



# Introducing *Consecrated Stewards*

*Consecrated Stewards is a ministry of growth and commitment in which the people of God celebrate His gifts and grow in the joy of giving and serving.*

As congregations recognize the need to renew or give regular attention to activities essential to the mission of the church, with increasing frequency they are seeking help in the area of stewardship. Congregations are receptive to—even seeking—help to address their stewardship needs in a very direct way.

LCEF's Capital Funding Services has developed a resource to meet this stewardship need in congregations. This new resource is being made available through local administration in the District in order to fully address the needs of congregations.

## ***Consecrated Stewards* Raises Annual Giving by Raising Christian Stewards**

### ***Consecrated Stewards—Overview***

*Consecrated Stewards* is based on the need of the giver to give, not the need of the church to receive.

It is not tied to the church budget, and can be used at any time of year. Budget based emphases never raise more than what is needed to meet the budget. Stewardship emphases raise people to a new level of spiritual commitment and annual giving. Congregations often experience intentions of giving that exceed previous envelope giving by 15%-35%.

*Consecrated Stewards* is a stewardship education and commitment emphasis. It recognizes that churches that fail to talk about Christian stewardship on a regular basis often wind up talking about money all year long.

*Consecrated Stewards* is based on the Biblical principles of percentage-based, grace-motivated, sacrificial giving. It urges people to take a step forward in their stewardship life without pressure or legalism. It does not use gimmicks or fund-raising techniques. It emphasizes equal sacrifice, not equal amounts.

*Consecrated Stewards* ties the commitment process to the Sunday morning act of worship. It reaches the maximum number of people in the most spiritual setting. It does not have members asking other members one-on-one for a financial commitment.

*Consecrated Stewards* requires minimal organization:

- Four weeks of preparation and four weeks of emphasis.
- A working committee of eight.
- Usually only four committee meetings plus attention to ongoing stewardship.

*Consecrated Stewards* utilizes a trained facilitator to keep the process on track, maintain Biblical focus and avoid expensive shortcuts.

*Consecrated Stewards* raises Christian stewards, not just money. It is based on the need of the giver to give, not the need of the church to receive.

## Application

*Consecrated Stewards* is ideally suited for congregations that have struggled with effectively implementing stewardship programs or are looking for a fresh approach. Use of an outside consultant to guide the emphasis assures quality execution while uniquely bringing attention to the Biblical stewardship message. *Consecrated Stewards* is designed to be spiritually motivating rather than outcome driven. It is lightweight: quickly and easily organized, completes in a short timeframe, and relatively low cost.

## *Consecrated Stewards*—Features

- Builds on and enhances tested programs and resources from years of LCEF and LCMS stewardship experience and from Herb Miller’s “New Consecration Sunday” process.
- Three on-site visits plus phone support from a trained Guest Leader provide customized guidance, design, training and direction to the congregation and leadership.
- Celebration of Ministry. Each week during the four-week emphasis, a ministry of a group within the church is celebrated for their good stewardship of the gifts God has given. On Commitment Sunday a special Celebration Luncheon celebrates the ministry of all in the congregation and provides an opportunity for congregational fellowship and an occasion to announce the results of the morning’s commitment.
- Stewardship Journey Talks. Each week a member of the congregation gives a brief stewardship journey witness talk during the worship service. The Guest Leader provides encouragement and guidelines for such talks.
- “Giving Life to the Next Generation” Bible studies. These excellent Lutheran Bible studies are suggested for all Bible classes during the four-week period. Many pastors have also used the accompanying inserts as preaching outlines for sermons during the emphasis.
- Collateral Support. Publicity aids and logos (posters, bulletin inserts, announcements, etc.), sample letters and assistance in customizing those letters.
- Guest Leader Involvement. *Consecrated Stewards* Guest Leaders are specially trained and certified by LCEF. The Guest Leader leads a Bible study or mini-workshop on the Sunday before Commitment Sunday. On Commitment Sunday the Guest Leader brings the stewardship message and leads the commitment process.
- Prayer is essential to the process, supported by resource materials and guidance.

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**Footnote:** The Bible study materials and other resources produced by Capital Funding Services contribute a uniquely Lutheran perspective on stewardship.

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CFS has the permission and blessing of Herb Miller to use his “New Consecration Sunday” materials as a resource in *Consecrated Stewards*. CFS has the blessing of the LCMS Department of Stewardship to offer *Consecrated Stewards* to the congregations of Synod. Larry Reinhardt, Director of Stewardship (recently retired) encourages it as another tool to educate people about Biblical stewardship.