

In Touch

An Occasional Newsletter
from the Stewardship Committee



Seeking the Light

Third Presbyterian Church, Rochester, New York

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The StewardSHIP is back—by popular demand.

The past year has been rough seas for some, uncertain for many, and calm for few. We have met hard challenges and felt buoyant optimism. As a congregation you have responded generously, with over half of you giving almost 8% more in 2009 than you did in 2008.

This generosity made it possible to reach our many destinations—this troubled city of Rochester and its many residents in need; the hungry who come to us for food; those without a home or place to stay; children in poverty in our schools who need help learning; the many in their homes and residences who need visitors and kind words; our national and international neighbors in New Orleans and Kenya. In spite of the rough seas, we have reached these destinations and brought our many kinds of help for those in need.

November 8 is Stewardship Sunday

John Wilkinson's sermon will focus on "Stewardship as Navigation." Please bring your completed pledge cards to church where we will present them during worship. If you are unable to be in worship on November 8, you may mail your pledge cards to the church office, or submit a confidential pledge to cfoster@thirdpresbyterian.org.



Our ocean journey is a context to show how our faith, trust, and relationships form the foundation of our generosity to others. Last year we focused on the destinations our StewardSHIP visited. This year we will focus on how our ship, and we as passengers on it, stay together, connect with each other, and work in the broader community. We are searching for the answers to a question posed by Lawrence Hargrave at a recent retreat for Outreach program volunteers:



As we look out, how do we look in?



The answers to this question are found in the several “C’s” we will travel this year—Culture; Community; and Connecting.

Culture is so many things... sophistication, learning, customs, values, traditions, snob appeal, refinement. Whatever meaning we take from the word, it describes our common values and our identity.

- What makes us feel comfortable with the church?
- What keeps us coming back, and together?
- What are we like that draws new members in?

Community is also a big tent word—it means so many things... the town or city, a neighborhood, a group of people with some traits in common. However it is applied, it describes the broader group of which we, as individuals, are a part.

- The church nurtures us as individuals; how do we share these gifts with others?
- Do we keep what we have as a group of church members or do we share it?
- Are we a faith community?
- Or simply a group of faithful people?





Connecting is how we learn where we fit and how we share with others. Our connections keep us together and magnify our individual gifts. Connecting creates richer expressions of our values—our culture—and channels our faith into the world around us—our community.

- How do we make connections with others both inside and outside our community?
- Do we stay in our snug harbors or head out onto wider seas?
- Are we challenged to stretch beyond what keeps us comfortable?

We each have our own answers to these questions, some of them affirming the richest meanings that can come from a church, and some simply validating that we enjoy getting out to see people on Sundays. Each is valuable and important; neither is better than the other. The StewardSHIP carries all passengers.



We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If our gift is prophesying, let us use it in proportion to our faith. If it is serving, let us serve; if it is teaching, let us teach; if it is encouraging, let us encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let us give generously; if it is leadership, let us govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let us do it cheerfully. —Romans 12:6-8

Finances

Both income and expense in 2010 are budgeted to be 8% lower than in 2009.

Our stewardship goal in 2009 was \$931,000. The amount received was \$859,179. The final response—our actual stewardship budget amount—was \$802,750. Thank you to all who responded.

Our target for 2010 is \$890,000. Overall projected income is down by 5% due to lower levels of giving of annual pledges—from \$951,000 budgeted in the current year to \$902,000 next year. (Even though half of the pledges were increased this year by 8%, about 20% of pledges were decreased by 1/3 due to the financial crisis of last fall.) Endowment income drops by 12% because of the loss in the value of our endowment funds. Almost every other income and expense category decreases from this year to next.

These budget figures represent important changes over the next several years, and require continuing fiscal caution and restraint. However, we are confident that, as in the past, the congregation will respond generously to our annual call for pledges for the upcoming year.

StewardSHIP Sunday will be November 8, and you will receive your pledge cards in late October. We ask you to consider increasing your pledge if only by a small amount.

Yours in faith,
Stewardship Committee
Rod Perry (chair), Sue Melech, Sue Locke, Bill Coons, Carol Coons, Bob Norton, John Wilkinson, (staff)

	2010	2009
INCOME		
Pledges & Contributions	\$902,100	\$951,000
Endowment Income	\$356,200	\$404,500
Interest & Trust Income	\$21,000	\$24,000
Rent:		
Day Care & 34 Meigs	\$32,800	\$33,000
Fund Raising & Gifts	\$14,000	\$12,000
Miscellaneous Income	\$5,500	\$5,000
Fund Transfers	\$5,000	\$5,000
Balance from previous year	\$0	\$20,000
Total	\$1,336,600	\$1,454,500
EXPENSE		
Staff: Ministry, Building, Finance	\$792,500	\$853,000
Outreach—Local and Denominational	\$197,500	\$215,000
Worship, Music & Arts	\$36,000	\$35,000
Faith Development	\$16,900	\$18,000
Boards & Committees	\$5,500	\$6,000
Office & Finance	\$67,500	\$68,000
Membership/Fellowship	\$6,400	\$7,500
Building Maintenance & Utilities	\$180,000	\$215,000
Support to Presbytery (per capita)	\$34,300	\$37,000
Total	\$1,336,600	\$1,454,500
Pledge Goal	\$890,000	\$931,000



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Rochester, New York 14607

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