



# Deepening Our Stewardship Formation Best Practices

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# Learning Objectives

1. Understand the importance of stewardship formation
2. Explore stewardship as discipleship
3. Learn six best practices to form stewards year-round
4. Discover three ways to connect money to ministry

*Introduction*

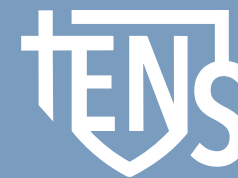




# Common Gaps in Stewardship Formation

- ▶ Money-talk happens rarely, feels jarring
- ▶ Theology often rooted in duty or fear
- ▶ Focus too narrow – forgets the 3Rs:  
**Resources, Relationships, Responses**

*Don't neglect the opportunity to teach about Stewardship throughout the year!*



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*Relationship & Formation*

# Stewardship as Discipleship

- ▶ Giving to a budget = transactional, finite
- ▶ Giving as a spiritual practice = transformational, abundant
- ▶ Stewardship is a way of following Jesus
- ▶ Stewardship is a constant prayer of gratitude – thanking the Creator for every gift and using it wisely for God’s purpose in the world



*Relationship & Formation*

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## Some Scripture Studies

- ▶ Matthew 25:14–30 – Parable of the Talents
- ▶ Luke 12:22–34 – Seek the Kingdom
- ▶ John 6:1–13 – Feeding the 5,000
- ▶ 1 Timothy 6:17–19 – Do good, be generous, share
- ▶ For a full list see our Resource Library for a *Stewardship Bible Study*



## Bible Study: Luke 12:22-34

He said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to your span of life? If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest?"

Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, you of little faith! And do not keep seeking what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. For it is the nations of the world that seek all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. "Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

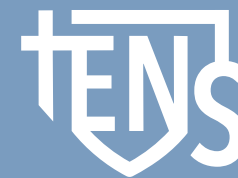
*Online Giving*

# It works – A story of Transformation

- ▶ Moving from fear to gratitude
- ▶ Deficit budgets and reliance on reserves
- ▶ Shift from scarcity to abundance mindset
  - ▶ **Eliminated deficit, expanded ministry**
  - ▶ **Increased number of households giving + 5%**
  - ▶ **Increased average gift size +3.9%**
  - ▶ **Increased volunteer hours committed +12 hours/avg**



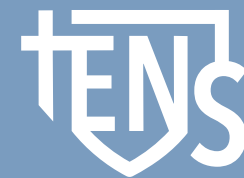
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# Six Best Practices - Overview

1. Preach and teach Stewardship year-round
2. Tie stewardship to liturgical seasons
3. Incorporate testimony and storytelling
4. Integrate stewardship into all ages
5. Celebrate impact visibly
6. Practice gratitude publicly

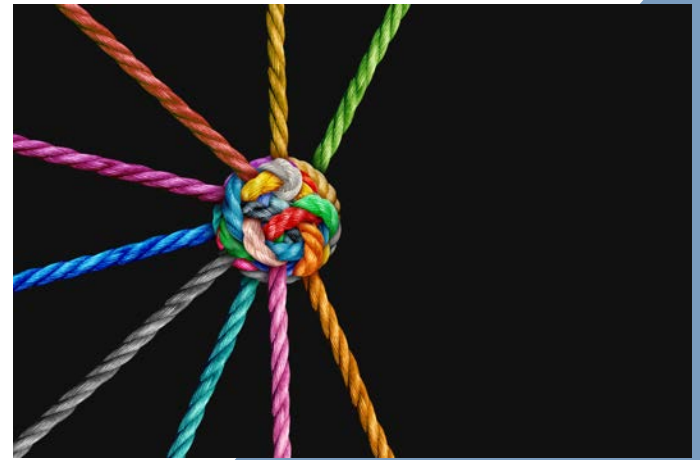


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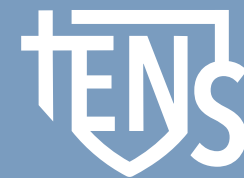
# Practice 1: Preach & Teach Stewardship

- ▶ Lift up stewardship themes in the lectionary
  - ▶ TENS monthly newsletter contains preaching tips and hints
- ▶ Connect scripture to the **3Rs**
- ▶ Normalize generosity in weekly worship through gratitude



## Practice 2: Tie Stewardship Formation to Liturgical Year

- ▶ Advent: Hope & preparation  
(Responses)
- ▶ Lent: Self-denial & giving (Resources)
- ▶ Easter/Pentecost: Resurrection life & community (Relationships)

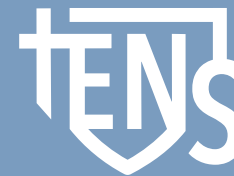


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# Practice 2: Tie Stewardship Formation to Liturgical Year

- ▶ Advent: To a world longing for change, we focus on our **gratitude** for all we have received and **communicate our hope** for justice and peace
- ▶ Christmas: The greatest gifts are the ones we give to each other through our **faithful generosity and abundant love**.
- ▶ Epiphany: We focus on how we are **Christ's body in the world** as we manifest God in our lives, families, and work
- ▶ Lent: Dust to dust is a powerful reminder that **planned gifts** are an essential part of faith-based fundraising and giving.
- ▶ Easter: Our faith and our works are alive, just as Jesus lives. Renewed with joy and refreshed by the waters of Baptism, we can't help but **shout our Alleluias to a world longing for love**.
- ▶ Pentecost: Our faith scatters us in all directions as we bring **healing, feeding, comfort, teaching, faith, and love** to a hungry world.

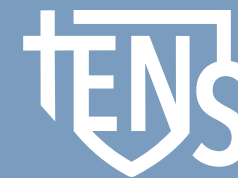
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# Practice 3: Testimony & Storytelling

- ▶ Invite members to witness: how they steward the **3Rs**
- ▶ Stories of grace resonate spiritually and practically with members
- ▶ Regular sharing, not just during pledge season
  - ▶ Consider announcements, newsletter articles, and social media posts / videos



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# Practice 4: Formation at Every Age

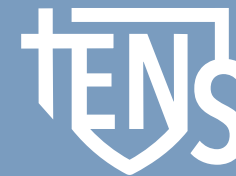
- ▶ Children: learning to share
- ▶ Youth: stewarding peer relationships
- ▶ Adults: faithful management of resources



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# Practice 5: Celebrate Impact

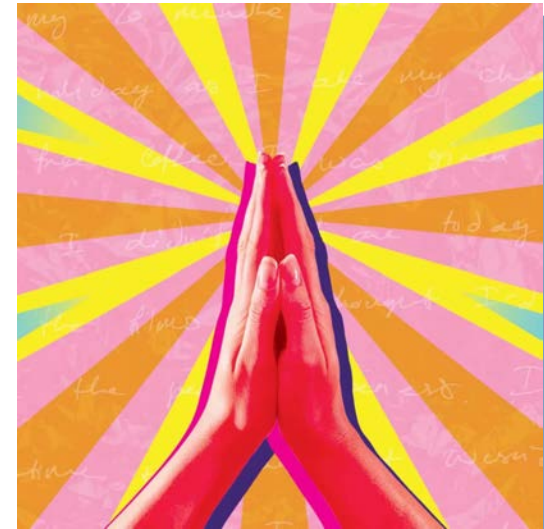
- ▶ Quarterly impact reports
- ▶ Show numbers + tell stories
- ▶ Highlight how **3Rs** are bearing fruit



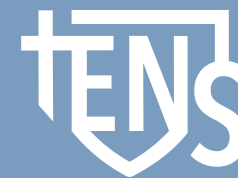
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## Practice 6: Gratitude

- ▶ Thank stewards of **all 3Rs**: resources, relationships, responses
- ▶ Gratitude as discipleship practice
- ▶ Not once a year – always
  - ▶ Daily habit
    - ▶ For what am I grateful today?
    - ▶ When you see someone doing something nice or good, thank them for it – not personally, but on behalf of humanity
  - ▶ Weekly habit
    - ▶ Write an email to colleagues, employees, family, or friends thanking them for particular things they did
  - ▶ Accept the gratitude of others toward you



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# Three Ways to Connect Money to Ministry

1. Impact data: meals, visits, programs
2. Stories & testimonials: lives transformed
3. Balanced communication: numbers + narratives



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## Example: Both Sides of the Story

- ▶ “Your giving provided 3,000 meals...”
- ▶ “These meals impacted neighbors and alleviated food insecurity”
- ▶ “...AND transformed the lives of parishioners who shared their testimony.”



Our Gifts are not transactional – they are **transformational!**

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## Next Steps

- ▶ Formation = discipleship, not dollars
- ▶ Stewardship = lifelong spiritual practice, rooted in **3Rs**
- ▶ Try one new best practice this year



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# Reflection & Discussion

- ▶ Which practice does your church already do well?
- ▶ Which one will you try next?



# TENS Theme for 2025

What is the good news that you cannot wait to share with the world? What stories do you have that need to be told, that can help others relate to the world around them? How do you inspire generosity in others by your words, actions, and witness?

The theme of our campaign materials this year focuses on our storytelling, on the way we tell our friends and neighbors about our faith, our ministry, and our mission. What is your good news?

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*And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior..."* **Luke 1:46-47, NRSV**

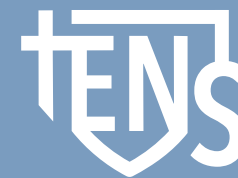
*Keeping the Conversation Going*



**Tell Out  
My Soul**



**Proclama  
mi alma**



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Thank you!

For more information, resources, and videos,  
find us at [www.tens.org](http://www.tens.org)

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