Planned Giving Reprintables

*WELS Ministry of Christian Giving has edited and approved the following resources for your church to customize (when necessary) and use as needed. They are intended to encourage members about good stewardship practices and to inform them about ways to make planned gifts to benefit your church and other WELS ministry. Consider using them at your website, in bulletins or newsletters, etc. To use, modify as you’d like. Then highlight the text and copy and paste it (Ctrl-C, Ctrl-V) where you want it to go.*

*The first article is from Stewardship Advisors. To learn more, visit* [*www.stewardshipadvisors.org*](http://www.stewardshipadvisors.org) *or call Ron Chewning at 888-783-2790. WELS Ministry of Christian Giving obtained permission to share this.*

Living a Stewardship Lifestyle

When we discuss stewardship, we may immediately start to think of giving our time and money. Stewardship certainly involves giving and serving, but, even more, our stewardship is incorporated into a way of life. It does not consist of just isolated events. When God’s Word and love fill our hearts and minds, our stewardship becomes a lifestyle. As a lifestyle, it defines who we are and what we do. It is our vocation. With transformed hearts, we express our faith in the way we live our lives. Through faith, God provides motivation and power to live the Christian life in a growing awareness of redeeming grace.

In defining stewardship, the Rev. W.H. Greever once wrote, “Christian stewardship is the practice of the Christian religion. It is neither a department of life nor a sphere of activity. It is the Christian conception of life as a whole, manifested in attitudes and actions.” Our faithful stewardship, as it reflects God’s love, becomes our approach to life. It is more being than doing. Our deeds of stewardship such as using time wisely or helping the needy arise out of being stewards. Stewards are who we are. Stewardship is a whole life response to God out of gratitude and thanksgiving for all of his love, goodness, and mercy. Theologian T.A. Kantonen wrote, “The life of stewardship is nothing less than ‘total devotion’ to the Christ who is known as a real, living personal presence in the hearts of believers, a genuine loyalty that is expressed not in mere opinion or sentiment but in character and conduct.”

It does not take talented people to be faithful stewards, but it takes all there is of us. It takes our total commitment. Stewardship is our response to God’s abundant grace in all aspects of life. This faithful stewardship is only possible when we acknowledge our sinfulness and our forgiveness through faith in Christ. God gives us faith so he can use us to carry out his plan, which is to save all people. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, we acknowledge God in all things and in all places. As faithful stewards, we know that all we have belongs to him so we can give generously of our time, talents, and money.

An Annual Gift—Even after You’re Gone

Did you know there’s a gift option that allows you to continue your yearly offerings to [Church Name], even after you go home to heaven?

Let’s say you give $5,000 annually to [Church Name]. You do not want to see any negative impact on [Church Name] after you go to heaven. The answer is to designate a $125,000 gift, which can be done through your estate plan, toward an endowment fund benefiting [Church Name]. If the fund distributes four percent of the three year rolling average to [Church Name] for perpetuity, that will be $5,000 per year every year. The annual amount could even increase depending on the growth of the endowment fund. (To determine the size of the endowment gift you need to make to cover your annual giving, take your annual gift amount times 25.)

Through WELS Foundation, an individual, family, congregation, or WELS organization can set up an endowment to benefit any WELS ministry. If interested, contact WELS Christian giving counselor, [counselor name], at [counselor phone] or [counselor e-mail] for guidance.