

Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

1 Timothy 4:12

June

Stewards in Formation:

Children, Youth and Young Adults



Will our children be stewards?

Adults: Are we attending to the spiritual formation and practical instruction of our children, youth and young adults as Paul did with young Timothy? Are we respecting and encouraging their discipleship and leadership? Are we tuned in to their sincere faith?

Youth and young adults: Do you know the gift of God that is within you? Are you good stewards of your body, your friends, your money, your stuff? Do you want to change the world?

“Adolescents are looking for a soul-shaking, heart-waking, world-changing God to fall in love with; and if they do not find that God in the Christian church, they will most certainly settle for lesser gods elsewhere... So will we.”¹ While we will involve children, youth, and young adults as stewards year-round, it is good to lavish special attention on our “stewards in formation.”

As centers of hope and transformation, local churches will cultivate the life of the spirit, and the spirit of generosity, of all stewards in the Household of God and assist parents in their awesome responsibilities.

SUGGESTED LEADERS/PARTNERS:

Stewardship, Christian Education, Youth and Young Adult ministries.
Conference outdoor ministries.

IDEAS FOR LEADERS:

(Resource Websites and links: www.ucc.org/stewardship,
www.uccvitality.org/resources)

- **Continue the sermon series** with “Will Our Children Be Stewards?”
- **Focus** on one *God’s Gifts, My Gifts* lesson in Sunday school each week. Have parents explore the lesson again with their children during the following week.
- **Choose** age-appropriate Bibles (see link at www.ucc.org/children).
- **Support** participation in the National Youth Event (Regional Youth Events in non-NYE years), Conference camping program, church service trip, etc. (check www.ucc.org/youth).
- **Support** your young adult (ages 18-30) participation in Conference, national, and ecumenical leadership events (check www.ucc.org/young-adults). Ask them to represent your congregation as delegates to Association, Conference and General Synod meetings.
- **Provide information** about UCC-related colleges and seminaries and discerning God’s call (find links at www.ucc.org/seminarians and visit www.askthequestion.org).
- **Address stewardship of human sexuality** with age-appropriate, medically accurate resources (see www.ucc.org/justice).
- **Offer** a parenting forum using resources like:
 - Children Learn What They Read: Seeing the Presence of God through Selected Storybooks*
 - Will Our Faith Have Children?* (Video Study Guide)
 - Beyond the News: Parenting Adolescents* (Video)
- **Consider** *Vacation Bible School Learning Design* for your VBS.

“Youth look to the church to show them something, Someone, capable of turning their lives inside out and the world upside down. Most of the time we have offered them pizza.”²

¹ Kenda Creasy Dean and Ron Foster, *The Godbearing Life: The Art of Soul Tending for Youth Ministry*, (Nashville: The Upper Room, 1998), 9.

² *Ibid.*, 9.