

Appeal Letter Writing: How to Invite Generosity



- Think person, not purse. Tell how lives are changed by the ministry of your church and how the reader's gift will make a difference.
- Focus on the narrative, not the numbers. Giving is emotional, so appeal to the reader's heart. Rather than saying, "An average of 225 people come to our community dinners so we need more funds for food", include a quote from a dinner attendee or tell the story of someone who comes that shows how the dinner has impacted him or her.
- Be clear and direct. Keep the letter to one page. Use short paragraphs and language that's easy to understand. Avoid technical terms.
- Include a call to action. Tell the reader what you want him or her to do, and what will happen as a result. "If you make a gift today, it will help us feed more children tomorrow."
- Give the reader options. If you're asking for a monetary gift, include a response envelope. Share how the reader can give online or through an automatic bank draft. Consider whether the appeal is one to which someone would make a gift of stock or distribution from an IRA; if so, include information on how to give utilizing those methods.
- Use a postscript. Research shows readers pay attention to the "P.S.", so use it wisely. Reiterate your call to action, share a deadline, or highlight another way a gift will help the church strengthen its ministries.
- Consider targeting your letters. Someone who gives every year should be thanked for their past generosity, whereas someone who has never made a financial gift to the church should be challenged to take that first step.

Appeal Letter Writing: Sample Language



Sentences and Phrases About Stewardship:

- Gifts of God's grace and goodness
- As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called to serve God through all He has entrusted to us
- Practice of faith
- Caring for something we value and treasure
- We recognize God as creator and owner of everything.
- Grounded in faith, love and commitment to God's work through our church
- As stewards we don't hoard and keep what is God's to ourselves; rather, we use these gifts to love God and our neighbors.
- What we do with our time, talent, and treasure impacts our faith in transformative ways.
- Inspiring, liberating, rewarding
- Responsibility, privilege, joy
- Lifestyle with the cross at its center
- Express gratitude, generosity, service and care
- God creates. God entrusts. We respond.

Sentences and Phrases About Pledging:

- Personal decision between God, you, and your family
- Transforms you, the pledger, and our church home
- Pledging is an important part of our stewardship, not because of the dollar amount, but because of how it can deepen our relationship with God.
- Give what you can and let God take care of the rest.
- "Yes, Lord, I will do this."
- A chance to say, "I believe in what we are doing as a church and in who we are becoming together in Christ."
- Part of the foundation that keeps ministries alive and helps create new ones

Other Helpful Phrases and Words:

- With thanksgiving
- Offer to God
- For generations
- Prayerfully discern
- Together we can...
- Transformed spirit
- Continuing giftedness
- Abundance
- Partners in...
- Vital
- Invitation
- Commitment
- Celebrate
- Blessing