



Make It Simple

A Resource for Stewardship Education and Annual Response

User's Guide **THE TEN PERCENT THING**

Use any of the suggestions here to construct a learning experience focused on the story and thoughts of Barb Debski about tithing.

Discussion Items

1. Per Barb's comment, how might "offerings" devolve into "payment for services"?
2. What's the advantage of seeing "tithing" as a path rather than a destination?
3. What might have been the "bumps along the way" in Barb's journey toward ten percent giving?
4. What did she mean when she said "God is kind to let us tithe."?
5. Explain how Barb might feel a "calling toward tithing."

Sharing Items

1. What in Barb's testimony encourages you? Surprises you? Motivates you?
2. When it comes to giving a percentage of your income to your congregation, what are your "nighttime what-if monsters"?
3. What was new and refreshing in Barb's testimony about tithing?
4. What part of your generosity is compelled by duty? By gratitude? By responsibility? By shame? By your identity? By your calling?
5. What would happen in your congregation if members tithed the value of their automobiles? Their vacations? Their food budgets?

Action Items

1. Use a “growth giving chart” to assess the percentage level of your present giving. (To download this chart, see <http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Discipleship/Stewardship/Financial-Response-Methods.aspx>)
2. Before or after viewing the video, use a Bible concordance to find—and read together—all the passages in the Scripture that talk about tithing. What do you notice? (For one concordance entry, see <http://bibletab.com/t/tithes.htm>.)
3. Using sticky notes and felt-tip markers, make a wall-decoration that lists or illustrates the blessings this group acknowledges as gifts of God. (HINT: Use large-sized notes for easy visibility.)
4. Find and listen to the story of a congregation member who is willing to talk about his or her experiences with tithing.
5. Use the Web to find out the average household income for your ZIP code. Multiply that amount by 3%, 5%, and 10%, and then again by the number of contributing households in your congregation. What might be the level of available contributions if tithing were a practice for one-tenth of your congregation’s members? One quarter? One half? All members? (See <http://www.zip-codes.com/zip-code-database.asp> or www.factfinder.census.gov for this information.)