

James Hazelwood

Everyday Spirituality

A Resource Guide



www.everydayspirituality.org

Contents

Introduction - This is not your old school resource guide. No, I'm not going to spell out every single step, provide detailed worksheets and come cook dinner for you. Instead, this resource guide is a menu. I'm thinking of those diner menus from Brooklyn, NY. - only without the Lox and bagel offering. (Which I happen to love, just hold the capers). What follows is some ideas, hints, suggestions. You can pick and choose, and shape them around your own projects. If you have additions, come up with new ideas, send them to me and I'll share them with others.

What's inside?

Book Study Guide

Group Conversations with ES Cards

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- Three Week Series

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Study Guide

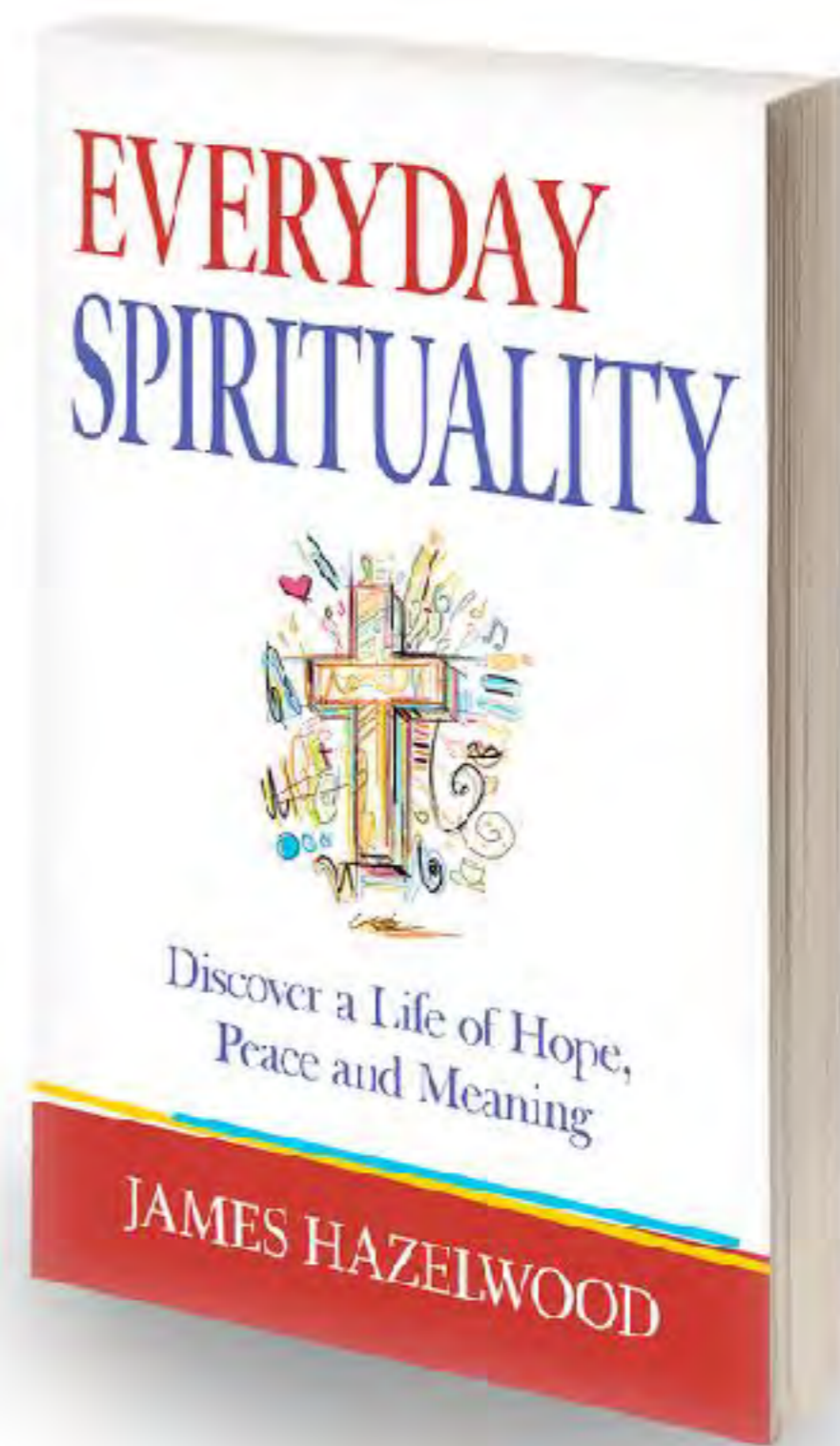
How to Have a Small Group Discussion

This guide is designed to help you get the most out of the book by connecting with others around the topic of each week. It is not necessary to do any homework, though having read the chapters each week prior to your small group will undoubtedly enrich and enliven the experience.

One resource that may help your group is the Everyday Spirituality Card Game. There is more information in this resource guide and at www.everydayspirituality.org

Here's how the Small Group works: The **Connect** section is intended to help you connect with each other, giving you opportunity to share a little bit about yourself and what is resonating with you in the series. The **Engage** section is intended to point you to portions of the book that will help you to explore in more depth the topic of the week. The **Apply** section is intended to help you take some action, and also give you opportunity to invite your small group for help and accountability.

So dig in...and begin to enjoy the freedom of Everyday Spirituality.





Is Spirituality something that only happens in a Church or a Mosque or a Temple?

Forming a Small Group: I think the best discussions happen among a few people, so a small group is best if it's made up of a small group of people. Three to Five is ideal, and six would be the maximum number. If you have more, that's fine but I'd divide the group for the discussions. You'll thank me for doing this, especially the shy ones. Otherwise the talkative ones will dominate in a larger group.

Building Trust: The best small groups build trust, and that means holding confidence and spending more time listening and less time giving advice.

How Long: This Study Guide is set up for three sessions. If you get to the end of three sessions, and you want to go on, great. Commit to another three, send me an email asking for another resource or find one on your own.

Session One

Things we do Every Day

Advance Preparation: Read the Introduction and Section One of the Book *Everyday Spirituality* by James Hazelwood

Connect: Begin by inviting each person to introduce themselves and one reason they decided to be a part of this discussion group. If you have a set of the *Everyday Spirituality Card Game*, invite each person to draw a card and offer their response.

Engage: Use this time to dive into the contents of the book

1. In the Introduction, the author (that would be me), describes his own inner battle with a force of resistance. I name that Voice Earnst or Earnstine. Can you relate to this story? In what way?
2. The first section of the book describes nine different actions that most of us do everyday. Which chapter struck you the most? Which one could you relate to most clearly? Which one didn't work for you?

3. What's your response to the idea that the sacred, the Holy, God can be found in our everyday life experiences? Do you agree or disagree.
4. What's something you do everyday that was left out of this section? How could that be an expression of *Everyday Spirituality*?

Apply: Let's talk about a way to apply what we've learned

1. In the coming week, how will you try to increase your awareness that what you are doing everyday is an expression of your spiritual life?
2. *Optional:* If you would like some kind of support or encouragement from the rest of your group about something in your life, you can offer that now. Ask them to keep you in mind, pray for you, call or text you during the week.

Session Two

Things we do Every Week

Advance Preparation: Read the chapters in Section Two of the Book *Everyday Spirituality* by James Hazelwood

Connect: Begin by inviting each person to greet everyone and tell about one humorous thing that happened to them since you last met. If you have a set of the *Everyday Spirituality Card Game*, invite each person to draw a card and offer their response.

Engage: Use this time to dive into the contents of the book

1. In Section Two, we move from things we do every day to things we do, well, more like once a week. Look over the Table of Contents for this section. Do you agree that these actions are weekly? Or are some more frequent or less for you? What would you add to the list?
2. This section of the book starts to move us in the direction of occasional activities. Which of these chapters did you most resonate? Why?
3. Now that you've had some time to think about this concept of *Everyday Spirituality*, have you found yourself realizing "oh, I'm grocery shopping, this is sacred work?"

Or similar kinds of experiences. If so, tell the group what you are thinking about.

4. As you get to the end of Section Two the chapters start pushing in directions that may seem challenging. This is especially true for Chapter 17, which the author (that's me again) found hard to write. I'm a little embarrassed to write about my short comings. What about you? If you are ready, is there something to come clean about?

Apply: Let's talk about a way to apply what we've learned

1. In the coming week, how will you try to increase your awareness that what you are doing everyday is an expression of your spiritual life?
2. *Optional:* If you would like some kind of support or encouragement from the rest of your group about something in your life, you can offer that now. Ask them to keep you in mind, pray for you, call or text you during the week.

Session Three

Things we do Every So Often

Advance Preparation: Read the Introduction and Section Three of the Book *Everyday Spirituality*

Connect: Begin by inviting each person to introduce themselves and something strange or usual that happened since you last met. If you have a set of the *Everyday Spirituality Card Game*, invite each person to draw a card and offer their response.

Engage: Use this time to dive into the contents of the book

1. In Section Three, the author (that would be me), dives into some areas that may be unusual for more traditional approaches to Spirituality. What chapter struck you as different, odd or uncomfortable?
2. Is there a particular story from one of the chapters that connected with your own life? Tell us about your reaction, and if you have had something similar, what happened..
3. The author (again that's me) received more submissions from readers on the subject of grief. It seems that for many people times of loss, death and grief are also times of spiritual experiences or encounters with God. Why do

you think is, and have you known anyone with such encounters around times of loss?

4. The last chapter of the book describes several mysterious encounters with seemingly unexplainable moments in people's lives? This really isn't everyday kind of stuff, but many people have holy moments and mysterious encounters that are spiritual. Actually, I think lots of us do. If you are comfortable with your group, and have had something similar, would you consider describing what happened.

Apply: Let's talk about a way to apply what we've learned

1. This group has met together now for three times, describe one take away from the book, the group or the conversations you've had?
2. *Optional:* If you would like some kind of support or encouragement from the rest of your group about something in your life, you can offer that now. Ask them to keep you in mind, pray for you, call or text you during the week.



The Conversation of Everyday Spirituality - Sometimes it's one thing to read a book, and agree or disagree with its contents. We know from a good bit of research that processing through a topic like Everyday Spirituality it helps to have conversations with people. It's in that spirit that we came up with the idea of Everyday Spirituality Cards. This is a deck of cards each containing a

prompt or a question. At this time one deck has 25 cards, and we've found that's enough for most groups. If you are interested in ordering one or more sets, go to www.everydayspirituality.org

How to use your Everyday Spirituality Cards

By Yourself: pick a card, write in a journal. Reflect on it during the day.

With your partner: Set aside 20 minutes. Pick a card. Take turns talking about it.

With your family: At a meal or in the car, one child picks a card, each family member answers in turn.

With a group: Two choices. 1) Use one or more cards to start a conversation. or 2) In groups of five or less, each person picks a card and answers a different question.

Remember: Keep confidences, tell stories, be brief, no advice giving, listen to others.

more at www.everydayspirituality.org

EVERYDAY
SPIRITUALITY

Is this Lutheran?

If you are not Lutheran, you can skip this page.

Lutherans (that tribe within the Christian communion that traces roots back to Martin Luther 1483-1546) can be a tad persnickety when it comes to theological teaching. This tribe, which graciously adopted me, wants to make sure that both the spirit and the substance of any theology is, well, let's call it, sound. Yes, is this Everyday Spirituality theologically sound?

Let me assure you there is enough here to pass the Luther test. Theologian Kirsi Stjerna in her essay "Luther, Lutherans and Spirituality" summarizes Martin Luther's thinking on this topic as follows: "He (Luther) made a fundamental discovery that God need not be sought further than in one's own life, one's daily reality."

But, let's go further and see what Martin himself said. What better place than of his sermons from 1525. After describing how we are filled with God, God's gifts and grace and spirit, Luther continues, "...you do not lack any part but have it all gathered together, and so that all you say, all you think and everywhere you go - in sum, all your life - is throughout divine."

I think we are safe to go forward with Everyday Spirituality.

Congregational Stewardship Appeal Resources

Items included in this Kit

- Introduction
- Appeal Time Line
- Discussion Series
- Brunch Event Plan
- Sample Letter
- Sample Postcard
- Sample Pledge Card

To download an editable form of this document, click [here](#)



INTRODUCTION

In many ways, *Everyday Spirituality* is about storytelling. It is an invitation to open our hearts to one another—to deepen the bonds of friendship among the people who gather in congregations, communities and other settings.

Jesus, Moses, Buddha, Socrates, Thoreau, James Baldwin, Toni Morrison and Gabriel Garcia Marquez knew that sharing a simple story had the power to draw people in, to engage their imaginations, and eventually transform them. We are also called to share our stories. Sharing our stories can help others catch a glimpse of God at work in the midst of our ordinary, everyday lives, and that glimpse might be all that is needed to ignite or fan the flame of faith in the heart of another.

You can use storytelling of *Everyday Spirituality* for a congregational annual stewardship appeal. This is a perfect time to invite some people in your congregation to “share a story” of how they experience God’s presence in their everyday lives as part of the worship services leading up to Commitment Sunday. The goal is to engage 3 people representing different age groups to share a story on three consecutive Sundays’. These stories can be shared right before the offering—helping people connect to the truth that sharing our stories is a form of offering ourselves to God and others. Before the story teller shares their story, the congregation could be invited to join in singing verse 4 of the hymn “Lord, Speak to Us that We May Speak.” Or perhaps another musical piece related to storytelling.

Enlisting your story tellers should be done several weeks before the appeal kicks off so that there is adequate time for the individuals to prepare and receive coaching, if desired. Reading all or portions of the book, *Everyday Spirituality*, would be a great way to help people prepare. The book is filled with many examples pointing out the

ordinary ways that we connect with God or the spiritual dimension of our lives every single day!

Another optional idea that you can add to your appeal process is creating a video to show at the brunch. This would involve asking people of all ages if they would be willing to share their answer to one of the following questions, or other questions of your choice, and then videotaping their answer.

Possible Questions:

What is the funniest thing you ever saw happen in church?

What is one of your favorite things about our church?

Tell us about a time God seemed very present in your life.

You could also use questions from the Everyday Spirituality cards. You can order these cards at www.everydayspiritualitybook.com

Timeline and Tasks—Annual Stewardship Appeal

One Month (or More Before you plan to Begin your Appeal)

Preparation: Schedule a meeting with your Stewardship Team to work on the following:

- Determine the key dates for Kick Off Sunday, Brunch Sunday and Commitment Sunday
 - Prepare your introductory postcard (See sample in this packet) and mail it so that people receive it one week prior to Kick Off Sunday.
 - Prepare your own questions “*Everyday Spirituality*” or order the cards for appeal brunch
 - Enlist a person to lead the *Everyday Spirituality* Adult Discussion Series
 - Enlist people to plan the food and set-up for the *Sunday* Brunch
 - Enlist people to plan special refreshments following worship on Commitment Sunday
 - Order several copies of *Everyday Spirituality*, by James Hazelwood.
 - Enlist three “Story Tellers” to share a 3-4 minute story during worship on the three Sundays prior to Commitment Sunday.
- Optional idea: If there is an individual in your congregation, who would be willing to create a video, this could be a wonderful addition to the program at the brunch. Perhaps this is a way to involving younger people. The video would involve asking people if they would be willing to share their answer to one of the following questions, or other questions of your choice, and then videotaping their answer. Once you have a variety of responses recorded, edit the video down to no more than 4 minutes. This can be be previewed at the brunch, and later added to your website.
- Possible Questions:
- What is the funniest thing you ever saw happen in church?
 - What is one of your favorite things about our church?

Week One

First Sunday: “*What’s Your Story?*” Kick Off Worship

1. A member or members of the Stewardship Team introduce(s) the Annual Stewardship Appeal. Begin by holding up the postcard and saying something like, “Hopefully you have all received a postcard like this introducing our annual stewardship theme. If not, please pick one up in the narthex today.”

- Our theme for this year is: “*What’s Your Story?*”
- Our theme grows out of those frequently used words of Jesus, “Go and tell...” and is based on a verse from Paul’s letter to the Thessalonians where he writes “*So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the Gospel of God, but also our own selves...*”
- It is a reminder to us that stewardship is about more than sharing our time, talent and treasure. It is also about sharing our stories as a way to deepen our relationships and to pass on our faith. Over the next few weeks, we’ll have a lot of fun sharing our stories with one another in a variety of ways.
- Share Key Dates: Be sure to mark your calendars for our congregational brunch on Sunday, XX and Commitment Sunday on XX. (Will there be a sign up for the brunch? If so, have it ready today and encourage people to sign up.)
- Also, today we begin a *What’s Your Story?* Adult Discussion Series based on James Hazelwood’s, new book Everyday Spirituality. (Hold up a copy.)

2. Before the offering is collected, the congregation is invited to sing verse 4 of the hymn “Lord, Speak to Us that We May Speak.” Or another appropriate song. The first story teller shares their story. When the story teller is finished, the offering is collected.

During the week following the first Sunday:

- Prepare packets for the congregation. Place all information in an envelope, affix address label, and file in boxes in alphabetical order for easy distribution in the

narthex following worship on the second Sunday of the appeal. (Or you can simply mail all of the packets.)

Contents of packet:

- Personalized letter inviting people to make a pledge or commitment (See sample)
- Pledge Form with self addressed return envelope. (See Sample)

Week Two

Second Sunday:

1. Before the offering is collected, the congregation is invited to sing verse 4 of the hymn “Lord, Speak to Us that We May Speak.” The second story teller shares their story, followed by collecting the offering.
2. Remind people about the *What’s Your Story?* Brunch next Sunday. (If there is a sign up, encourage people to do so.)
3. Remind people about the *What’s Your Story?* Adult Discussion Series. The second session is held today.
4. If you did not mail the packets, let people know their Stewardship Packets are ready to be picked up in the narthex, and help distribute the packets as people leave the sanctuary.

During the week following the second Sunday

1. Mail any remaining packets that have not been picked up on Monday
2. Finish preparing program for brunch. Assign someone to be the MC and someone to give an overview of the information in the stewardship packets. On Saturday or early Sunday morning: Make sure a basket of Everyday Spirituality questions or a card deck is on each table. (If a video has been prepared, make sure screen / projector, etc. are set up and ready to go)

Week Three

Third Sunday: *What's Your Story?* Brunch

1. The pastor preaches a sermon on the *What's Your Story?* Theme—perhaps sharing a compelling story from his / her life.
2. Before the offering is collected, the congregation is invited to sing verse 4 of the hymn “Lord, Speak to Us that We May Speak.” The third story teller shares their story, followed by collecting the offering.
3. Gather for the *What's Your Story?* Brunch (See set up and program on website link)
4. Remind people to bring their pledge forms to worship next week.
5. The third and final adult discussion session is held today, unless you scheduled your brunch during the education hour. If so, the third and final session is held next week.

Week Four

Fourth Sunday: *What's Your Story?* Commitment Worship

1. People are invited to bring their pledge cards forward and place them in a basket or on the altar, while a soloist sings and instrumentalists play the hymn “We Are An Offering”
2. The pastor says a prayer of thankfulness and dedication after all the commitments have been brought forward.

During the Week:

Personalized Thank you notes with the *What's Your Story?* logo are written to all who have pledged. These notes are signed by Pastor and Stewardship Team chair or member.

Follow Up--Week Five:

Announce the results with joy and gratitude: Total number of pledges and the total amount pledged. (More pledges will probably come in on this Sunday.)

During the Week:

A follow up letter with a self addressed envelope and pledge form goes in the mail inviting people who have not yet made a commitment to do so.

After about 3 more weeks, announce updated results and thank congregation for their generous response. This is an important step. People need to hear the results.



Adult Group Discussion Series

(You will need a copy of the book, Everyday Spirituality)

*Faithful stewards share not only their time, talent and treasure.
They also share their stories, as a way of sharing themselves.*

Session I: Sharing Our Stories

Connecting with Each Other: Begin by inviting each person to introduce themselves and share their answer to the following question:

In what settings or situations are you most likely to share a story from your life?

Listening to a Story: Ask four volunteers to read aloud Chapter 10 of Everyday Spirituality entitled “Friend.” (This will take about 8 minutes, so invite each person read a page and then switch to the next person and repeat as necessary.)

Discussing the Story:

1. Can you relate to Donna’s story? In what ways?
2. How does being with friends and talking about everything from “family to politics to hobbies” have the ability to “save our souls?”
3. In what ways do you cultivate “friendships of the good” in your life?
4. Do you agree that we are “brought to life by the friends we keep?” In what way have you been brought to life by a friend?
5. What sorts of things does your church do, or could you do, to help alleviate loneliness in people’s lives?

Session II: Sharing Our Time and Talents

Connecting with Each Other: Begin by inviting each person to introduce themselves and share their answer to the following question:

Name a person who has shared the gift of their time or talent with you. How has this gift enriched your life?

Listening to a Story: Ask four volunteers to read aloud Chapter 18 of Everyday Spirituality entitled “Serve.” (This will take about 10 minutes so invite each volunteer read a page and then switch to the next person and repeat as necessary.)

Discussing the Story:

1. When you hear the “serve,” who comes to mind?
2. What is your favorite way to share your time and talents?
3. Why do you think mission trips or service projects are so transformational for teens and adults?
4. How does Martin Marty’s expression, “It’s not what you gotta do; it’s what you get to do,” change your perspective on sharing your time and talents or serving?
5. What sorts of “golden opportunities” to serve others do you see for your congregation?

Session III: Sharing our Treasure

Connecting with Each Other: Begin by inviting each person to introduce themselves and share their answer to the following question:

If someone gave you \$100 to give away, who or what would you give it to and why?

Listening to a Story: Ask four volunteers to read aloud Chapter 7 of Everyday Spirituality entitled "Spend." (This will take about 10 minutes so invite each volunteer read a page and then switch to the next person and repeat as necessary.)

Discussing the Story:

1. Who or what has influenced your thinking when it comes to spending, saving and giving away money?
 2. Do you agree the experiences bring more satisfaction than things? Why or why not?
 3. In what ways have you experienced the truth that generosity is contagious?
 4. A study at Princeton University found that once people earn \$70,000 a year, earning more than that does not make a difference in life satisfaction. Why do you think this is true?
 5. In what ways has being a part of your congregation helped you to be more generous?
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All Congregation Brunch on Stewardship or Commitment Sunday

The purpose of this event is to celebrate your life together and to help people in your congregation “share their stories.” Telling stories helps build community. It is also a chance for the stewardship leaders to go over the information in the Stewardship Packets and for the pastor to share a bit about the vision for the coming year. If a video was created (Recording people’s responses to the questions, “What’s the funniest thing you ever saw happen in church?” or “What’s your favorite thing about our church?” or other questions of your choice), this is the event at which the video is shown.

When people arrive, the greeters have people fill out a name tag.

The menu is a simple brunch of quiche or egg casseroles, fruit salad and muffins. The food for each table is brought to the table, and served family style.

Following the meal, invite everyone to pick a slip of paper from the basket (or a card from the deck) which is at the center of their table. Give people a minute to think about their answer. Then invite people to share their answers with one another, beginning with the person whose birthday is “closest to today.” Do two rounds of questions if you have time. If you want to encourage more mixing up of your people, you can ask half of the people at each table to move one table over before beginning round two.

After one or two rounds of sharing, invite someone from the Stewardship Team to highlight the information in the Stewardship Packets that were mailed out the previous week. If possible, also share any new or expanded projects being proposed for the coming year. Especially highlight anything that is planned to help those in your congregation grow in their ability to tell their stories and THE STORY of God’s love, compassion and justice.

Invite people to prayerfully consider their financial commitment to the coming year ministries of the congregation. Ask them to return their pledge forms the following weekend during the Commitment Worship service(s).

Sample Letter

“So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves...”

I Thessalonians 2:8

Insert Date

Dear

“What’s Your Story?” Our stewardship theme for this year is an invitation to open our hearts to one another—to deepen the bonds of friendship among us. It is a reminder that faithful stewards share not only their time, talent and treasure. They also share their stories, as a way of sharing themselves.

Jesus knew that sharing a simple story had the power to draw people in, to engage their imaginations, and eventually to transform them. As followers of Jesus, we are also called to share our stories. Over and over again, we hear Jesus say, *“Go and tell...”* Sharing our stories can help others catch a glimpse of God at work in the midst of our ordinary, everyday lives, and that glimpse might be all that is needed to ignite or fan the flame of faith in the heart of another.

During these last weeks we have had several opportunities to listen to each others stories. It has been enlightening, encouraging and inspiring to hear the everyday, ordinary ways that each of us connects to the presence of God in our lives. And this is just the beginning! There are so many more stories to tell and to hear.

Enclosed in this packet you will find a pledge form with a chart to help you prayerfully ponder your annual financial commitment to the work of our congregation. Please fill out the form, put it in the return envelope and bring it with you to worship on Commitment Sunday, (insert date).

We are so thankful for the gift of each other, and the many ways this community of faith helps us grow in grace and live out our faith in a world that really needs to hear the story that we love to tell—the story of God’s love, compassion and justice. As we each prepare to make our pledge, let us remember those beautiful words we have been singing together each Sunday:

*Oh, fill us with your fullness, Lord, until our very hearts o’erflow
In kindling thought and glowing word, your love to tell, your praise to show.*

With Joy and Gratitude for your Partnership in the Gospel--

Pastor

Council President and /or Stewardship Team Chair

(Insert Church Name)
2020 Annual Stewardship Appeal

Please **save the following dates** and plan to be a
part of
these engaging events in our life together:

Date *What's Your Story?* Kick-Off Worship
Setting the stage for sharing our stories

Dates *What's Your Story?* Adult Discussion
Series
Join us each Sunday at (insert time) in the
(insert place) to explore *Everyday*
Spirituality together

Date *What's Your Story?* Brunch (insert time)
A time to enjoy food, each other, and
inspiring stories

Date *What's Your Story?* Commitment Worship
We offer our financial commitments to
support our 2020 ministries and share in
festive refreshments following worship.

*"So deeply do we care for you that we are
determined to share with you not only the gospel of
God but also our own selves..."*

I Thessalonians 2:8

Annual Stewardship Appeal Pledge Form

In gratitude, I/we intend to give to God's work in and through
(Insert your church name here)

a total of \$_____ for *insert year* (annual gift).



I/we intend to give our gifts:

Weekly Monthly Quarterly

Semi-Annually Annually on

You may also submit your pledge online at (insert website link) - click on the donate button to complete the form.

I would like to receive donation envelopes.

I authorize the financial secretary to effect this change.

Make life easy and checkless – set up auto monthly payments through your bank.

There is a reason why I cannot pledge:

I am currently facing a difficulty.

I would like the pastor to contact me.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Preferred Phone _____

Email _____

Sometimes it helps to think about a percentage of giving.

Annual Income	Weekly Income	Weekly Pledge					
		1%	3%	5%	8%	10% <i>tithe</i>	12%
\$20,800	\$400	\$4	\$12	\$20	\$32	\$40	\$48
\$31,200	\$600	\$6	\$18	\$30	\$48	\$60	\$72
\$41,600	\$800	\$8	\$24	\$40	\$64	\$80	\$96
\$52,000	\$1,000	\$10	\$30	\$50	\$80	\$100	\$120
\$62,400	\$1,200	\$12	\$36	\$60	\$96	\$120	\$144
\$72,800	\$1,400	\$14	\$42	\$70	\$112	\$140	\$168
\$83,200	\$1,600	\$16	\$48	\$80	\$128	\$160	\$192
\$93,600	\$1,800	\$18	\$54	\$90	\$144	\$180	\$216
\$104,000	\$2,000	\$20	\$60	\$100	\$160	\$200	\$240
\$130,000	\$2,500	\$25	\$75	\$125	\$200	\$250	\$300
\$156,000	\$3,000	\$30	\$90	\$150	\$240	\$300	\$360
\$182,000	\$3,500	\$35	\$105	\$175	\$280	\$350	\$420