

St. Luke's Stewardship Story 2021 – 2023
Reflections, Lessons Learned & A Few Tips

Prepared by Karen O'Brien, Senior Warden Emerita & Stewardship Committee Co-Chair
Representing the Stewardship Committee of
St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Auburn, CA

1. Start planning early for fall pledge campaign
 - a. Conduct first Stewardship Committee meeting – March or April
2. Recruit enthusiastic volunteers for Stewardship Committee
 - a. One-on-one recruiting is best
 - b. Find folks with diverse skills & experience
 - c. Encourage volunteers to articulate what aspects of work they want to do
3. Recognize and respect group dynamics
 - a. Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing (FSNP) describe the four stages of psychological development a team goes through as they work on a project. Teams move through each stage as they overcome challenges, learn to work together and eventually focus on accomplishing a shared goal.
 - b. Be patient; it takes time to get through these stages
4. Determine the role of Rector and other clergy in Stewardship Committee
 - a. Lay led campaign?
 - b. Rector led campaign?
 - c. How does Rector see his/her role? Don't assume you know.
5. Start with Scripture
 - a. Build your theme with Scripture as foundation
6. Explain theme to your parish
 - a. Create an 'elevator speech' that explains your theme
 - b. Not everyone will have the same understanding of the theme that the Stewardship committee has
 - c. Provide document that explains the theme, its spiritual and theology foundation
7. Establish clear roles and responsibilities among Stewardship Committee members
 - a. Put it in writing
 - b. Practice 'highest and best use' principles in determining roles & responsibilities
8. Keep Vestry informed on progress at key milestone points (e.g., when the theme is finalized, the Fall campaign mailing goes out)
 - a. Vestry members are strong allies once the fall campaign begins
 - i. They are also additional arms & legs in making phone calls & writing thank you notes
9. Don't wing it!
 - a. Make a plan & put it in writing

- i. You can change direction if needed, but you need a plan to drive activity
 - b. Create a marketing calendar and put *every* activity on it
- 10. Establish multiple touch points (communication/messages) to use throughout the campaign (e.g., E-newsletter articles, bookmarks handed out during worship, personal testimonies, e-mail blasts).
- 11. Celebrate with your parish!
 - a. Campaign Kick-Off Luncheon
 - b. Ministry Fair
 - c. Gratitude Lunch at end of campaign
- 12. Be transparent, but be confidential
 - a. Stewardship shouldn't be a big black hole that only Clergy and committee know about
 - b. Keep individual pledges confidential, but share the topline number with the parish
 - i. Limit the number of people (2) who have access to individual pledges even within the committee
- 13. Starting to feel like it's a slog? Amp up messaging!
 - a. The Parish will respond to the committee's and Vestry's passion for stewardship, so keep up your enthusiasm even when it feels challenging
- 14. Focus is not money
 - a. Educate your parishioners that stewardship is more about discipleship than it is about financial commitment
 - b. Reinforce this message multiple times during your campaign
 - c. St. Luke's used "*Every pledge matters, every pledge counts!*" as campaign tagline to communicate no pledge is too small or large
- 15. Ask for help!
 - a. Ask Vestry to make phone calls to parish members who have not pledged yet
 - b. Ask the Rector to contact people who have been historically generous pledgers
 - c. Have Vestry send thank you notes, engage other ministry leads
- 16. You've got to have a scarf or necktie for each activity
 - a. Planning on holding a ministry fair? Assign a committee member as the lead for that activity.
 - i. Make sure all others take their directions from that person
- 17. Don't get hamstrung by data
 - a. Understand the financial dynamics of the parish is important, but don't wait until you have all the data you'd like to have to start work
 - b. Jump in the pool and trust that God has put water in it!
- 18. Data is not the driver!

- a. Stewardship is a faith/heart activity reflective of our love of God; make sure your campaign has that at its core, not numbers
19. Meet as a committee regularly (2 – 3 times per month)
20. Have a written agenda for every Stewardship Committee meeting
- a. Will result in more productive meetings
 - b. Avoid getting derailed off the agenda
21. Debrief at the end of the campaign
- a. Dedicate one meeting to discussing what went well, what didn't go well and what could be changed for future years
 - i. Make sure to record this information for future committees
22. Be kind to each other!
- a. Seems so obvious, but worth repeating
 - b. Say "thank you," compliment the work of other Committee members, praise them to others in the parish