Stewardship See the Difference

A summary of the results of the National Stewardship Programme 2012-2013



While Jesus was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head...

The Church of Scotland

Stewardship and Finance

Introduction

In 2013 churches were invited to complete an evaluation form, indicating what their involvement had been in the National Stewardship Programme. Thus far there have been returns from 502 congregations.

The impact of a stewardship programme can be measured in many ways. Some people will speak about the spiritual vitality of a congregation being reignited, whilst others will speak purely in financial measurements. The truth is that there is no one barometer by which to gauge the success of a stewardship programme. Only by watching the stewardship programme unfold; listening to the congregation speaking about the programme; and worshipping in the months after the programme, do we begin to sense the impact the programme has had. With this in mind, the data below only scratches at the surface in measuring the impact of the stewardship programmes as it is purely a quantitative analyses. The data provides some indication however on the different successes of the National Stewardship Programme, as well as the challenges that face us in the years ahead.

The Stewardship and Finance Department offers two stewardship programmes:

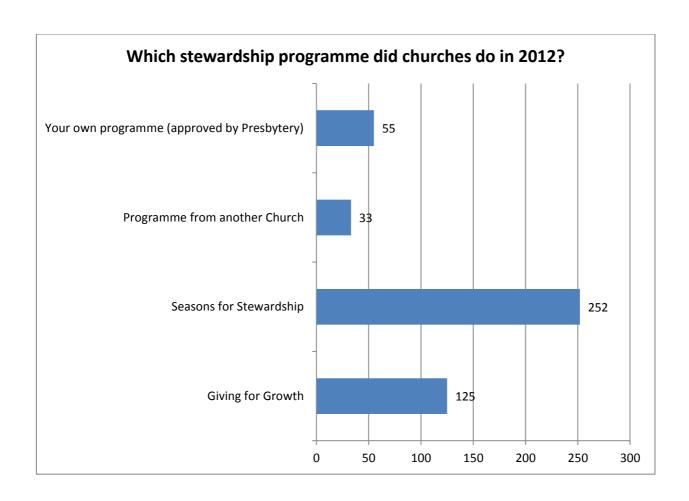
- Giving for Growth is the financial programme that enables churches to tackle their levels of monetary giving;
- Christian Seasons for Stewardship is a programme that offers churches the opportunity to develop a 3 year strategy to stewardship whereby one theme is chosen (from time, talents, and money) and this theme is the focal point of congregational life for at least a month.
 The following year, another theme is adopted – and so on.

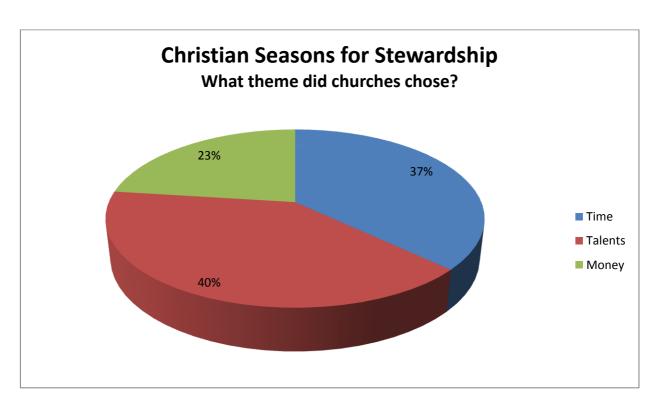
The General Assembly of 2011 also decided that in addition to the above programmes, churches could undertake their own stewardship programme (provided this was approved by Presbytery); or that churches could adopt a programme from another denomination.

Many churches have embraced the National Stewardship Programme. Some have been a little slower off the mark, and sadly others have yet to do anything meaningful. Likewise, some Presbyteries have been diligent in encouraging participation in the National Stewardship Programme, whilst others have been less so.

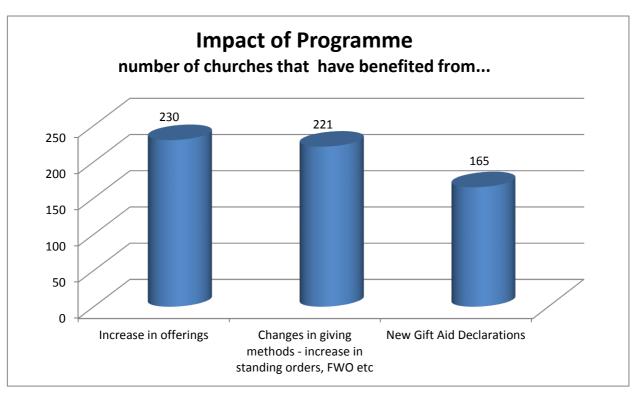
The data below will provide you with some analysis of the success and potential for further development within the National Stewardship Programme.

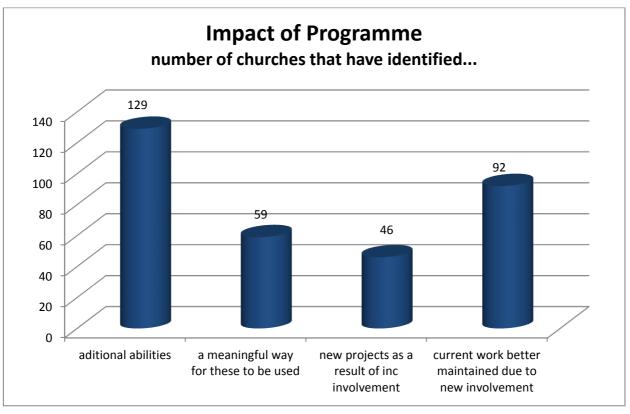
My hope is that the data will inspire your church to take stewardship seriously. If you wish to embark upon a stewardship programme, or if you wish advice on how to address stewardship concerns, you will find contact details of the Stewardship Consultants at the back of this book. Please do contact us for assistance.

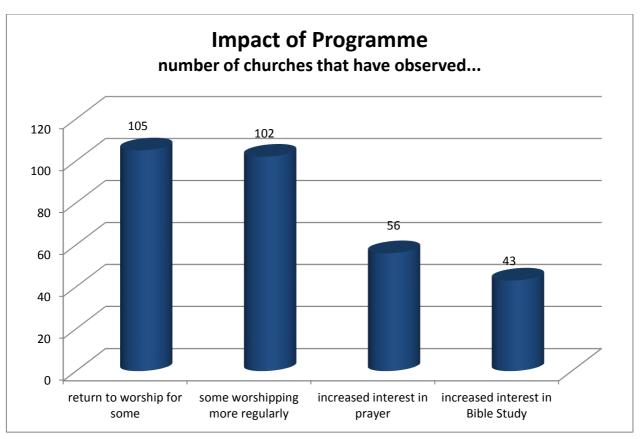


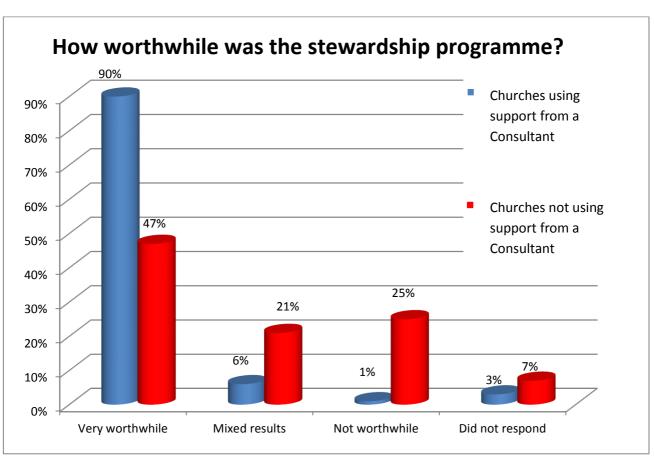


502 churches have completed and returned (by May 2013) their evaluation forms, but many of these respondents gave multiple answers when rating the impact of their programme. For this reason, the figures in the "impact" tables below show total number of respondents rather than percentages.



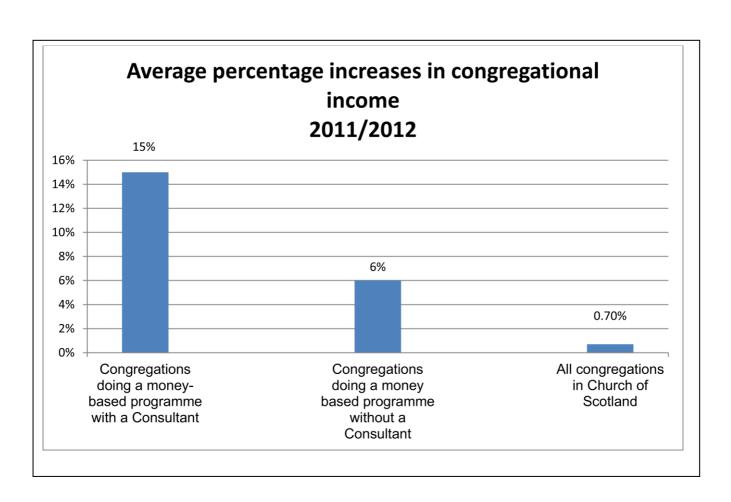






The data in the above chart indicates far greater levels of satisfaction with the stewardship programme when a Stewardship Consultant leads and enables. Note also the increased levels of dissatisfaction when no Consultant is present.

The financial analyses below would clearly support the argument that a Stewardship Consultant does make a difference in the impact of a programme. This data is for churches who did a stewardship programme in 2011 – full financial impact on financial results will not be known until 2 years after the programme (i.e. end of 2013), but the data provided shows the financial impact (on total congregational income) of a stewardship programme.



Looking ahead to the remainder of 2013, the emphasis is once again on the Christian Stewardship Season for the majority of our congregations. Only 30 respondents indicated they would be doing a Giving for Growth Programme, whilst 234 indicated they would be pursuing the Christian Seasons for Stewardship option. Many of those churches pursuing the Christian Seasons for Stewardship programme will be focusing on the theme of money (122 respondents to be precise).

A word on the National Stewardship Programme...

Our Stewardship Consultant was an essential, enthusiastic and motivating influence during the planning process of our stewardship programme.

Our planning began in November 2011 and our Gathering took place 6 months later - somehow, we even managed to induct a new Minister during all of this.





STRICHEN & TYRIE PARISH CHURCH

Oakshaw Trinity-a celebration



Our Stewardship Programme produced an increase in offerings of £17,228, plus an anticipated increase of £2817 in the annual tax reclaim.

The assistance given by the Consultant was invaluable in our planning and in the production of our material for the Giving for Growth programme.

At our Gathering we had pop-up banners, displays and leaflets explaining the impact of our giving locally, nationally and internationally.

We even found a new Minister during our Stewardship Programme - so we have plenty to celebrate.

For any advice or ideas on Stewardship Programmes for your church, please contact:

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