

*Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.*

1 Peter 4:10

# August

Stewards Gifted by God:

## Our Talents, Vocation and Life-long Learning



**A**ll are gifted by God and all are called. Generally the notion of call is understood as a calling to ministry, with a path that leads to ordination. But God grants persons varied talents and abilities and calls us all to serve in many ways. The process of discernment is a method of reflecting on life's journeys that can open us up to hearing God's voice urging us in a certain direction, whether in an educational or vocational path, love, a spiritual journey or some other aspect of life.<sup>1</sup>

The church is looked to by many for vision, direction, and courage. People long to know

the scriptures, to become articulate about faith, and to see more clearly the relationship between the gospel and the realities of the world. Life-long learning enables persons to discern the shape of discipleship throughout the changing course of their lives.<sup>2</sup>

**As centers of hope and transformation, local churches engage, in the tradition of Jesus, in discerning, cultivating and using the gifts of Christ's disciples for the common good.**

**SUGGESTED LEADERS/PARTNERS:**

Stewardship, Christian Education and Youth ministries.

**IDEAS FOR LEADERS:**

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

- **Continue the sermon series** with “Stewards Gifted by God.”
- **Help members discern** their spiritual gifts and call (find links at [www.ucc.org/young-adults/call.html](http://www.ucc.org/young-adults/call.html)). Offer a Bible study/forum to take inventories, share results, deepen understanding, and discern ways to use these strengths in church and all of life.
- **Conduct** a Time and Talent survey so leaders in each ministry area can call on those wishing to serve.
- **Engage teens** with the “Creativity” chapter in *Way to Live*.
- **Engage youth** in *God’s Gifts, My Gifts*: “DARE-2BU”
- **Provide information** about UCC-related colleges and seminaries and discerning God’s call (find links at [www.ucc.org/seminarians](http://www.ucc.org/seminarians) and visit [www.askthequestion.org](http://www.askthequestion.org)).
- **Invite your college students** to join STEP (Student Ecumenical Partnership), the national student ministry/network of the UCC and Disciples of Christ (see [www.stepnetwork.org](http://www.stepnetwork.org)).
- **Provide effective teaching ministries**, assisted by Partners In Education (link at [www.ucc.org/education](http://www.ucc.org/education)) area workshops and/or consultation (contact through your Conference office). Enhance learning with multicultural resources and resources that engage multiple ways of learning.
- **Contact United Church Press** – for curriculum, Bible study aids, and other education resources for congregations (800-537-3394, [UnitedChurchPress.com](http://UnitedChurchPress.com)).
- **Schedule movie nights** on this theme at church or in homes.

***“What is the one thing you can do in your congregation to call on the giftedness of members, and how would this affect mission?”<sup>3</sup>***

1 From [www.ucc.org/young-adults/call.html](http://www.ucc.org/young-adults/call.html)

2 “Toward a vision of education in the United Church of Christ,” United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, 1985, at [www.ucc.org/education/mission/#VISION](http://www.ucc.org/education/mission/#VISION)

3 Rochelle A. Stackhouse, *The Gifting God*, 12.