Financial stewardship is essential to the life and mission of both congregation and wider church. This course will include a study of biblical texts related to giving and stewardship of resources, the meaning of money, one’s own attitudes regarding money and stewardship, theological foundations for financial stewardship, the importance of pastoral leadership in the congregation’s stewardship, analysis of stewardship programs, presentations from parish pastors, discussion of practical application to contemporary parish life and preaching a stewardship sermon.

Instructors:
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Our goal is to support each student’s development as an effective stewardship leader for Christian communities as you equip these communities to become cultures of generosity.

The course has three parts:
- **Identification** of your relationship to possessions and how this relationship is defined by your management of life with Christ at the center.
- **Integration** of biblical, theological and life experience resources through listening and learning to enrich your understanding of the place of stewardship in personal and faith community life.
- **Development** of a clear plan for helping a congregation build effective stewardship practices, as you nurture a culture of generosity in the community of faith.

To accomplish these goals, you who are enrolled in the course will:
- Grow in your knowledge of biblical material concerning financial stewardship
- Understand your own history with money and how this shapes your present attitudes
- Strengthen your discipleship by learning from wise Christians who value stewardship as vital to their lives of faith.
- Develop your ability to use financial tools such as planning, budgets and financial reports
- Understand the flow of your year-round leadership in stewardship, organized around your: 1) listening, 2) asking, 3) thanking, and 4) telling.
- Embrace your role as a leader in congregational stewardship ministry
- Propose a strategy for year-round stewardship for a congregation you know well

Class meets from 8:00 a.m. to 10:50 a.m., October 24, 31, November 7, 14, 21, December 5
Each class will have two 75 minute sessions (8:00 – 9:15; 9:35 -10:50)

Students will be expected to thoroughly read excerpts from “Rethinking Stewardship, Word and World Supplement Series 6”
And two textbooks:
Each week students will be expected to write a 500 word reflection on the reading assignment and post this paper on "MY Luther Net". This reflection must be posted each week by noon Thursday.

The final project will be a 3,000+ word presentation of a financial stewardship plan for a congregation well known to the student. Weekly writings will contribute to this final project. This final project will include an analysis of the congregation’s setting and stewardship history and a proposal for financial stewardship ministry for the next three years. Components of the final project will be:

- Congregation’s setting and stewardship history (zip code data, trend report, interview with pastor and/or lay leader(s) about the congregation's stewardship history).
- Describe the congregation’s vision, leadership and financial stability
- Plan for the congregation’s stewardship ministry for the next three years, including:
  - Biblical themes that speak to this context (how would these be introduced and taught)
  - Your attitudes and values as a leader in the congregation’s stewardship ministry
  - How to introduce stewardship themes/material to different audiences in the congregation?
  - Who would you partner with to implement this plan? How would you form these partnerships?
  - What resources would you draw upon?
  - A brief timeline for implementation of the plan

Prior to Session I- Complete a money autobiography which will be e-mailed to each participant and turn in your written responses in class on October 24.

Session I – October 24

- Biblical Reflection
- Why is financial stewardship so important? Why does this matter?
- How is it with you and money? Money Autobiography
- Expectations of class members
  - Syllabus
  - Weekly Assignments related to reading
  - Final Paper – Develop a financial stewardship plan for a congregation you know
- The Biblical basis for financial stewardship

Reading Assignment to be completed by October 31

- Word and World Supplement 6 (WW) pp 1-19
- The Soul of Money, pp. 43-94

Session II – October 31

- Biblical Reflection
- Introduction of Final Project
- Discussion of Reading Material
- The Context - How is money often talked about and dealt with in congregations and our society (and how this hampers the mission of the church?)
Elements of positive congregational stewardship ministry –
  - Three Basics for Financial Stewardship in the Congregation
  - Three Reasons People Give, Three Pockets from which people Parents’ Offering Plate]
  - Four motivators for generosity (Callahan)
  - The Role of the pastor/church staff in financial stewardship ministry

Reading Assignment to be completed by Nov. 6
  - Money and Ministry (MM) pp. 3-50
  - Not Your Parents Offering Plate (NYP), Forward, Introduction, and pp. 1-78

Session III- November 7
  - Biblical Reflection
  - Discussion of Reading material
  - Understanding congregational budgets and financial matters
  - Talking about money when you aren’t asking for any: the key to money and spiritual growth
  - Talking about money when you are asking for some (overview)
  - Overview of annual appeals
  - “Make it Simple” ELCA material on annual response program- Glenn

Reading Assignment to be completed by Nov. 13
  - MM pp. 53-115
  - WW, pp. 77-86

Session IV – November 14
  - Biblical Reflection
  - Discussion of reading material
  - Role of the Pastor in Financial Stewardship – Guest Presenter: Pr Gary Langness
  - Elements of positive congregational stewardship ministry [Not Your Parents’ Offering Plate, Chapter 6]
  - Introduction to capital appeals and Endowment Funds
  - Overview of final project

Reading Assignment to be completed by Nov. 20
  - MM, pp. 116-175
  - WW, pp. 99-121

Session V – November 21
  - Biblical Reflection
  - Generational Giving Characteristics- Guest presenter: Grace Duddy Pomroy
  - Discussion of reading material
  - Year-Round Stewardship

Reading Assignment to be completed by December 4
  - NYP, pp. 79-120
  - MM, pp. 176-200
Session VI- December 5
- Biblical Reflection
- Discussion of reading material
- Organizing categories for leading financial leadership
- Nuts and Bolts of pastoral financial leadership – Guest Presenters: Prs. Chris Nelson, Bob Wertz and Dennis Preston

Assignment – Final Paper due December 11