

**THE  
EVERY MEMBER  
UNCANVASS**

**A Stewardship Kit for Small Congregations  
By  
Frank Oglesby**

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## WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF THE UN-CANVASS !

We hope this kit will be useful to you in planning your program of stewardship in your congregation. It is designed to offer new ideas for you.

Frank Oglesby is not an expert in Every Member Canvass planning for small congregations. He is not a professional fund raiser. But he does have a lot of experience and it has worked for his congregation. If you have questions about his plan, please feel free to write Frank or to call him. His address is 5415 Greenwillow Road, Indianapolis, Indiana 46726; his phone number is (317) 547-7284.

When the Resource Center for Small Churches first published the EVERY MEMBER UNCANVASS in 1979, the response was much more than the author and the Resource Center ever expected. Many congregations used the UnCanvass approach either straight from the manual or with changes to suit it to their particular needs. Many thanks needs to go to the Rev. Robert Greene for discovering this material and making it available to many churches through Grassroots.

We cannot guarantee that the UnCanvass will work in every setting, but it has worked for hundreds of congregations and we hope that it will work for you. The key seems to be to have committed lay leaders who have some theology of stewardship and are willing to share that with others. This may be as basic as God has been good to me and it is up to me to return a part of what He has given me back to Him to further the ministry of His Church.

Try it! You'll like it!

FRANK P. OGLESBY is a professional engineer and a member of St. Matthew's Church in Indianapolis. He is a leader in diocesan and congregational life.

In the Diocese of Indianapolis he has served as President of the Standing Committee, as President of the Board of Directors of the diocesan camp and conference center, as a member of the Commission on Ministry, and as a member of the Finance Committee.

In his congregation, Frank has served as Senior Warden, Financial Secretary, EMC Chairman, Chalice Bearer, Convention Delegate, and other posts.



## Introduction to the Revised Edition

I would like to give you two personal examples of how the UnCanvass has been successful: my husband's parish has used various modifications of the UnCanvass for over 10 years in a congregation of 450+ members, and it has met with continued success.

My own congregation of 90 + members has used the UnCanvass for the past 4 years with similar success. As with many small churches, the idea of individual home visits is met with nearly total resistance, but the brunch/dinner model with talks by the members of the parish has brought us an increase in pledges each year in a town with a shrinking economy! We even used the UnCanvass method for a Capital Funds Drive and had 101% of our goal pledged!!

The UnCanvass is a variation on a theme. The major difference is in its focus on a congregational event as the location for the "pitch" rather than home visits by canvassers. Many churches find that one-on-one calls are difficult to get done; people just simply won't go! This has been recognized by professionals in the area of stewardship, and many of us who are part of a parish know that it is true.

While the UnCanvass seems to be especially appropriate in small, "family-sized" churches, it has also been successful in larger churches. Every congregation needs to change its approach to stewardship from time to time and the UnCanvass provides a creative and workable option.

### WHAT IS THE UNCANVASS?

In the next section of this material, Frank Oglesby describes it in detail: how to carry it out. It is a simple process. Follow his plan, but feel free to add to this method what ever works for you.

The congregational event can be a Brunch as Mr. Oglesby has suggested. We have also had dinners in various vestry homes, cocktail buffets, auctions and elegant lunches in the parish hall. What ever you choose to do should be enjoyable and something that will make people want to come. From past years experience, don't do a potluck; if you're going to ask for pledges, then provide a "free meal" as well as food (like pizza!) and babysitting for young children. Maybe the Youth group could help.

The education of your congregation in the area of stewardship takes place in three main ways:

1. the letters that give basic financial information about the costs of running a parish;
2. one or more sermons about stewardship. One series we've heard about had the following titles:

Stewardship has nothing to do with money  
Stewardship has something to do with money  
Stewardship has everything to do with money;

(The clergy and lay leadership need to be open about their own attitudes and commitment to stewardship. I have shared the dollar amount of my pledge and what % it is of my income. This tells the congregation that I am serious about pledging and it also says that it's O.K. to talk about money out loud.)

3. in articles in the Sunday bulletins and parish newsletter.

You may also want to encourage the Christian education program to do a unit on stewardship. "Come Aboard the Steward Ship" is available from the Episcopal Church Center - Office of Stewardship. You can call them at 1-800-334-7626.

You can order pledge cards from several church supply businesses or print up your own. We've included a sample pledge card in this kit. Feel free to adapt it.

The Rev. Betty W. Fuller  
Seedlings, Incorporated  
July 1992

TO HAVE A SUCCESSFUL

UN - CANVASS

- \* Educate - be Practical
- \* Get Everybody Out
- \* Play the First Team  
(The Vestry)
- \* Involve the Rector/Vicar  
in a major role
- \* Have Fun
- \* Reach Out
- \* Watch Your Pledges Grow

We hope the following information helps  
you meet your goal

## EVERY MEMBER UNCANVASS

A Plan that worked for a Small Church

Frank P. Oglesby

For years our congregation wandered about in the maze of Every Member Canvasses, stewardship Drives, Pledge Card Sundays - always keeping our financial head just above water. The "Hard Sell," "Soft Sell," "Cry Poor!", "Ain't You Ashamed!", the "Numbers Game," and "Tithing" were some of the methods we used to try to raise the funds necessary to keep our church healthy. We got the job done; however, we always caused dissatisfaction just by mentioning "Every Member Canvass" in front of any gathering at church.

About ten years ago my Rector gave me a paperback book entitled Stewardship: Myth and Methods, by the Right Reverend John H. MacNaughton, now Bishop of West Texas, which helped me to better understand stewardship and how it can be accomplished successfully and practically. I have shared this information with many friends.

As Ed McMahon on the NBC Tonight show used to say to Johnny Carson, "Right here in this one little book is all that you will ever want to know about stewardship. It has the whole thing in 137 pages. You just can't beat it. The whole thing is right here before you."

There isn't the usual "You're wrong, peanut breath!" from Johnny Carson, because this time, Ed is right.

For several years the principles of Bishop MacNaughton's book have been applied to our parish's Every Member Canvass with resultant increases in the size of our individual pledges, of our pledges that are honored (paid). But best of all, a whole new receptive attitude to our Every Member Canvass has been established.

The word of our success has gotten around and there have been many requests to use our material and methods, all granted. This word evidently led to the publication of our first edition by the Resource Center for Small Churches and now to this revised edition being re-issued by Seedlings, Incorporated.

To answer your immediate questions. . .

We are an Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Indianapolis at the same location for 25 years. We have 200-plus communicants,

100 pledging units. Our 1985 budget was \$67,000; \$60,000 of that was pledged income from an equal mixture of professionals, skilled craftsmen, and blue collar workers.

## A. PRINCIPLES

Before describing the practical aspects of our plan, let's consider some of the principles that apply. The plan is simply an organization and application of these principles:

### \* Giving is Returning - But:

Only when we admit

- \* That everything we are
  - \* Every breath we breathe
  - \* Every talent we show
  - \* Every cent we have
  - \* Everything comes from a loving God and Father. Only then do we begin to see ourselves as returners, giving back a little of what we have in trust.
- 
- \* We give to God through our congregation and Diocese to assure the continuance of God's work in the world. Money is a very worthy gift.
  - \* Give sacrificially -- give your fair share (3-5%) of your total income).
  - \* Every Member Canvasses can be fun.
  - \* Play the First Team. Dedicated people get results.
  - \* The Vestry must be committed to the process and to sacrificial giving.
  - \* The support and intimate involvement of the Rector/Vicar is mandatory.
  - \* The Every Member Canvass has to be a 4 - 8 week program of education and communication and it can be fun.
  - \* Establish a budget after the pledges have been received.

## B. BEFORE THE PLAN

(Optional - any simple attention getter can be used)

Select a photographer. Every church has at least one person interested and qualified for this role. Instruct the person chosen to shoot pictures of anything that moves -- 35 mm color slides of people or a videotape -- pictures of everyone within the church family. The end product is a show 35 - 45 minutes long presented at the Every Member Canvass Brunch as the "Entertainment." It helps to add a little subliminal marketing by making a few titles such as "Giving Is Returning," and "Give Your Fair Share," and inserting them into the presentation at appropriate spots. This approach is good year after year -- people enjoy seeing themselves.



We have one major difference from all other plans that I have seen and that is we do not recommend visitations (calling) unless it is requested. This is directly related to our smallness. This factor is discussed in the "Plan."

### C. THE PLAN

The activities are charted weeks before and weeks after the Kick Off Brunch. Just looking at the chart would suggest a complicated and difficult plan -- not so. A few simple things make it very easy.

The Vestry Members are the Hosts and Hostesses. They have a very simple thing to accomplish: I rank asking a church friend out to a Brunch, at which the entertainment is watching a video or slide show of his church family, as one of the easiest promotions ever. This describes the Vestry's responsibilities.

The first training session is designed to provide the Vestry with their lists of parishioners and to answer questions about getting the parishioners to the Brunch. The purpose of the second session is to provide an opportunity for the Vestry to validate the Brunch attendees list and to make list adjustments for the Vestry Hosts and Hostesses.

All EMC meetings are held around the regular Sunday services, including the Brunch. No evening or weekday meetings are required. Meetings are short and are well attended.

The Brunch is really an extension/augmentation of the coffee hour. The plan is to keep it simple and easy: juice, coffee, good Danish pastries -- no cooking other than coffee. Alternatives to an extended coffee hour are a catered lunch or a pitch-in. They all serve the purpose -- cause maximum participation. Use all paper products and minimize set-up and clean-up. The Brunch Chairperson plans the menu, buys the food, prepares the coffee, sets up the tables, and picks up afterwards. This takes about two hours.

A major feature of this plan is that there is no need for Canvass visitations (calling). We have proven that calling can hurt rather than help increase giving. In a small church it often becomes a confrontation that isn't necessary. We have had good results having the Chairperson do all the follow-ups personally, by phone with visitations only when requested. The Brunch is the real key to success. If 60% of all pledges are made available at one time, the rest is easy. Also, there are better results educationally from the mailings than from calling, proven by increased pledging and spontaneous discussions of the mailings. There is great appreciation of the confidentiality that exists when only one person does the follow-up.

# **EVERY MEMBER UN CANVASS**

TIME	ORGANIZE	EDUCATE	EXECUTE
<b>Long Lead</b> 1 Year	<b>Vestry Action</b> Appoint a Photographer Identify EMC Chairperson Identify Education Chairperson (Optional)		
<b>September</b> Week (-7)	Identify Hosts & Hostesses Appoint a Brunch Chairperson (The Vestry)		
Week (-6)		<b>Mailing #1 - Rector's letter: <i>Theology of Giving</i></b> (mail with Brunch invitations)	Mail Brunch invitations (EMC Chairperson)
Week (-5)			
Week (-4)		<b>Mailing #2 - <i>The Who, What, When, Where, &amp; Why of Giving</i></b>	<b>Training Session #1</b> for Hosts & Hostesses (EMC Chairperson)
<b>October</b> Week (-3)	The number of mailings is optional	<b>Mailing #3 - <i>The Who, What, When, Where, &amp; Why of Giving</i></b> (continued)	Contacts by Hosts & Hostesses
Week (-2)		<b>Mailing #4 - <i>Why Pledge?</i></b>	<b>Training Session #2</b> for Hosts & Hostesses (EMC Chairperson)
Week (-1)		<b>Speech by EMC Chairperson - <i>How Much Should I Give?</i></b>	Contacts by Hosts & Hostesses (Final Report)
Week (0)	<b>BRUNCH - EMC KICK OFF</b>	<b>Short Wrap-Up Sermon</b>	First Pledge Making
<b>November</b> Week (+1)			<b>Mailing #5 - To those not attending the Brunch</b> (EMC Chairperson)
Week (+2)			Chairperson calls to non-pledgers
Week (+3)			Chairperson Follow-Up
Thanksgiving Day	<b>Thanksgiving</b>	<b>Thanksgiving</b>	Pledge Cards presented in Thanksgiving

Every Senior Warden/Finance Chairperson/Every Member Canvass Chairperson from a small church who has read this far has probably made up his/her mind about this plan. It's a lot of work for the Chairperson! Don't despair! It really isn't that bad. In fact, it is easy. The list of things that the Chairperson would do are identifiable in the chart. Let's review them.

The Invitation: A simple letter to every member inviting them to the Brunch. It lists the agenda for the day: Eucharist, entertainment, brunch, and pledge collection.

Hosts and Hostesses: Divide the parish into the same number of groups as there are Vestry persons. Provide the Vestry with the names of their Brunch guests. Adjust the lists as commitments are known.

The Speech: Easy . . . say what you believe about giving. Your commitment is well-known and you know the principles of giving and the Every Member Un-Canvass theme.

Pledge Cards: If everything else has been done, you are ready to collect the Pledge Cards. After the Brunch, offer a simple reminder to all attendees of their role in their church family and the EMC theme, and collect the pledges.

Follow-Up: The Brunch crowd will yield 50 - 60% of total pledges -- 15% will be returned from the follow-up mailing to those not at the Brunch. Thus only about 25% of your pledge collection will require personal follow-up. You'll have fun finding out what's going on in your church.

At this point I predict you are saying to yourself, "I have read that an Every Member Canvass can be fun -- but I still don't know for sure how it can be fun."

What About Fun? The most fun is having all of the church family at the largest event of the year. You'll see people who didn't make Christmas or Easter. Old acquaintances are renewed and new ones are made. And when Brunch is served - all that beautiful quiet. (You don't need to know much about marketing to know now is the time to collect the pledge cards.) Knowing that everybody has had the opportunity to learn the Who, What, Where, Why, When, and How Much about giving takes away the stress of an EMC and makes the potential for fun much greater. The fact that visitations are minimal and only upon request relieves stress on the canvassers and again helps add to the fun potential.

You only need to recall two simple phrases to remember our plan:

Giving Is Returning and Give Your Fair Share.

Have lots of fun at your next Every Member <sup>Un</sup>Canvass!

RECTOR'S LETTER FOR MAILING #1

(CHURCH LETTERHEAD)

To the people of \_\_\_\_\_:

In a very short time our Every Member UnCanvass will begin. Bishop \_\_\_\_\_ will visit \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ to baptize and confirm and to help us launch the Un-Canvass. The purpose of this letter is to remind you of some of the important issues at a time when we are all thinking and praying about our pledges.

First of all, there are the practical considerations. We all want to support our Church's work in the parish, in the diocese, and in the nation and the world, and we know that it is our great privilege to be able to give to that work. But we are not trying to meet a minimum budget -- to get by. Instead we are asking all our members to think of the parish's needs in the light, not of our present, admittedly extensive program, but of the tremendous opportunities that lie open to us. Without a dramatically increased budget we will surely fail to keep pace financially with all that has been happening at \_\_\_\_\_, and we will fail in our real commitment to be the hands and feet and eyes and ears and mouth of Christ -- we'll fail at doing His work in the communities for which we are responsible. So we ought to pledge as never before.

Then too, you and I should keep in mind the inescapable need of every Christian to give and to give sacrificially; for without true sacrifice there cannot be true love or growth or any real validity in the religion we profess. Every Church member pledges either by himself or with his family. This is the standard for all Episcopalians everywhere; it is part of the responsibility we accept with out membership in this Church. We know that it is a real privilege to pledge and to be committed and counted-on Church people.

In a time of inflation and, for many, job uncertainty, it is all the more urgent that we pledge really well; for we at \_\_\_\_\_ cannot move ahead without this -- we can only go plodding along, just keeping the doors open. But with a good, meaningful pledge by each of us, pledging that involves sacrificial giving out of the actually enormous bounty that we enjoy, St. \_\_\_\_\_ will be alive as never before. And we shall prove true to the trust that Christ placed in us when he ascended. For we are His Body; we are the Church.

Faithfully yours,

The Rev. \_\_\_\_\_, Rector

VESTRY INSTRUCTIONS

(WEEK -5)

(CHURCH LETTERHEAD)

Dear Vestry,

You recently received a letter mailed to all parishioners of \_\_\_\_\_, announcing the start of our \_\_\_\_\_ Every Member UnCanvass. The kick off is planned around a Brunch which we hope will give us the greatest possible emphasis on the start of EMC.

[Last year, our best-ever un-canvass, we asked The Vestry (and had a tremendous response) to act as hosts and hostesses for their \_\_\_\_\_ friends at a Brunch at the church. We plan to carry out the same general plan this year.]

Your obligations are limited. We are enclosing a list of the people you are to sponsor, and we ask you to:

1. Call and invite the people on your list to be your guests at the Brunch. Determine and report the number of adults and children on your list who will attend.
2. Attend two meetings:  
  
Sunday, \_\_\_\_\_, immediately after church. This is a planning-training meeting.  
  
Sunday, \_\_\_\_\_, immediately after church. This is a wrap-up/final count meeting.
3. Take some church friends to the Brunch on \_\_\_\_\_. This Brunch is sponsored by the Vestry.
4. Distribute pledge cards to the people on your list who attend the Brunch. Record those given pledge card.
5. Encourage completion of the pledge cards at the Brunch. Envelopes will be provided to assure that pledges are confidential.

At the Brunch, we plan to have a special area for children in the fourth grade and up. Nursery attendants will also be available.

Please help! Unless I hear from you, I will expect to see you at the meeting on \_\_\_\_\_.

Faithfully yours,

\_\_\_\_\_, Chair  
The Stewardship Committee

(CHURCH LETTERHEAD)

Dear Fellow Parishioners:

The \_\_\_\_\_ Every Member <sup>Un</sup>Canvass (EMC) theme has been generally accepted, and we have had several years of increased individual pledging and giving.

The theme is "Giving is Returning - Give Your Fair Share." We will not fight success; this theme will be continued through our <sup>Un</sup>EMC.

In soliciting your response to our <sup>Un</sup>EMC we ask you to adjust your giving to your church as your income has been adjusted over the last year - keep giving your fair share - (think 5%) - of your total income.

To our great friends on fixed incomes - hang in there - we appreciate your sacrificial giving - you realize and demonstrate "Giving is Returning."

Regardless of the successes with our theme, it is possible we still have some people who do not understand it, and some who certainly do not respond to it. If we had full response our finances would take care of themselves. We also get questions which indicate a lack of understanding. Questions such as:

1. What does everybody else give? 5%?
2. What are the costs? What is my share?
3. I'll give when I come. Why should I pledge?

These reasonable questions have reasonable answers.

In this letter we will respond to the question "Giving." In subsequent letters we will try to answer the other questions.

WHO GIVES WHAT

Pledge Value	Number of Pledges	Pledge Value	Number of Pledges
\$100/week	_____	\$10-\$14/week	_____
\$50/week	_____	\$5-\$9/week	_____
\$40/week	_____	\$1/week	_____
\$30/week	_____		
\$25/week	_____		
\$20/\$24/week	_____		
\$15/\$19/week	_____		

MAILING #2 -- continued

A GUIDE TO PERCENTAGE PLEDGING or PROPORTIONATE GIVING

Look at your current parish pledge for a moment. You know your approximate income for this year. What percent of that did you pledge to the church? Perhaps this table will help you.

Annual Income	\$5200	\$7800	\$10400	\$15600	\$20800	\$31120	\$52000
Percentage of	\$100	\$150	\$200	\$300	\$400	\$600	\$1000
Giving	weekly	weekly	weekly	weekly	weekly	weekly	weekly
1%	\$1.00	\$1.50	\$2.00	\$3.00	\$4.00	\$6.00	\$10.00
1.5%	\$1.50	\$2.25	\$3.00	\$4.50	\$6.00	\$9.00	\$15.00
2%	\$2.00	\$3.00	\$4.00	\$6.00	\$8.00	\$12.00	\$20.00
2.5%	\$2.50	\$3.75	\$5.00	\$7.50	\$10.00	\$15.00	\$25.00
3%	\$3.00	\$4.50	\$6.00	\$9.00	\$12.00	\$18.00	\$30.00
3.5%	\$3.50	\$5.25	\$7.00	\$10.50	\$14.00	\$21.00	\$35.00
4%	\$4.00	\$6.00	\$8.00	\$12.00	\$16.00	\$24.00	\$40.00
4.5%	\$4.50	\$6.75	\$9.00	\$13.50	\$18.00	\$27.00	\$45.00
5%	\$5.00	\$7.50	\$10.00	\$15.00	\$20.00	\$30.00	\$50.00
7%	\$7.00	\$11.50	\$14.00	\$21.00	\$28.00	\$41.00	\$70.00
10%	\$10.00	\$15.00	\$20.00	\$30.00	\$40.00	\$60.00	\$100.00

Run your finger across the top until you find the annual weekly family income closest to yours. Move your finger down that column until you see the closest approximation to your weekly parish pledge.

Perhaps your pledge is less than 1% and is not on the chart at all. Not so good when you consider that many of your fellow Episcopalians give 10% to the church and still give to colleges, hospitals, and charities.

But not so bad either, providing you determine here and now to do something about it, so increase your percentage giving. Resolve to raise your pledge a half percent, or a full percent. And continue your efforts to raise your pledge year after year. Find where you stand this year, and move down that same column one line -- that's an increase of half a percent -- or move down two lines -- that's an increase of one percent.

Depending on your personal circumstances, the dollar amount of the pledge might possibly be lower than your pledge this year. That doesn't matter. The important thing is for a Christian to grow, and increasing the percentage of your giving is one witness to it.

MAILING #2 -- continued

Analyze these data and you find:

There is no one person financing St. \_\_\_\_\_. It takes everybody's contribution.

\_\_\_\_\_ pledging units provide \_\_\_\_\_% of our pledged income.

Almost \_\_\_\_\_% of our pledging units are \$\_\_\_\_\_ per week or less.

Our average pledge is \$\_\_\_\_\_ per week.

What should this information mean to you? Many of you who remember our theme have the answer - "interesting information only." To anyone with a different answer, remember:

Giving is Returning - returning to God some of the personal blessings He has provided us for our stewardship. Give sacrificially.

Give Your Fair Share - a fixed percentage of your income. We suggest 5%. Five percent will represent sacrificial giving to most of us.

Whether you are in the top ten, in the lower ten, or you do not give at all - we love you - God loves you; and we need whatever support you can provide - especially your presence. We do ask that you seriously consider what you presently give against your ability to give and apply the theme.

Recently our Rector wrote a letter to all parishioners that expresses a consideration that we should all have in mind as we decide what we will "Return to God". He said "Keep in mind the inescapable need of every Christian to give and give sacrificially; for without sacrifice there cannot be true love or growth or any real validity in the religion we profess."

Faithfully yours,

\_\_\_\_\_, Chair  
The Stewardship Committee



(CHURCH LETTERHEAD)

Dear Fellow Parishioners:

The second question raised during our \_\_\_\_\_ Un<sup>n</sup>EMC is: What are the costs of operating \_\_\_\_\_? What is my share?

The costs of operating \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ are projected to be:

Fixed Costs

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per week per pledge for assessment
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per week per pledge for utilities
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per week per pledge for insurance
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per week per pledge for our small loan
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (We have \_\_\_\_\_ pledges below this value)

Salaries

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per week per pledge for salaries
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per week per pledge for pension
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per week per pledge for auto/travel
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_% of our pledges are below this value.)

Miscellaneous

(Repairs, Sunday school, music, office supplies, altar supplies, etc.)

The grand total required to operate \_\_\_\_\_ this year is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per week per pledge.

Noticing the number of pledges below the value of a particular cost element gives you an idea how impractical it is to ask for an *equal* share, not a fair share, as a pledge to your church.

The common understanding of an *equal* share is "Divide the budgeted disbursements (the bills) by the number of members and let me know my share." \_\_\_\_\_ of our \_\_\_\_\_ pledging units could not have been said to be giving an equal share during the \_\_\_\_\_ budget cycle.

MAILING #3 continued

A Fair share is easy to determine and affects everybody the same way. It is really fair.

Your weekly income x a fair share (sacrificial)= your recommended pledge.

200/week X = \$10 week.

Your church should be as much as a fair share of your household budget as any other element; i.e., clothing, food, rent, entertaining, medical expenses, etc. Remember - Giving is Receiving.

If you would carefully review our budget, I am sure that you would find that the budget is established around projected income. It is not an objective budget directed toward best doing God's work at \_\_\_\_\_.

I am also sure that some of you found a glaring shortcoming of this budget; i.e., other than a small portion of our diocesan assessment, we are not spending a budgeted cent for God's work outside our parish. Many churches have a goal to spend as much outside their parish as they do inside. That's kind of what it's all about.

Give a Fair Share and this situation can be improved. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ needs to reach out into our world and offer the great things we have in our church to many who need them.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_, Chair  
The Stewardship Committee

(CHURCH LETTERHEAD)

Dear Fellow Parishioners:

The third question we promised to answer is:

"I'll give when I come. Why should I pledge?"

To pledge means - "to make an official promise." Your employer's promise to pay you a salary - so much an hour, a week, a month, a year, - is a pledge. He pledges to pay you when you are ill, pay you to take a vacation, and provide many other benefits. Many times his pledges will take the form of a contract - an official pledge.

With your employer's pledge to you, you too can make official promises to others:

To buy a car - a house - a boat.

To acquire credit cards.

To secure a loan.

To send children to school.

To support your church.

On your promises merchants buy goods, build stores, hire people, build homes, etc.

A pledge is also the basis on which our church functions. At St. \_\_\_\_\_ many years ago a number of families got together and pledged themselves to establish a church. Each year since, our church family has made official promises to keep our church functioning. This year \_\_\_\_\_ individuals or families have pledged \$\_\_\_\_\_ to continue the worship of God at \_\_\_\_\_. On these promises:

We "hired" a priest.

We hired a secretary.

We hired an organist-choir master

We promised to support the diocese with our assessment.

We promised to pay for the goods and services required to allow us to operate.

Without these pledges from you we could not continue to function as a parish. If you only want to give when you come and therefore do not pledge, do not be surprised if some Sunday when

you come, we are not there. Remember, as a member of this family you should provide your Fair Share.

It is a fact that situations change and that pledges that have been made in good faith must sometimes be modified. So do not let the possibility of a change in your circumstances cause you not to pledge. We often have pledges both increased and decreased during the year. Above all, do not let the lack of a pledge, or a delinquent pledge, keep you from church. Only one person other than you knows the amount of your pledge and your progress in paying your pledge.

\_\_\_\_\_ pledges are a critical minimum to maintain our program at \_\_\_\_\_. We are a pledging church and most everybody pledges, but such a few pledges places a major burden on every pledger.

We have answered our three Every Member <sup>Un</sup>Canvass questions. We hope you have learned the things you need to know to convince you to pledge, and the meaning of our theme "Giving is Returning - Give Your Fair Share." If you have, you will pledge and give sacrificially. If there are other questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_, Chair  
The Stewardship Committee

At this time in our Every Member UnCanvass, you have most likely heard our theme that "Giving is Returning." You have most likely heard or read the theology of giving. Remember, the inescapable need for every Christian is to give sacrificially, for without true sacrifice, there cannot be true love or validity in the love we profess for God. Every church member pledges!

So we know what to give: money and our talents  
We know how to give: through a pledge  
We know when to give: regularly  
We know where to give: to God through our church  
And, we know why to give: for God's work

The big question not answered at this time is, "how much to give?" Of course, the "how much" has to be your decision and your response will be handled confidentially. Nevertheless, to assist you in making this decision, let's review some of the processes others have used in determining "how much."

Do you remember "Tithing?"

The literal meaning of tithing is that you give 10% of all you have to God through the Church. Tithing is mentioned 39 times in the Old Testament as evidence of the importance of tithing in those days. Of course, in those times, the religious community was the source of many charitable acts: medical care, old age assistance, help for the poor and education -- all provided by support from tithing.

Tithing in the Old Testament sense does not answer our present-day concerns. It is legalistic in the "do it or else" sense. This tithing process neglects the fact that we are called upon to return all He has given us: some in service, some in prayer, and some in life consecrated to Him.

Many congregations have played the "Numbers Game." In this process, you start with last year's budget and determine the increases required to meet this year's demands. Next, you carefully calculate salaries, insurance, assessment, retirement, utilities, etc. in order to determine the magic number -- say -- 15%. Knowing this number, you point out that everybody must raise their contribution 15% to meet these new demands. Something is also wrong with this process:

It puts emphasis on church needs -- not giving  
It is unfair -- it is unfair to the sacrificial giver  
It is a minimum -- rather than a maximum approach  
It forgets the whole concept of what we could do if money were not an issue  
It is not a spiritual challenge.

We give to the church. What we really need is to give to God.

Then there is the "Aren't You Ashamed Approach." Statistics prove that in this country we spend each year:

- 3 billion on cosmetics
- 3 billion on tobacco
- 10 billion on recreation and entertainment
- 12 billion on alcohol
- 9 billion on gambling, furs, and jewels
- 1.5 billion on the church and charities

So you spend two times as much for cosmetics and tobacco and eight times as much for booze as you contributed to your church? Aren't you ashamed? This system appeals to guilt and drives people away and criticism for failure is a poor motivation. Giving is an emotional process -- motivated by feelings.

Let's look at the "Cry Poor" approach. There are leaks in the roof. The nave is going to fall into the undercroft. The furnaces are shot. We must have more secretarial help. To continue to serve, we must dig a little deeper in this time of crisis.

For special circumstances this is not a bad process but to use it too many times, the "cry wolf" approach drives away the support needed to meet a real crisis. This system promotes giving out of pity, not thanksgiving, and appeals to failure and failure begets failure.

There is another approach - "Proportionate Giving." What percentage of your income for last year did you give to God through your church? You can figure it out very easily:

*If you made \$25,000 and you gave \$5 per week, you gave 1% of your income.*

With this method of measuring your gift, you certainly know what you are giving and you don't fool yourself about sharing.

Awareness of sharing will push your proportionate giving up to about 3% to 5%. The percentage you use is less important than the fact that you conscientiously make a measure of your commitment. This method of determining "how much" places the emphasis where it belongs -- giving out of income. You can compute your gift according to a solid year-in-year-out principle. It keeps you honest about your giving. It allows every giver to stand on equal ground.

I recently read that if every Episcopalian became destitute and went on Social Security at the lowest family income; and, if each of us gave 5% proportionately to God through the Church, the income of the Church for God's work would be up seven times its present level.

In summary, although there are many ways to suggest how much you should give, the "how much" must be your decision. You

should give -- and certainly whatever you give will be welcome. I do suggest that you consider proportionate giving since this process makes it possible for each of us to provide our fair share regardless of our income. The 3% to 5% figure represents different dollar amounts of sacrificial giving, at different income levels, but it evidences the same dedication.

If I haven't been properly persuasive and there are questions, please let me know. I will be glad to assist you.

MAILING #5

(WEEK +1)

(CHURCH LETTERHEAD)

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

We are sorry you missed our kick off brunch for Every Member UnCanvass. We had a good turnout, a fun brunch, and an excellent start of our canvass.

\_\_\_\_\_ pledges were received worth \$\_\_\_\_  
compared with last year when \_\_\_\_\_  
pledges were received worth \$\_\_\_\_

This is an increase of \$\_\_\_\_

With this start, we are looking forward to a successful canvass.

We know you want to pledge your Fair Share, so we are enclosing a pledge card for your convenience. Please return it as soon as you can. We plan to complete our canvass by the first weekend in \_\_\_\_\_. We need to complete our canvass by then in order to establish a proposed budget for your approval at our Annual Parish Meeting in January.

Thank you,

\_\_\_\_\_, Chair  
The Stewardship Committee



MAILING #6

CAMPAIGN COMPLETION

(CHURCH LETTERHEAD)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Mr., Mrs., Miss \_\_\_\_\_,

Your generous pledge of \$\_\_\_\_\_ is hereby acknowledged.

Your pledge and contributions are considered confidential and only those church officials who need to know are privy to this information.

The Treasurer will provide you with a quarterly statement of our records of your contribution against your pledge and will provide you with a year-end statement of your contribution for tax purposes. Please address any questions or concerns to the Senior Warden or Treasurer.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_, Senior Warden

SAMPLE PLEDGE CARD

\_\_\_\_\_ Church

MY TOTAL PLEDGE TO \_\_\_\_\_ FOR 19\_\_ IS \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Your 19\_\_ pledge was \$ \_\_\_\_\_)

(Your 19\_\_ pledge was \$ \_\_\_\_\_)

My 19\_\_ pledge will be paid:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ weekly    \$ \_\_\_\_\_ monthly    \$ \_\_\_\_\_ quarterly    \$ \_\_\_\_\_ annually

I want to use pledge envelopes weekly: \_\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_\_ no

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date