

# DAYSRING DAYBOOK

## Growing Generosity: Stewardship Best Practices

Many studies suggest that there has been a generational shift in the way people give. Congregations need to learn how to talk about giving in a culture that doesn't like to talk about money. Barbara Fullerton identified 6 best practices in year-round congregational stewardship in her doctoral thesis.

**Best Practice One:** Provide excellent operational management. We give when we can see where our gifts are going and what they are accomplishing. Sound operational management increases our confidence that our gifts are being well managed.

**Best Practice Two:** Integrate stewardship into worship year-round. We give when our hearts are touched by the overwhelming gift of God's love and grace, and when we are reminded about how we can participate in God's mission.

**Best Practice Three:** Teach about stewardship. A culture of gratitude and generosity is created when there is teaching about generosity and stewardship through Bible studies, Sunday school lessons, personal-finance training, and budget counselling. We also need to learn about how to arrange major gifts and end-of-life gifts through planned giving.

**Best Practice Four:** Provide opportunities for spiritual growth. When we grow spiritually, and see ourselves as stewards and disciples, we tend to be generous with our lives and our money. Spiritual growth is encouraged by opportunities such as Bible studies and small group ministries. .... Page 4



## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*Everything we have is a gift from God that we are to use to love God and our neighbour as ourselves.*



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## FROM OUR MINISTER:

### What does outreach look like?

When we look at what it means to be a Christian, there is an important aspect to bear in mind. Being a Christian means to follow Christ. Following Christ then means realizing that Jesus Christ's life shapes ours. While Jesus assures us of life after death, it's not a "pie-in-the-sky one day when you die" thing. It is now and it is real.

There are typically three things that happen as our faith is formed. We get a life "from above," a life that looks up. Then we start looking inwards and our lives get shaped and are affected by Christ on the inside. Lastly, having the connection upwards, and having the inward change, there is a natural flow to reach out. This might sound very simplistic, so for what it's worth, it is "up-in-out."

None of us is perfect, no congregation is perfect, and this doesn't hinder us in doing exactly what Jesus equips us for through his Spirit. We have a life to live, a life that has an effect on those whom we meet outside.

Dare I say that the only way for us to have any future as a faith community is by outreach? This is who we are and this is the meaning for our whole existence. What does it look like? Do we only gather and keep each other warm and cozy? Obviously not!

In this way Presbyterians are strong in making a difference outward. This is so often a programmed thing. We give towards Presbyterian World Service and Development and Presbyterians Sharing. How about us as individuals?

Let us reflect on how much we touch lives right where we live and work. The reflection doesn't need to be long; it can spring into action!



*Heinrich*



## When Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day Meet

**ASH WEDNESDAY** occurs this year on February 14. It marks the beginning of Lent. Lent, like Easter is a "moveable" observance. Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday after the full moon following the March equinox. Ash Wednesday is the first day of the 46-day period leading up to Easter. The name (Ash Wednesday) is taken from the custom of smearing ashes on the forehead. The powdered ash is from the previous year's Palm Sunday palms that are burned and provide the substance for the smear. The ashes, from ancient time, signified grief and sorrow for sins, followed by repentance. This observance is largely practiced in the Anglican, Lutheran, Catholic and Orthodox traditions. An innovative form of outreach is practiced in Edmonton: Anglican clergy meet commuters in the "market place," administering ashes in the hallways of the main LRT station.

**VALENTINE'S DAY** is a stated observance on February 14. The saint who is officially recognized as the source of the observance, was known as St. Valentine of Rome to differentiate him from dozens of other Valentines who carried the same name. Another source of this observance may lie in the liberties with history some historians claim the medieval English poet, Geoffrey Chaucer, took for his poetic characters. In 1375, Chaucer wrote Parlement of Foules, also known as The Parliament of Birds, where he linked courtly love with the celebration of St. Valentine's feast day. The poem refers to February 14 as the day birds (and humans) come together to find a mate. He may have invented the observance as a special day for lovers, which now extends to a day of romance, playful and otherwise, for exchanging cards and gifts. Still, another legend has linked February 14 to the year 278, when Valentine, a priest, lost his head at the command of Emperor Claudius II. This Valentine committed the crime of marrying Christians when the Emperor was attempting to recruit single men for the army.

This year's double observance highlights expressions of love: (1) a penitential practice when Christians repent of sin, receive forgiveness and assurance of God's love; and (2) gifts and cards exchanged as expressions of love. This co-occurrence of events previously happened in 1945 and will not be repeated until 2029.

*by Marilyn A. Carr*



Eri Yoon and Anam Gill

## “GOD HAS A PLAN,” SAY INTERNS

Coming from two diverse cultural backgrounds the new interns for the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) began their journey in Hannover, Germany, early in January.

Eri Yoon and Anam Gill, coming from South Korea and Pakistan respectively, were greeted by the German winter—which, according to them, is not as harsh as they had expected!

The WCRC’s one-year internship programme brings together young people from member churches to take part in the functioning of the WCRC and learn more about Christian unity and the ecumenical movement.

Both Anam and Eri are excited about their new beginning at the WCRC’s office, hoping to take back the wealth of knowledge and wisdom gained from their experiences to their home countries. They both strongly believe that God has the best plans and coming to Hannover is no coincidence.

Eri literally grew up in church because her dad was a pastor in Busan, South Korea. She started playing piano at worship services in his church and later served as a Sunday School teacher before going to the seminary herself. She completed her Bachelors degree in piano but decided to obtain her Masters in Divinity because she wanted to serve the church and help her dad as well.

“Unity of church is very important; when I read the Bible I find that,” she says. “Last year I was here as a delegate to the WCRC General Council in Leipzig. This made me want to learn more about the concept of church as one body of Christ. There is a term, ‘Kairos of God,’ which means God’s timings, and the more I prayed what I should be doing, the answer I got was clear that I need to apply for this internship.”

Eri primarily will be working in the programme office during her internship period, focusing on communion, theology, justice and witness. Anam will be working in the communications department for the most part. Both, however, will be given experiences throughout the entire organization.

Anam, a journalist by profession, has been freelancing for various international and national dailies, but her interest in the ecumenical movement developed in 2006 when she was part of the World Council of Churches (WCC) 9th General Assembly in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Later she was a part of WCC’s Living Letters delegation to Liberia and Sierra Leone and freelanced for WCC in their communications department, including at the WCC 10th General Assembly in Busan, South Korea.

Before coming to the WCRC she was working on the Dialogue Café Lahore project, a space for dialogue connecting global and local youth on issues regarding sustainable development. She founded this space in 2016 and believes that dialogue is essential for peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

Through this internship, she hopes to have a broader understanding of the church, ecumenical movement and the work of the WCRC. “Hailing from Pakistan where Christians are a very small minority, I have always wanted to know how Christian unity can empower the less privileged segments of a Christian community, especially in places where they are a minority,” she says

Anam is looking forward to her year in Germany which she finds very intriguing and enriching: “I have seen so many beautiful churches here and I feel so happy just walking in churches without any fear of it being bombed, unlike in my country, and pray peacefully whenever I want to.”

The WCRC’s internship programme is made possible through contributions by the Evangelisches Missionswerk, Reformierte Kirchen Bern-Jura-Solothurn, and the Presbyterian Church of Korea.

**Source:**

<http://wcrc.ch/news/god-has-a-plan-say-interns>

### ... Growing Generosity

**Best Practice Five:** Get involved in leadership. Interestingly, churches with clergy and lay members involved in wider church roles (presbytery, synod, General Assembly, etc.) experienced per capita giving around 50% higher than most other churches!

**Source:** Adapted from an info-sheet provided by Karen Plater, PCC Associate Secretary, Stewardship Department

Also, see <http://www.abc-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Growing-Generosity-article.pdf>



**Best Practice Six:** Engage in social justice. When we care and speak out for the most vulnerable and show a concern for the environment we often give more financially. Fullerton found that per capita giving was 18% higher in churches with 5 or more active involvements in social justice issues.

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