

Springboard

Up your game with year-round stewardship



Over the 20 years I've had the wonderful opportunity of working for our Foundation, I've watched the

church stretch, grow and adapt to the changing world around it. One of the more effective strategies has been the shift by many pastors and churches from annual stewardship campaigns to year-round stewardship.

To many, stewardship means an annual campaign, usually held in the fall, during which church members are asked to pledge a gift for the next 12 months. Today, however, more and more churches — often with our encouragement — have moved to treating stewardship as a year-long process. Their experience proves this consistent approach is more effective in cultivating commitment and joy of giving in their congregations.

If your church is looking to develop a year-round stewardship plan, take advantage of some of the tactics that have been successful for other churches. A good guiding principle comes from Eugene Grimm, author of the book *Generous People*: "Keep it positive, keep it biblical, and stress the mission, not the need."

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HEARTSPRING METHODIST FOUNDATION

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Spirit

Heartspring partners with Dollars for Scholars

HEARTSPRING RECENTLY partnered with the United Methodist Dollars for Scholars program to make its scholarship dollars work harder for deserving students. The program, offered through the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation (UMHEF), quadruples the funding a student receives by matching the church's scholarship dollars with funding from Heartspring, the student's chosen United Methodist school and the Texas Conference.

Essentially, a \$1,000 scholarship a student is given by his or her church could turn into a \$4,000 scholarship for Texas Conference students through the program.

Heartspring's scholarship committee recommended partnering with the Dollars for Scholars program for the next four years. The money comes from Heartspring's permanent funds and from support previously committed to Lon Morris College.

"This is an excellent vehicle that allows us to meet our goal of distributing scholarship funds according to the wishes and requirements of our donors to help deserving students seeking a college or higher education in an effort to further the Kingdom of God," says committee and board chair Mike Hood.

"With today's ever-rising tuition costs, a quadruple match is an excellent opportunity for TAC students," enthuses Heartspring President and CEO Rev. C. J. Taylor. "We are excited about helping our donors do even more good with their charitable dollars."

During the 2018–2019 academic year, UMHEF will distribute more than \$1.5 million through the United Methodist Dollars for Scholars program. This money supports students who are members of a United Methodist Church and plan to attend a United Methodist-related college or seminary for an undergraduate or graduate degree.

UMHEF President and CEO Robert Fletcher says, "I am grateful for [Heartspring's] continued support and partnership. Together, we can ensure today's students are educated to become tomorrow's leaders for our church and communities."

If you or someone you know may benefit from scholarship assistance provided by the United Methodist Dollars for Scholars program, visit www.umhef.org for more information.

To learn more about Heartspring's scholarship program and how you could pay it forward to future generations, contact us at 713-533-3780, 800-521-9617 or office@heartspringmethodist.org. ■



Thriving through stewardship

CHRISTIANS ARE taught that God owns everything and we are merely stewards, or managers, of the gifts and graces with which we've been blessed. While this thought often is well-received, the word the church uses to describe this concept, "stewardship," is often met with negativity. Churchgoers tend to associate stewardship with church budgets or annual pledge campaigns, which can feel like a continual ask for more money.

Stewardship is about so much more than that.

It is true that a big chunk of any church budget comes from the Sunday collection plate — an amount that can vary wildly week to week. However, while meeting church income targets is important for funding programs and keeping the lights on, successful church leaders know it takes more than just regular tithing to survive.

In fact, successful ministry requires us to expand our practices of stewardship to embrace a year-round, all-encompassing way of life if we expect the ministries we care about to thrive. This requires regular reminders of the importance of giving back and the celebration of what, together, the congregation can achieve through joyful giving.

Proper financial management is a big part of stewardship, but God also has richly blessed each of us with much more than just money. He expects us to joyfully share all of what we have been given, including our time, talents and treasures. In order to joyfully share, or in Methodist terms, to

practice extravagant generosity, it may help to first broaden our understanding of what it means to practice Christian stewardship:

Ownership

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." (Psalm 24:1)

One of the most basic principles of biblical stewardship is that God owns everything, and we are stewards, or managers, of his property. Stewardship is our commitment to dedicate the piece of God's creation over which we've been given control, namely ourselves and our possessions, to help further the Kingdom of God.

Responsibility

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." (1 Peter 4:10)

It is important for us to remember that while owners have rights, stewards have responsibilities. God is the owner of everything we have, which means the control and power that comes with ownership is not ours to wield. God has entrusted each one of us with the responsibility of caring for part of his property in accordance with his will, and we are called to do so as humble servant leaders.

Accountability

"But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead." (1 Peter 4:5)

The Bible talks a lot about accountability. It teaches us that as Christian stewards of all that has been entrusted to our care,



we will be held accountable for how we have chosen to use everything we have been given, including our time, talents and treasures.

Reward

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving." (Colossians 3:23 – 24)

As Christians we understand that God rewards his "good and faithful" servants, both in this life and the next.

Recognizing God's ownership of all our resources and earnestly accepting our responsibility as a steward of his resources allows us to more joyfully and abundantly share those gifts with others.

So, share your voice with the choir. Use your organizational skills to start planning the mission trip you've dreamed about. Set up a scholarship fund to support church youth going to college. And yes, be sure to contribute your tithes and offerings to the church budget. When we give of our time, talents and treasures freely, joyfully, extravagantly, that's when ministry may truly thrive.

Contact Heartspring today for tips and tools on how your church can expand its stewardship to serve its mission. ■

Financial Corner: Volatility returns in 2018

HEARTSPRING INVESTMENT

consultant Jamison Monroe, chairman and CEO of Houston-based Monroe Vos, ended a recent publication with this: “If interest rates stabilize and earnings for S&P 500 companies materialize, the markets should remain stable throughout 2018. We will keep a close watch on inflation, the Fed, corporate earnings, and

geopolitical events. It should be an interesting year.” Well, there have been a lot more “ifs” develop in recent weeks, but this sums it up — it has been and will continue to be an interesting year.

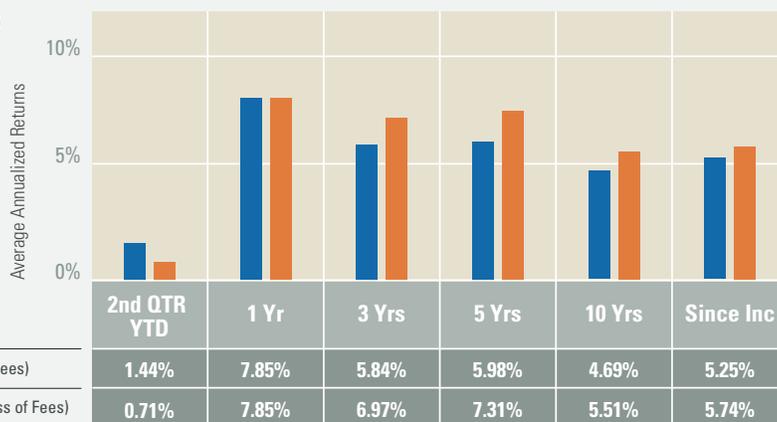
As Heartspring moves forward with the merger with Texas Methodist Foundation (TMF), let me reassure you that we will continue to invest in high-quality,

long-term investments that offer protection on the downside when the markets drop as well as upside growth when the market rises.

We are here to manage performance and grow your investments for the long haul as Heartspring and, once part of TMF, for many years to come. ■

HEARTSPRING FUND PERFORMANCE VS. BENCHMARK

For the period ending June 30, 2018



One-stop shopping for financial information

For those of you who want more detailed market data, reports on Heartspring fund performance, and other investment and financial news, visit the Financial Corner on our website www.heartspringmethodist.org/financial-corner. There you'll find our most current performance, as well as other tools and resources, such as market news and commentary from our fund managers, updated monthly.

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Ideas to consider:

- Establish a committee or task group to work solely on this effort. Stewardship often gets included on the “to do” list of the finance team, but it’s easy to get lost in a sea of other financial tasks and duties. Make stewardship a priority by creating a separate group to focus on stewardship needs.
- Learn from the experts. J. Clif Christopher, a United Methodist pastor from Arkansas and the founder and president of Horizons Stewardship, has written three good books: *Not Your Parents Offering Plate*, *Whose Offering Plate Is It?* and *Rich Church, Poor Church — Keys to Effective Financial Ministry*.
- Develop a stewardship calendar. The most effective churches performing year-round stewardship are those that create a monthly calendar of action items related to stewardship.
- Let us help you. Heartspring has the experience, information, materials and other tools that can be invaluable as you and your congregation plan and prepare for effective year-round stewardship.

Give us a call today. We look forward to helping your congregation cultivate successful stewards to help further the Kingdom of God.

Grace and peace,

Rev. C.J. Taylor

Stronger Together: Heartspring, TMF update

GREAT NEWS! The merger of Heartspring Methodist Foundation and Texas Methodist Foundation (TMF) received final approval when delegates of the Texas Annual Conference voted to affirm it at the May annual meeting. Previously the two boards voted unanimously to join forces, and the Texas Conference Board of Trustees also approved the combination.

Teams from both Heartspring and TMF worked diligently to finalize a comprehensive merger agreement that was signed on July 26 and the two foundations will begin operating as one entity Jan. 1, 2019. Until that time, Heartspring will continue to serve the churches, agencies and individuals of the Texas Conference as it has for the past 40 years.

“We are pleased to have such overwhelming support from our boards and annual conference leadership,” says Heartspring president/CEO Rev. C. J. Taylor. “We truly believe we will be stronger together, and we have put together a blueprint for the future that builds on our respective strengths. As we move through the integration process this year, we will be seeking ways to more effectively partner with you to achieve the dreams your church has for God’s Kingdom.”

Visit www.heartspringmethodist.org to read frequently asked questions and view videos featuring Bishop Scott Jones, TMF President Tom Locke and Heartspring’s Taylor. We’ll post new information online as it develops.

Questions?

Heartspring: Rev. C. J. Taylor or Krystal Wheeler at 800-521-9617 or office@heartspringmethodist.org
TMF: Tom Locke or Curtis Vick at 800-933-5502 or tmf@tmf-fdn.org ■



Grant program supports causes close to your heart



Could your ministry use a helping hand? The Heartspring Grant Program was created to help worthy United Methodist organizations and causes further the Kingdom of God.

Applications are due by Aug. 31 each year, and grants are typically awarded after our quarterly board

meeting in October. The application and a handout explaining the grant program policies, guidelines and procedures may be found online at www.heartspringmethodist.org/grants.

If you have any questions or if you need more information, please contact us at 713-533-3780, 800-521-9617 or office@heartspringmethodist.org.

Spirit

The Heartspring *Spirit* is published quarterly by Heartspring Methodist Foundation for clients, friends and members of the Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church.

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