



The Church of Scotland

*challenge*

**TO THE  
CHURCH**

**National  
Stewardship  
Programme**

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to have this opportunity to introduce the National Stewardship Programme.

**WHAT is the National Stewardship Programme?**

The National Stewardship Programme allows our congregations the opportunity to think about how we use our time, talents and money in serving God. How do we cultivate these gifts, share them sacrificially, and return them to God with increase?

The National Stewardship Programme was launched in 2011 and has already provided opportunities for congregations throughout Scotland to respond to the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ by breaking the jar. The Stewardship Consultants are working alongside churches who are doing just that.

This information pack should assist your church in getting started. This information pack includes:

- an extract from the Report of the Council of Assembly to the General Assembly of 2011
- some guidance on getting started on the programme
- contact details for the Church's Stewardship Consultants
- details of the programme options provided by the Church of Scotland.

Please do contact me, or one of the Consultants if you wish any assistance.

Yours in Christ,

Alan Gibson

Rev Alan Gibson  
Head of Stewardship  
[agibson@cofscotland.org.uk](mailto:agibson@cofscotland.org.uk)

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2011

### Extract from the Report of the Council of Assembly

#### Deliverance (or Decision)

The General Assembly welcomed the proposals for a national stewardship programme and

- (a) agreed that the programme include a letter from the Moderator to every member of the Church;
- (b) agreed that there be national publicity for the programme; and
- (c) instructed Presbyteries to instruct their congregations to participate in this programme. (Section 3.1)

#### 3.1 National Stewardship Programme

**3.1.1** The General Assembly of 2010 passed a deliverance in these terms:

*Acknowledge the potential for increasing Christian liberality across the Church; resolve that the Church should embark upon a national stewardship programme and instruct the Council to bring detailed proposals for the implementation of such a programme to the General Assembly of 2011.*

**3.1.2** This instruction relates to the Christian giving of money by members and adherents of the Church. The Council understands a national stewardship programme to be a programme which gives stewardship a regular and ongoing place in the life of every congregation, rather than a 'one off' event which has few lasting benefits.

**3.1.7** The Council believes that a national stewardship programme must be based on the biblical principles of Christian giving:

we give in response to the generous giving of God  
we give to enable the sharing of the gospel through the work of the Church.

**3.1.8** In the light of recent experience, the Council believes that a national stewardship programme must be

able to increase stewardship activity throughout the Church  
adaptable to congregations of all sizes, locations and backgrounds  
susceptible to Presbytery oversight  
capable of running without a significant increase in staff costs  
adaptable for use at the right time in the life cycle of a congregation.

**3.1.9** Taking account of all that is said above, the Council proposes the following framework for a national stewardship programme:

Every congregation will be expected to take some action with regard to stewardship every year, with a focus on the giving of money at least every third year.

Congregations will be expected to adopt one of the following options:

- (a) The *Stewardship Season* approach, where the giving of time, talent and money are considered separately over a three year period, with a month each year being designated as the stewardship season. This approach provides the

opportunity to explore the various elements of Christian stewardship in an imaginative way, with the giving of money being considered every third year.

(b) The *Giving for Growth* programme, which is a more traditional stewardship programme designed to teach and promote the Christian giving of money and is a revised version of the pilot programme *Together we make a difference*. This programme offers a clear framework for congregations to review their giving of money.

(c) A programme from another Church designed to teach and promote the Christian giving of money, e.g. *Giving in Grace* (from the Church of England Diocese of Liverpool), *Give to Grow* (from the Salvation Army), *Seasons of Giving* (from 'Stewardship').

(d) Another approach which incorporates the principles stated in 3.1.7 above and is approved by Presbytery.

Congregations will be expected to embark on one of these options in 2012, or within three years of the completion of their last stewardship programme which promoted the giving of money.

**3.1.10** In addition to the above, congregations will be urged to adopt the following practices:

(a) There is regular teaching on the biblical basis for Christian giving through sermons, study groups and articles in parish magazines.

(b) Members and adherents are made aware every year of the work of the Church – local, national and global - which their giving supports.

(c) An opportunity is given every year for members and adherents to review their offering, request offering envelopes or bank standing order forms or sign a Gift Aid Declaration.

(d) There is an annual reminder of the value of gifts in the wills of members and adherents for the work of the Church.

(e) Members and adherents receive an annual 'thank you', affirming their giving and its value in enabling the sharing of the gospel through the work of the Church.

**3.1.11** This process will require the firm support of Presbyteries. Presbyteries have an encouraging, monitoring and disciplinary function in relation to their congregations. It is hoped that most of the action required in respect of a national stewardship programme will be in the encouraging and monitoring parts of the Presbyteries' function, but disciplinary action through the superintendence process may be required. Congregations which are willing to embark on the programme as outlined above have a right to expect their Presbyteries to ensure that those congregations which are less willing do address their giving of money by participating in the national stewardship programme.

**3.1.12** To introduce and explain the national stewardship programme, representatives of the Council of Assembly and the Stewardship and Finance Department will convene Presbytery Conferences throughout Scotland in the autumn of 2011, to which every congregation will be invited to send representatives. Guidelines for implementing the national stewardship programme will be issued to Presbyteries and congregations. These will provide more detailed information about the framework outlined above.

## GETTING STARTED

This pack contains details of the options which are available to congregations when they embark on the national stewardship programme.

There are two programmes offered by the Stewardship and Finance Department –

- *Seasons for Stewardship*
- *Giving for Growth*

Detailed guidelines for these programmes can be downloaded from the Church of Scotland's website:

[http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/5999/stewardship\\_season\\_booklet.pdf](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/5999/stewardship_season_booklet.pdf)

[http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/5998/giving\\_for\\_growth.pdf](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/5998/giving_for_growth.pdf)

**Please remember that stewardship programmes are tools to help congregations. They are tools which have served congregations well in the past, but they are only tools. When congregations embark on stewardship programmes, they need to be enthusiastic about what they are doing. The stewardship programme should be linked to their vision for the Church – where they believe God is calling their congregation to be.**

Core ingredients for any stewardship programme are:

- commitment and enthusiasm from all office-bearers
- prayer to remind us that we are working with God and that we need God's strength and direction
- careful preparation and planning
- teaching Christian giving as a response to God's giving and a means of sharing the gospel through the life and work of the Church
- imaginative material to communicate the message
- an opportunity for everyone in the congregation to make a personal response

## **SUPPORT FROM STEWARDSHIP CONSULTANTS**

The Church's five Stewardship Consultants and the Head of Stewardship are ready to assist and support congregations in the planning and delivery of the National Stewardship Programme.

Remember – there is no charge for their services.

Here are the contact details for the Stewardship staff:

For congregations in the Presbyteries of Edinburgh, West Lothian, Lothian, Melrose and Peebles, Duns, Jedburgh, and Orkney:

**Margot Robertson**

Email: [mrobertson@cofscotland.org.uk](mailto:mrobertson@cofscotland.org.uk)

Telephone: 01620 893459

For congregations in the Presbyteries of Annandale and Eskdale, Dumfries and Kirkcudbright, Wigtown and Stranraer, Ayr, Irvine and Kilmarnock, Ardrossan, Lanark, Greenock and Paisley, and Hamilton:

**Edith Scott**

Email: [escott@cofscotland.org.uk](mailto:escott@cofscotland.org.uk)

Telephone: 01357 520503

For congregations in the Presbyteries of Glasgow, Dumbarton, Argyll, Stirling, Lochaber, Lochcarron-Skye, Uist and Lewis:

**Stuart Sangster**

Email: [ssangster@cofscotland.org.uk](mailto:ssangster@cofscotland.org.uk)

Telephone: 01360 622302

For congregations in the Presbyteries of Falkirk, Dunfermline, Kirkcaldy, St Andrews, Dunkeld and Meigle, Perth, and Dundee:

**Sandra Holt**

Email: [sholt@cofscotland.org.uk](mailto:sholt@cofscotland.org.uk)

Telephone: 07807 477 682

For congregations in the Presbyteries of Angus, Aberdeen, Kincardine and Deeside, Gordon, Buchan, Moray, Abernethy, Inverness and Shetland:

**Fiona Penny**

Email: [fpenny@cofscotland.org.uk](mailto:fpenny@cofscotland.org.uk)

Telephone: 01771 653442

Congregations in the Presbyteries of Ross, Sutherland, Caithness and England should contact the Head of Stewardship, the **Rev Alan Gibson**, at the Church Offices:

Email: [agibson@cofscotland.org.uk](mailto:agibson@cofscotland.org.uk)

Telephone: 0131 240 2226 (Direct Line)