

FUMC Stewardship Plan

Our baseline numbers

- 250 members
- 150 giving units
- 30 pledges (20% of giving units)
- \$227,000 from pledged giving
- \$153,000 from unpledged giving
- \$1,798 FUMC average annual giving per member (2024)

FUMC Giving Trends (From May 2025 report by FMT Lead)

- Over 15 years – 1.0% Average annual growth and 0% Median growth rate
- Over 10 years – 2.1% Average annual growth and -1.1% Median growth rate
- Over 5 years – 1.7% Average annual growth and 0.0% Median growth rate

What does stewardship mean for FUMC?

At Franconia United Methodist Church, stewardship is a sacred calling—a joyful response to God’s abundant grace and Christ’s calling be loving disciples using our God-given gifts to serve our community. It’s how we care for and actively share the gifts we’ve been entrusted with: our time, talents, and treasures. Stewardship is love in action—nurturing our church, delivering mission-minded service to our community and the world, and planting seeds of hope for generations to come. Stewardship is intentional – placing personal and financial priority on supporting the church and cultivating the attributes of Christ in our lives.

Proposed objective of the plan

For the first year, increase the number of pledged givers (from 30 to 50) and increase our total giving by 10% (\$38,000) to stem the impact of declining account balances and increased expenses. Additionally, for the first year, increase the number of consistent, connected mission and ministry participants. *(Possibly add a creation care objective.)*

Proposed core elements of a year-round stewardship campaign

1. Theme – “Living the Jesus Way” - As proposed by Pastor Melissa. A multi-week opening sermon series beginning the first week of November.
2. It’s about mission – People give when they are emotionally connected to people and programs. This motivates increased and predictable funding.
3. The Stewardship Plan will essentially be a faith-based marketing plan with outreach and asks that are deliberately designed to inspire.
3. We’ll need to tailor our ask to various levels of givers.
4. We’ll need to get personal – The number one reason people give is because they are asked.
5. We’ll need to take advantage of multiple ways to communicate mission needs. It should reflect the diverse ways people absorb information – In reading, seeing/hearing and by doing/being directly engaged.
6. We’ll need to follow up, multiple times.
7. We’ll need to always say thank you and creatively show appreciation.
8. We’ll need to give this time.

Potential components for a 12-month plan

1. Personal Witness
 Mix of presentations, letters and short videos from members on why they give.
 Videos from recipients (those who have benefited from our giving).
 Mix of presentations, letters and short videos from members who take joy in ministries – i.e., from choir members, youth, and small groups.
2. Preaching
 From pastor, lay leader, or guest speaker/preacher.
3. Telling stories
 Humanizing our outreach.
4. An annual emphasis
 This will be year one of an ongoing effort.
5. Tithing

Showing people what it means to tithe.

Scheduling tithing months (May and September) – to challenge congregation and show impact.

6. Time and Talent

Asking members what moves them and letting them know where their participation would be welcomed.

7. Planned Giving

Tap District Office for material and person to make presentation.

8. Personal Financial Management

Tap UMC resources for presentations to members on how to continue to support the church through challenging financial times in their lives.

9. Realistic church budget building and management

Present congregation with a narrative budget that gives life to numbers.

10. Reliable accounting and reporting systems

Present quarterly reports on the human and personal impact members' stewardship are having.

11. Celebration

As objectives are realized, there needs to be some form of recognition and celebration.

Year-round actions to inspire stewardship

(For year one)

Initial actions in October:

One week before sermon series starts – Send joint letter from Pastor and Board Chair to all members encouraging pledging.

Separate pledge request to church leadership – Intent being to announce what is realized during the second week of Pastor's November sermon series.

November

- Pastor's stewardship sermon series.
- Presentation of Mission Impact Budget.
- Initiation of year-round stewardship campaign:
 - First week, introduce the campaign.
 - Second week, report on leadership pledge status.
- Distribution, collection, and blessing of Pledge Cards.
- Lay witness – “How my giving relates to thankfulness” (or another appropriate witness).
- Celebrate Thanksgiving.

December

- Share “Gifts that Give” flyer, providing members with options, beyond their normal offering, to select from or mix as they choose. Potentially “giving in honor” of someone:
 - Apportionment.
 - Mission of choice.
 - Gift cards for school and/or
 - Staff love offering.
- Encourage year-end giving through tax-wise generosity.
- Second Sunday – Mission Moment on how we did with pledges.

January

- Send thank you notes to those who pledged and remind them of the amount.
- Presentation by Associate Lay Leader for Becoming more like Jesus – How donations make the opportunities available.
- Lay witness – around Epiphany – “How my giving relates to the gifts of the magi and the gift of Jesus.”
- Stewardship Team develops stewardship education goals for the year.
- Prepare human interest articles for the church newsletter about what giving can accomplish in people's lives.
- Reach out to members who pledged in previous years but have not done so this year and are still active.

February

- Lay witness – “What giving means to me.”
- Pastor re-emphasizes vision for the ministry of the church.
- Offer a financial seminar using UMC resources.

March

- Lay witness – “How my giving relates to the sacrificial gift of Jesus.”
- Share information with new members on the relationship of giving to faith, using social media or some other medium.
- Send a quarterly statement of giving along with testimonies and stories about how donations have been used to help real people.

April

- Stewardship Team - Review any materials for the fall giving campaign.
- Set challenge for May to be a tithing month.
- Last Sunday - Have the FMT Chair deliver a presentation, with a follow-up letter, explaining the church’s funding position and the impact additional support could have.

May

- Select leaders for next year’s stewardship campaign.
- Memorial Sunday – Pastor to lead a seminar on “Planning Your Own Funeral.”
- Plan a tithing month activity – short video for e-news on how to tithe or a seminar using UMC resources.

June

- Invite a member originally from another country to share his/her stewardship experience.
- Report on how May tithing challenge went and send a quarterly statement of giving along with testimonies about how donations have been used to help real people.

July

- Invite small groups to share their dreams for the church’s ministry. Provide a means of feedback and opportunities for donations.
- Lay witness – “How my giving connects faith and living.”
- Prepare for Mission Fair in August.

August

- Presentation by Associate Lay Leader for Belonging to the Body of Christ – How donations support.
- Mission Fair.
- Set challenge for September to be a tithing month.

September

- Presentation by the Associate Lay Leader for Being Christ in the World – How donations support.
- End of September - Presentation on church goals for 2027 by FMT.
- Activate Stewardship Campaign Committee.
- Publish a “giving chart” in the church newsletter.
- Send a quarterly statement of giving along with testimonials and stories about how donations have been used to help real people.

October

- Report on how September tithing challenge went.
- Stewardship Team – Craft a plan for optional donations throughout the year, beyond normal giving. To distribute to members in January.

List of Potential Short Videos – Subject to volunteer availability, timing/relevance, and appropriate scheduling during the year

- Tithing Month activity – Short video for e-news on how to tithe.
- Young couple sharing what the church means to them and how they manage to tithe/give regularly.
- Witness video – “How my giving relates to the sacrifice of Jesus.”
- Long-time member sharing what this church has meant to them over the various phases of his/her life.
- Children’s ministry students and parents. Emphasizing how donations support ministry.
- Video featuring a youth – Potentially sharing what he/she would miss if don’t give.
- BMT lead sharing what it costs to keep the lights on and ensure safe and clean facilities for everyone to enjoy.
- Video of individual who has directly benefited from church’s mission/ministry outreach.