givers and volunteers** is probably self-explanatory. It's a well-developed practice among nonprofit organizations (such as colleges, hospitals and other community agencies), but in the church ... not so much!
 - How does your church thank people for their gifts to the church?
 - Are there additional things you'd like to do?

Using the wheel

- Consider choosing two or three items to work at during this year.

Don't try to do it all. This is a multi-year process; a church won't accomplish everything in one year.

- **Books:** Maybe your leadership would like to choose a book to read and discuss together.
 - We'd encourage you to begin by reading *Bounty* or *Embracing Stewardship*.
 - Pastors may want to read *Preaching and Stewardship*.
- **Seminars:** Maybe you want to attend a seminar, such as *Cultivating Generous Congregations*.
- **Everence:** Maybe you'd like Everence staff to lead a seminar or a Sunday school class for your church.
- **Meeting:** Maybe you'd like your Everence Stewardship Consultant to meet with your stewardship committee or church board to walk through the stewardship wheel together and brainstorm about resources and possible next steps.

In conclusion

- **Plans:** What items would you like to see worked on in your church over the next few years?
- **Everence:** How can I or other Everence staff be helpful?