



# stewardNet

News and inspiration

SUMMER 2016



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

*You're receiving this email because you or your congregation indicated you are a stewardship leader in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). If you'd prefer to unsubscribe from this newsletter, please [let us know](#).*

Dear friend in Christ,

According to the book "The Truth About Leadership" by James Kouzes and Barry Posner, for any new leader the first question people have is "Who are you?" And the second most common question is: "What's your vision?" That is because people are inspired and mobilized by a sense of vision, by knowing why they exist as an individual and organization and what problems they are meant to solve. Living with vision means people living on purpose.

For example, imagine you were offered a job to shovel sand into bags for \$15/hour. You might be less than excited about the prospect. Yet, if the purpose were to stop flooding in your community, you might be motivated to do the work for days without pay. Understanding the vision makes all the difference.

As we think about people growing in their identity as stewards, the role of vision cannot be underestimated. Being a steward is about embracing God's vision for your life, relating to God's vision for the world, and being inspired by the church's vision to bring people together to work on God's vision collectively. Hopefully, this issue of stewardNet will connect you to some useful ideas about vision. Vision needs to be about so much more than some verbiage on a web page that is hardly ever read. Vision is central to understanding what makes people tick including their motivation to live as stewards.

We are a church that is energized by lively engagement in our faith and life. Thank you for doing God's work with a faithful, generous heart!

Faithfully,

Steve Oelschlager  
Stewardship Program Coordinator  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

## **'Making Vision Stick'**

Andy Stanley on vision

For insights and practical aspects of communicating vision, see this [quick read](#) by pastor and author Andy Stanley. Stanley says, "To

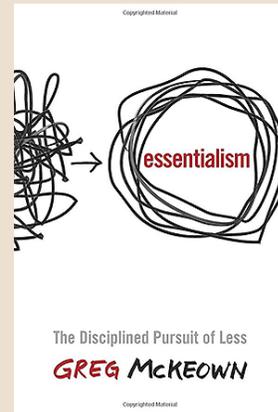
make vision stick, you need to state it simply, cast it convincingly, and repeat it regularly. The fourth imperative is that you must celebrate it systematically." On the topic of simplicity: "It is better to have a vision statement that is incomplete and memorable than to have one that is complete and forgettable." Stanley asks what it means if your vision is rarely mentioned or discernable in the prayers of the people.



### Staying focused on the vision

What is at the core?

Here is an intriguing thought from "[Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit of Less.](#)" "Since 1981 not a single film has won Best Picture at the Academy Awards without at least being nominated for Film Editing. In fact, in about two-thirds of the cases the movie nominated for Film Editing has gone on to win Best Picture." In other words, doing something well is strongly correlated with knowing what to cut. As the book says, "less is more." The challenge isn't discerning good choices from bad but rather great choices from good. Clarity of vision requires this kind of constant discernment.

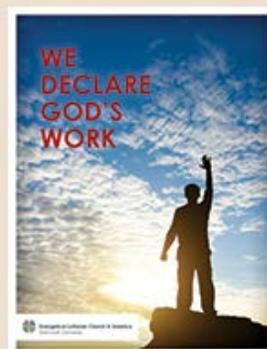


### Reinforcing vision through stories

The ministry of mission interpretation

Storytelling is the ability to share a vision. It is the ability to create a narrative, a sequence of events told to convey some message or meaning. It uses words and images to transport the listener from one place or time to another place or time. Compelling stories grab people's attention, help communicate a more memorable message and inspire action. Storytelling is a powerful tool!

Mission Interpreters in congregations tell the stories of our ELCA in action around the globe. The visions created through storytelling transport members of congregations to places near and far, meeting people whose lives have been changed through our work as the church together; they bring us into relationship with others. These stories often inspire members of congregations to become more involved because they feel more connected – they see the vision.



Congregations can benefit by learning to tell their own story. What descriptive words create the

best picture of your congregation? What action words tell others who you are? What vision is it you want people to "see" when they hear your story?

If you'd like more information on the Mission Interpretation ministry or how to begin to tell your congregation's story, please contact [Denise Ballou](#).

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### **Vision for ministry**

One trait of an effective capital campaign

We all know that it takes funding to do ministry. Every congregation, including your own, needs funding to carry out God's calling through ministries of teaching, reaching out to others, gathering for worship, and serving in the community and beyond. A capital campaign is a method for raising a specified sum of money during a defined period of time.



A congregation that finds itself being held back in its ministry, or being called to expand or change its ministry, might conduct a capital campaign to achieve a large, challenging endeavor, such as retiring debt, expanding facilities, or launching a new ministry program. A very important trait of an effective congregational campaign is a clear, compelling vision for ministry. This means synching the "what we are doing" with the "why are we doing this"; connecting the reason for the campaign with the going-forward ministry work that will happen as a result. During the entire endeavor as well as during the campaign, members need to hear this vision communicated often and through many methods. Vision-infused campaign messaging will assist people in their personal faith and financial walk. God will take what we are able to do and make miraculous things happen through our combined service and gifts.

MIF (Mission Investment Fund) Capital Campaign Services is a ministry of the ELCA that strengthens congregations by helping them raise funds, renew faith and reach goals. Learn more [here](#).

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### **Other items of interest**

Videos, magazines, grants and more

- The process to create a vision for the ELCA's future continues. Read the [directions paper](#) that shares the key messages harvested through conversations across the ELCA. Comment on the directions and priorities that have emerged using this [feedback form](#).
- Download the free 2016 edition of [Giving Magazine](#) to focus on God's vision that we take hold of the life that really is life. In this edition of Giving, Christian stewardship thought leaders from throughout North America offer spiritual insights and practical ideas for finding contentment through simpler living. The center section offers guidelines for creating a financial stewardship emphasis, including resources for four worship services and a special meal event.
- Does your banking community share your vision and values? Check out the new [ELCA Federal Credit Union](#). By banking with other Lutheran members and congregations, everyone can benefit from lower fees, lower interest rates on loans and higher returns on deposits. Financial services include auto loans, personal loans, credit cards, checking and savings accounts, surcharge-free ATMs and more.
- The Stewardship of Life Institute (SOLI) seeks to promote stewardship education in the ELCA, especially with seminarians and rostered leaders. Thus, SOLI is accepting grant proposals from ELCA seminaries, synods, congregations, and other ministries for projects, workshops or events that encourage stewardship education. [Go here](#) for details and to download the grant application form.

- A new video resource is available featuring Bishop Craig Satterlee from the North/West Lower Michigan Synod on preaching stewardship. The presentations focus on developing and preaching sermons that can inspire and invite congregants to support the ministries of their congregations and the larger church. There are companion workshops, notes, PowerPoint slides and a book. Please contact [Neil Bullock](#) at the ELCA for more information. You can also dial into a stewardTalk discussion with Bishop Satterlee on Aug. 23 at 3 p.m. Central time at 877-820-7831 and participant code 6314685#.
- ELCA congregations gave \$1.8 billion in regular offerings last year. Where does it go? This new [video](#) shares how your congregational offerings support the ministries of the ELCA and the church around the world.

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### **Sayings, quotes, thoughts**

Steve Jobs

"If you are working on something exciting that you really care about, you don't have to be pushed. The vision pulls you."

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### **Biblical foundations**

Proverbs 29:18 (KJV)

Where there is no vision, the people perish.

## **Upcoming events (watch the [calendar file](#) for details)**

**Aug. 23**

**StewardTalk with Bishop Craig Satterlee on preaching stewardship.**  
3 p.m. Central at 877-820-7831 and participant code 6314685#.

**Aug. 25-28**

**Joy Ranch, SD**  
Mission Interpreter Coordinators Conference.

**Nov. 17**

**StewardTalk with Dr. Adam Copeland on crowdsource fundraising.**  
3 p.m. Central at 877-820-7831 and participant code 6314685#.

**Nov. 30 - Dec. 2**

**Coral Gables, FL**  
Ecumenical Stewardship Center Leadership Seminar

**Feb. 14-17, 2017**

**Norfolk, VA**  
Association of Lutheran Development Executives

[Full calendar](#) | Subscribe to [Our Calendar File](#)

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