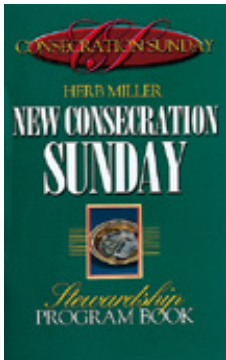


NEW CONSECRATION SUNDAY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

By Herb Miller



This program emphasizes growing in faith through our giving by growing one step closer to tithing or beyond. This annual financial campaign takes place over a period of at least six weeks from an initial meeting of the steering committee to the date of Consecration Sunday. The program kit includes an introductory audio cassette tape which can be played for the Finance Committee, Stewardship Committee, or Church Council; a Stewardship Program book for use by the members of the Steering Committee, a copy of the estimate of giving card, and a Guest Leader's Guide.

The campaign involves a Guest Leader who conducts an initial meeting with the steering committee, a special Leadership Event for church council members and other church leaders, the Consecration Sunday worship services, and a presentation of the results at the Celebration Meal. Members of the congregation are recruited to share their testimonies on why it's important to them to give to Christ through the Church and how it impacts their life of faith.

This program focuses on the need of the giver to give and invites everyone to consider taking one step-up in their personal stewardship as a disciple of Christ. The emphasis is not on paying the bills of the church. Instead, members are asked to consider what God is calling them to give in thanksgiving for the blessings they have received.

The congregation is responsible for:

- ◆ 3 mailings – 2 letters to the total congregation and 1 letter to leaders in the church
- ◆ 3 laity announcements for the 3 weeks prior to Consecration Sunday
- ◆ Making phone calls to invite those who haven't made a reservation for the Celebration Meal to attend Consecration Sunday and the Celebration Meal
- ◆ A stewardship sermon by the pastor on the week prior to Consecration Sunday
- ◆ Preparing a step-chart that outlines the number of giving units at each level of giving during the previous 12 months.
- ◆ Planning a meal or special refreshments for the Leadership Event held on the Sunday or Monday prior to Consecration Sunday. The Leadership Event is led by the Guest Leader. It is a time in which church leaders are thanked for their commitment to the church and participate in an inspirational stewardship message by the Guest Leader. In addition, they are asked to volunteer to make the necessary phone calls to those who still haven't made a reservation for the Celebration Meal on Consecration Sunday.
- ◆ Providing a meal on Consecration Sunday – it may be catered or provided by a few members of the congregation. It is not to be a potluck!

Your District Congregational Stewardship Team continues to attempt to match speakers with congregations. Please give us some time to do so. Contact Don Copely, Box 157, Humboldt, KS 66748, dcopley1@cox.net.

If you do decide to use Consecration/New Consecration Sunday, please use the program as it is written!!! The only congregations having a less than fantastic experience have been those who did not follow the plan. You can get the materials from Augsburg Publishing as well as Abingdon Press.