

*I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.*

John 10:10b

*Contribute a freewill offering in proportion to the blessing that you have received from the Lord your God.*

Deuteronomy 16:10

# November

Stewards of Life Abundant:

## Transformative Generosity



**T**he Bible starts out with a liturgy of abundance – a song of praise for God’s generosity. It keeps saying, “It is good, it is good, it is good, it is very good.”<sup>1</sup> Filled with God’s generosity, Jesus went around to people suffering from scarcity – of health, of acceptance, of power, of understanding – and replaced it with a gift of abundance. Jesus is well-schooled in the transformative generosity of God and in the conviction that if you share

your bread with the neighbor, the world will be made new. He knows that generosity isn’t something you just think about, it’s something you do.<sup>2</sup>

Stewardship presumes blessing and abundance. Jesus sums up the purpose of his ministry this way: that we “may have life, and have it abundantly.”<sup>3</sup> The real work of stewardship is the work of generosity in the spirit of Jesus. Our job is discernment of the ways in which all of us, including the church, already have “far more than all we can ask or imagine.”<sup>4</sup>

**As centers of hope and transformation, local churches will inspire generosity in the spirit of Jesus as a way of life.**

**SUGGESTED LEADERS/PARTNERS:**

Stewardship, Mission, Christian Education and Youth ministries.  
Association and Conference Stewardship/OCWM committees.

**IDEAS FOR LEADERS:**

(Resource Websites and links: [www.ucc.org/stewardship](http://www.ucc.org/stewardship),  
[www.uccvitality.org](http://www.uccvitality.org))

- **Continue the sermon series** with “Stewards of Life Abundant.”
- **Consult** *Inspiring Generosity* for help with stewardship theology, motivation, scripture, programs, understanding mission, presenting the budget and more.
- **Engage teens** with the “Stuff” chapter from *Way to Live*.
- **Engage youth** in God’s Gifts, My Gifts: “Share Love with Your Offering.”
- **Explore the practice of tithing** by encouraging the whole congregation (youth, teens, adults) to tithe one week’s income one Sunday of this month.
- **Celebrate “Our Church is 5 for 5”** with a poster and stickers (free) or plan to become 5 for 5 by contributing to One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, The Christmas Fund and Our Church’s Wider Mission-Basic Support.
- **Plan a stewardship program** using *Inspiring Generosity*, Stewardship Theme Materials, and “How Much Shall I Give” and “What Scripture Says about Giving” brochures.
- **Use StillspeakingMoney resources** to implement electronic giving to your church (see [www.ucc.org/stewardship/still-speaking-money](http://www.ucc.org/stewardship/still-speaking-money)).
- **Schedule movie nights** on this theme at church or in homes.

*You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity,  
which will produce thanksgiving to God.*

2 CORINTHIANS 9:11

*“Spiritual wealth is a matter of knowing how much we need,  
not how much we want.”*

DONNA SCHAPER

1 Walter Brueggemann, *Deep Memory, Exuberant Hope* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 69.

2 Walter Brueggemann, “Enough Is Enough” in *The Other Side Magazine*, November/December 2001.

3 *Inspiring Generosity* (Cleveland: Local Church Ministries, 2004), 3.

4 *Ibid.*, 5.