

THREE YEAR REVIEW  
OF  
DISTRICT FINANCES  
AND  
STEWARDSHIP EDUCATION  
(2000- 2002)

2003 DISTRICT CONVENTION REPORT

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STEWARDSHIP DIRECTOR'S REPORT

STEWARDSHIP EDUCATION

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FUNDING THE SYNODICAL BUDGET

DESIGNATED GIVING

## **STEWARDSHIP DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **SELC STEWARDSHIP DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT**

The SELC District Stewardship Department is committed to the task of Biblically edifying and equipping the saints in God's Family of Believers to manage life and all of life's resources for God's purposes out of love for Christ, their Lord and Savior.

The responsibilities of stewardship director are threefold:

1. Stewardship Education
2. Solicitation of Funds
3. Fiscal Committee Member

### **STEWARDSHIP EDUCATION**

During the past triennium the SELC District Stewardship Department provided educational materials and assistance to pastors and congregations. Packets containing Bible studies, worship services, devotional material, financial programs, newsletter/bulletin articles and visitation materials were purchased annually for each congregation.

- 2000 - "Living as Faithful Stewards" (R. J. Chewning)
- 2001 - "Congregational Stewardship Workbook" (LC-MS)
- 2002 - "Excel in the Grace of Giving" and "Stewardship Studies for Teens" (R. J. Chewning)

The CONGREGATIONAL STEWARDSHIP WORKBOOK, costing \$75 each and weighing approximately 8 lbs., is a comprehensive resource of stewardship information and helps designed to assist congregations in the promotion of Christian stewardship for years to come.

Stewardship articles appeared in the Beacon supplement of the Lutheran Witness. District financial reports and stewardship resources were shared at circuit and general pastoral conferences. Information was given at orientation meetings for new pastors entering the district. In November, 2002, a stewardship program titled, "Consecration Sunday", developed by Herb Miller, was successfully conducted at Sts. Peter and Paul Lutheran Church, Sharon, PA, and Our Savior Lutheran Church, Mayfield Hts., OH. Sts. Peter & Paul projected an annual increase of \$28,704 (+34%). Our Savior increased \$20,000 (+15%).

The department of stewardship endeavored to emphasize the three Biblical principles of giving:

## BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF GIVING

1. PROPORTIONATE Percentage of Income (1 Cor. 16:2)
2. REGULAR Weekly Giving (1 Cor. 16:2)
3. FIRSTFRUIT Funding God First (Prov. 3:9)

An effort was made to discourage a giving pattern of simply meeting needs. "Need Giving" focuses on meeting congregational budgets. In contrast, "Biblical Giving" emphasizes the SPIRITUAL NEED OF THE GIVER TO GIVE in response to God's love in Christ rather than on the NEED OF THE CHURCH TO RECEIVE in order to meet budgets. Love for Christ is the major motive for Christian giving. Needs are simply "indicators" of where to put loving gifts into action. Haphazard, irregular, spur-of-the-moment givers are poor stewards who fail sorely in fulfilling their full financial potential for the support of the Kingdom of Christ.

The financial support of the Church is only one segment in the many faceted role of Christian stewardship which involves the management of all of life for God's purposes. God, as the Creator/Giver of all things, is the owner of everything. Christians are the managers of His possessions. Christian stewardship begins and ends with this perspective.

## DEFINITION OF CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP IS THE FREE AND JOYOUS ACTIVITY OF THE CHILD OF GOD AND GOD'S FAMILY, THE CHURCH, IN MANAGING ALL OF LIFE AND LIFE'S RESOURCES FOR GOD'S PURPOSES

## FUNDING THE SELC BUDGET

In the fall of each year a budget goal is suggested to each congregation. The goal is NOT based on communicant membership. Instead, a percentage increase, based on a congregation's goal for the previous year, is suggested. This allows each congregation to establish a reasonable goal suited to its financial circumstances. During the past triennium, inflation, growth and catch-up factors determined percentage increases:

2000 - 3.5% to 5.5%  
2001 - 4.4% to 6.4%  
2002 - 10%

Congregations were strongly urged to remit on a monthly basis to enable a stable cash flow of district disbursements.

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

	<u>Budget</u> <u>Goals</u>	<u>Budget</u> <u>Receipts</u>	<u>%Goals</u>	<u>%Receipts</u>	<u>Budgets</u>
2000	\$504,105	\$514,239.13	102.01%	+3.3%	\$711,401
2001	\$527,672	\$503,624.71	95.44%	-2.06%	\$824,220
2002	\$560,871	\$533,504.25	95.12%	+5.93%	\$675,640

During the past triennium budgets were established in excess of projected receipts in order to diminish a reserve of over \$1 million. It is anticipated the reserve will reach a cushion level of approximately \$700,000 in the near future which would eliminate the luxury of SELC budgets exceeding projected receipts.

BUDGETS AND RECEIPTS

	<u>Budgets</u>	* <u>Receipts</u>
2000	\$711,401	\$574,244
2001	\$824,220	\$547,625
2002	\$675,640	\$571,493

\* Receipts include congregational contributions plus investment income.

COMMUNICANT MEMBERSHIP

	<u>Communicants</u>	<u>Cong.</u>
2000	13,712 (+141...-1.04%)	54
2001	14,122 (+410...2.99%)	55
2002	14,413 (+291...2.06%)	56

Statistics regarding communicant members are based on figures annually received from congregations. The loss of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Lakefield, MN; the addition of St. Athanasius Lutheran Church, Alexandria, VA, and Family of Christ Lutheran Church, Jackson Twp., OH, impacted the number of congregations.

**FUNDING THE SYNODICAL BUDGET**

Approximately 30% of the SELC District budget is given to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod budget to help finance world missions/ministries, seminaries, colleges, publications, etc.

LCMS BUDGETS

(Fiscal Year: July 1 to June 30)

	<u>Synodical Budget</u>	<u>SELC Contribution</u>
2000-01	\$82,949,807	\$188,000
2001-02	\$99,761,218	\$192,000
2002-03	\$88,575,254	\$196,000

A sharp decline in special "designated" gifts necessitated budget cuts for F.Y. 2002-03 totalling \$9.1 million. Synodical staff layoffs have taken place. 28 overseas missionary stations were eliminated. A downturn in the economy caused the reductions in special gifts. District contributions to synod's budget have remained relatively stable.

**DESIGNATED GIVING**

Special "designated" (restricted) giving is increasing in the SELC District. This is encouraged. However, designated giving should take place only after district budget obligations have been met. Congregations which reduce their support of the district budget in order to support ministries and missions of their choice, curtail and hamper mission/ministry efforts of the district.

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In addition to providing stewardship education materials, managing the solicitation of district budget funds and serving the fiscal committee, the undersigned also executed all correspondence and attended all meetings connected with the duties of district stewardship director.

Thanks is extended to Rev. John Gutz and Rev. Ronald Meyr who served as circuit stewardship representatives. appreciated also are the helpful assistance of the SELC fiscal committee served by Mr. Keith Balla, Mr. Paul Jurkovich, Mr. Richard Martin, committee chairman, and President Carl Krueger.



In Christ Jesus,  
Rev. Thomas Soltis, EM  
SELC Stewardship Director



## **SELC STEWARDS**

**Stewards Embraced by the Love of Christ  
Stewards Empowered by the Light of Christ  
Stewards Enjoying their Life in Christ**

Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (SELC) District of The LC-MS