

At the March 2017 Annual Conference Assembly (ACA), three additional team members were approved (Christine Yoder, Oak Grove-West Liberty; Marion Beyeler, Orrville Mennonite-Orrville; Roger Crossgrove, Zion-Archbold), bringing our team back to the normal seven-member group. We welcome these new members and appreciate the additional wisdom and experience that each of them brings to the Stewardship Ministry Team.

The Stewardship team is very grateful for the “healthy” budget that passed at the March 2017 ACA. Our team’s vigilant analysis work has decreased significantly. We sincerely appreciate the effort that individuals and churches in the Conference have made to help support the Church by financially supporting Ohio Conference. The efforts have been noticed by all on this team, and we thank God for the movement among the Conference in the way of the finances!

Several activities that we as Stewardship Ministry Team have been working on this year include approving several ‘special events’ to assist in building relationships within the Conference and support the direction that was set at ACA 2017:

- Assist in subsidizing the New Pastor Orientation in late summer 2017; up to \$1,500 (This event was postponed until sometime in 2018.)
- Recommend to use earnings/interest earned from the Endowment Fund for the “Gathered and Sent” initiative throughout the 2017-2018 Conference fiscal year, up to \$9,948
- Assist in subsidizing the Pastor-Leadership Team retreat in February 2018, up to \$2,500

While the Ohio Conference continues to run an operating deficit, due to the generosity of donors from years past, we have continued to have financial resources available these last several years when our cash outflows have exceeded the cash inflows. While the funds will not last forever — in fact, at the current rate, we anticipate depleting the excess resources in several years — we trust that God will continue moving amongst us. With that trust, comes an opportunity for embracing potentially new or different ideas to augment the current support of Conference.

During this past year Stewardship has spent a bit of time brainstorming how we as Ohio Conference can find additional means for the Conference to receive donations, or creating various forms of additional revenue stream. With the help of Leadership Team, the following are three specific avenues that Stewardship Team is pursuing in order to create additional sources of revenue for the Conference:

- Create a charitable account on www.smile.amazon.com and recommend constituents (such as you) use that when making Amazon purchases, so that the Amazon Smile Foundation donates 0.5 percent of qualified purchases to your favorite charitable organization (of course, it’s Ohio Conference!)
- Recommend “Donate Your Change” (www.donateyourchange.com) to allow Conference constituents (such as you) to round up credit card charges to the next whole dollar, so the change goes to your favorite charitable organization (of course, it’s Ohio Conference!)
- Recommend constituents use the “My Neighbor” credit card offered by Everence. This card generates donations to your favorite charitable organization (and again, of course, it’s Ohio Conference!) each time you use the card.

Stewardship Team welcomes ideas from others as we look for ways to help fund the Conference and thereby support healthy, growing congregations.

Respectfully submitted by the Stewardship Team: Christine Yoder, Dean Falb, Marion Beyeler, Matthew Hochstetler, Melanie Miller (co-chair), Roger Crossgrove and Ruth Kauffman (co-chair)