

Stewardship Task Force (STF) Report
Montana – Northern Wyoming Conference UCC
2019 CAM
August 9 – 11, 2019
Lynne Spencer-Smith, Chair

Members: Lynne Spencer-Smith (chair), Doug McClelland, Ken Crouch, Amy Carter, Robert Shy, Pam Peterson, Marc Stewart (ex-officio)

As a task force, our purpose is to “provide resources to local churches” as stated in the Conference By-Laws. The STF affirmed this designation and sought ways to provide stewardship resources to local churches. Not knowing what local churches would want from us, a survey was sent to all conference churches. We received responses from 21 churches. When asked what the STF could do to support churches in the area of stewardship, there was interest in learning more about stewardship and current trends.

After deliberation, we determined it would be helpful to present a bi-location, all-church stewardship event in early May. “What About Stewardship?: Helping Local Churches do Stewardship Better” was held on May 4 simultaneously at Mayflower UCC in Billings and Plymouth Congregational UCC in Helena. Keynote presentations were offered by Shana Johnson, Illinois South Conference Minister, presenting in Billings and Sue Artt, Rocky Mountain Conference Minister, presenting in Helena. The Billings location was attended by 23 individuals, representing 8 churches. The Helena location was attended by 13 individuals, representing 5 congregations.

The goals that STF set forth to accomplish at the event included:

- Participants will have made a connection with other stewardship minded folk
- Participants will commit to follow up connections and sharing of ideas, successes and challenges on a monthly basis.
- Participants will be aware that the Conference can provide stewardship coaches
- Participants will have an understanding that better local church stewardship will have an impact on the wider church
- Local churches will be instructed on developing a stewardship timeline
- Participants will become familiar with the development and use of narrative budgets

For the most part, these goals were accomplished. Although the goal of participants coming together for encouragement and support has not happened on a monthly basis, there has been one follow-up zoom support session and more will be planned for the early and mid-fall. Towards the end of the event, local church members recorded stewardship goals for their church. These goals will be the focus of future support sessions. We concluded by connecting the two locations via zoom for sharing and commissioning. The next support session will be August 21 at 7 pm.

What’s next for STF? We look forward to facilitating the stewardship support sessions and remind congregations of the coaches that are available to help guide you through your goals. We would love to have more people involved and spread the representation out across the conference a bit more. If you or someone you know would make a good addition to the STF, let

one of us know. We are looking for people who 1) love the church; 2) are excited about what the UCC has to offer; 3) is willing to spend some time and energy to help expand the stewardship of the Montana-Northern Wyoming Conference and its churches!

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Lynne Spencer-Smith,
Chair