

TRIP REPORT

The Northeast Ecumenical Stewardship Council

Spirituality & Stewardship: Growing Generous Stewards

March 17-18, 2006

I had the opportunity to be a part of this event and found it to be somewhat enlightening. There were lively and informative exchanges in both the sessions I attended.

I participated in the following two workshops:

1. **ENDOWMENTS**

Rev. Daniel J. Carlson - ELCA Regional Gift Planner

Topics included: How to begin: *Is all that detail really necessary?* How to encourage gifts: *Educate, motivate, celebrate!* How to spend: *What's more important - repairing the roof, or feeding the hungry? Who decides?*

The manual, *How to Create A Mission Endowment Fund*, is available for at: <http://www.elca.org/fo>

What I learned:

- That an endowment is different than a trust account, although I still can't fully articulate the difference...but I will in the near future.

As close as I can tell right now, an endowment (as used in this session) is a perpetual vehicle used to manage a pot of assets and spending all of the income generated from those assets. Growth does not come from investment income; growth comes from adding new assets in the form of gifts. Endowments are chartered with strict covenants on the use of proceeds.

- About 70 percent of people die without a Will in the United States.
- People frequently don't even think of putting their church in their Will, and, in general, tend to appreciate the suggestion as a way to extend their own stewardship efforts past their own lifetime.
- That people probably will not act to include their church in their Will if they are not asked to do so.

My evaluation of this session:

While the speaker was obviously knowledgeable about this content area, I was a little frustrated by the meandering around his agenda as well as the lack of well defined answers to very specific questions. I 'felt' as if he was so knowledgeable that he didn't have to specifically prepare for this event.

2. **CHILDREN, YOUTH & MONEY**

Amy Beveridge - CT Conference UCC

Young people spend much money and influence the spending of far more. Can we help them learn to value sharing?

What I learned:

- There are a lot of resources out there to help coach children in the ways of sharing their monetary wealth.
- There seems to be no resources that address the other two legs of stewardship -- sharing time and talents.
- I didn't find any resources that help mentor parents with their own everyday efforts in teaching their children about stewardship.

My evaluation of this session:

I actually was forced to 'work' during this session (I wasn't expecting that). Participants had to evaluate some of the materials used to teach stewardship and share their thoughts in open forum format. The facilitator kept us physically and mentally involved and focused throughout.