

And [Jesus] said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation.”

MARK 16:15

December

Stewards of the Gospel:

God Is Still Speaking ... Through Us



For Christians, being stewards of all life is grounded in the gospel. It is in the gospel that we find the meaning of our lives and the purpose of all our endeavors. The word “gospel” comes from the Greek word meaning “good news.” This was the word used by the New Testament writers for the great announcement by Jesus of what God was doing for humanity.

A church that is alive with the joy of the love of God made known in Jesus, experiencing

God’s intended shalom, is commissioned by Jesus to share that joy. In hope-filled worship we sing it; then go out to proclaim it. As we say with the evangelist, “But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us” (2 Corinthians 4:7), we claim our vocation as stewards of the gospel. We cannot keep it to ourselves. Living in a culture that is often indifferent or hostile to organized religion, many followers of Christ need just a little help to share their faith and personally invite others in ways that feel authentic to their faith experience lived out in the United Church of Christ.

As centers of hope and transformation, local churches celebrate the good news through the seasons of Advent and Christmastide by sharing it and by honoring those who have served the church by giving to The Christmas Fund.

SUGGESTED LEADERS/PARTNERS:

Stewardship, Worship, Evangelism/Growth/Outreach, Christian Education and Youth ministries.

IDEAS FOR LEADERS:

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

- **Continue the sermon series** with “Stewards of Good News!”
- **Promote The Christmas Fund** special mission offering (see www.christmas-fund.org).
- **Create a flyer** of your church’s Advent/Christmas worship and fellowship opportunities for members to post in their neighborhoods and use to invite family and friends.
- **Run welcoming ads** for your church in local media.
- **Offer a “Blue Christmas” service** for persons who are alone or grieving loss during the holidays. Encourage members to reach out and invite neighbors and friends.
- **Equip members** to share their faith and invite others (use *16 Ways to Say “I Love My Church,”* and *Are You Ready to Talk About Your Church?* brochures).
- **Share an invitation** to the UCC virtual Christian community at <http://i.ucc.org>.
- **Enrich and enliven worship** (see www.ucc.org/worship and www.uccvitality.org/resources Hope-filled Worship).
- **Schedule movie nights** on this theme at church or in homes.

How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news.

ROMANS 10:15B