

MONEY: MASTER OR SERVANT?

A Project of the Generosity Network of the Northeastern Iowa Synod, ELCA

This project has grown out of a combination of training Network members received through the Evangelical Outreach and Congregation Mission Unit of the ELCA, and workshops on stewardship led by Dr. Mark Allan Powell, Professor of New Testament Studies at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio, in which our clergy members participated.

The objective of the project has been to develop materials congregations in the Synod can use to facilitate a discussion to help members define and clarify the values that guide their personal and family financial management decisions and translate those values into actionable goals and strategies.

The materials at this point consist of three printed pieces: “Writing a Personal Money Autobiography”, “Some Guidance from God’s Word”, and a worksheet “My Values and Goals to Enable Me to Live Them Out”, plus a Power Point slide set covering all three of the printed pieces.

Availability and Use of the Materials

The three printed pieces and accompanying Power Point slide set can be accessed at <http://www.neiasynod.org/ministries/stewardship> and reproduced by congregations as needed. They are not copyrighted. “Writing a Personal Money Autobiography” and “Some Guidance from God’s Word” are in Microsoft Word format. The “My Values and Goals to Enable Me to Live Them Out” worksheet is in PDF format. Congregations may use any combination of the parts and pieces of the materials that meet their needs and fit into their programming.

We suggest that the Money Autobiography would be most effective as a pre-discussion “homework” assignment. Participants in our test group indicated that although they don’t like “homework” that the exercise is worthwhile.

We envision that this material could be presented by a team consisting of a pastor and a congregation member or members with background and experience in financial planning, banking or a related field. Depending on the interest and willingness of the team members and participants to engage in expanded discussion of specific “application” topics additional material could be added. There is good personal financial management material available from a variety of sources – we would specifically mention the Iowa State University Extension Service as a recognized source of objective materials.

This project is a “work in progress”. The Network would welcome suggestions both for possible improvements of the materials and ideas for using it more effectively. Comments can be directed to Rev. Mark Anderson at the Synod Office or to Al Charlson (alphylc@aol.com).

Generosity Network

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