



Episcopal Diocese of West Texas

Diagnosing the Congregation

Once the Stewardship Ministry Team is created and formed there can be work done on diagnosing the congregation and creating a plan to effect change. One of the best resources for diagnosing the congregation is the following table which was developed by The Rev. William A. Yon (of Alabama) who was instrumental in the creation of what is known as the "Alabama Plan" in the Episcopal Church. Church.

Conditions Which Constitute OBSTACLES To Effective Stewardship Education In the Congregation	Conditions Which Facilitate EFFECTIVE Stewardship Education In the Congregation
The priest has not made a clear decision about his/her own giving.	The priest is a tither or is committed to a plan of increased proportionate giving with tithing as a minimum goal.
The priest is conflicted about his/her role in leading the parish into more generous giving.	The priest is willing to witness publicly to his/her own understanding and practice of financial Christian stewardship and to invite parishioners to re-examine their own.
Vestry members have not made a clear commitment personally to proportionate giving and as a result give mixed signals to the parish.	Vestry members are committed to proportionate giving as the pattern of their own financial Christian stewardship and give clear encouragement to their fellow parishioners to do the same
There is little sense of an expanding mission vision to which parish leaders are committed which would require or justify increased contributions.	Opportunities are provided annually for parishioners to talk through their decisions about giving with their fellow Christians.
Parishioners are sent out to ask for pledges from other parishioners without adequate understanding and skill for this task.	Before members visit other members they are given the training necessary to approach this task with clarity and confidence.
Stewardship development plans are haphazard and poorly thought out.	A careful plan is developed to carry a stewardship education effort through to a successful conclusion.
There is little improvement from year to year in a parish's ability to carry on effective stewardship education.	Careful evaluation at the conclusion of the program enables a parish to build on successes and benefit from mistakes from year to year.

Use this chart to begin diagnosing the needs of your congregation and develop a plan to move from conditions which constitute obstacles to conditions which facilitate effective stewardship education in the congregation.

Adapted from the TENS [A Manual for Stewardship Development Programs in the Congregations](#)