

Stewardship Report 2025

Submitted by: Beth Davis

List of the members currently serving on your ministry or leadership team:

no formal team, however this position works closely with the Financial Secretary and Treasurer

As you look at the goals you had planned for 2025, what were you able to accomplish? Please be as specific as possible.

One goal was to continue to start the stewardship season earlier to allow for more time to follow up with members and gently nudge them to submit their pledge form. We launched the start of stewardship season on Anniversary Sunday, September 28th, with Stewardship Sunday being November 2nd. (*Note: Stewardship Sunday was originally scheduled for October 26th but needed to be pushed back to November 2nd.*) This earlier timeline again was much less rushed and gave more time for follow-up.

This year's annual stewardship campaign consisted of weekly member reflections leading up to Stewardship Sunday. Bob Schneider and Bobbie Benjamin, Suzanne Cole Lisa and Todd Williams, Jonathan Vogan and Larry Waddell shared a reflection on something they have been a part of in the spirit of the theme "Brick by Brick, Heart by Heart: Building a Church That Lasts."

A letter was sent to thank folks for their 2025 generosity and encouraged checking progress to complete 2026 pledges. The letter included the directions on how to check pledge information in Breeze.

The campaign resulted in 63 pledges to the church's operating funds for 2026 with \$277,843 pledged. This is an increase in total pledged from 2025.

How has your ministry/leadership team's work and goals shifted throughout 2025?

Thankfully there were few changes to the work and goals this year. We kept the earlier stewardship season that we shifted to in 2024. One change is that Stewardship Sunday needed to be pushed back due to a schedule conflict. That change required an additional reflection speaker to be identified and asked.

Where is your group or ministry area stuck? Do you need help in discerning who to ask to join your group or to get more involved?

Stewardship is not stuck at the moment; however, I am thinking of the future. Folks are being asked constantly to give their time, talent and treasures to Old First and beyond. I worry about the future and being able to meet the goals we set.

What has changed since returning to in-person/ hybrid ministry? How does your group imagine continuing to bridge the in-person/ hybrid gulf in 2026?

With continued commitment to hybrid worship, communication and engagement with members is better but still a work in progress. We again focused on meeting people where they are at. Our stewardship campaign included both traditional pledging (paper pledge cards at church) as well as digital pledging (digital pledge card and Breeze pledge commitment tracking).

How do you envision your group adjusting/changing with the completion of Old First House in 2026, if applicable? How has your group already anticipated this adjustment?

I believe there will be minimal adjustment needed with the completion of Old First House. Folks have shown they will continue their generosity and complete their stewardship pledges in addition to any support directed to Old First House.

What do you hope to accomplish in 2026?

A higher number of pledges and a higher total pledged! I deeply appreciate folks' generosity and know we can continue to do more. I will work to plot the stewardship campaign dates out over the summer to be prepared for fall.

What are the ways that the church can support your team in achieving your goals for the upcoming year?

Continue to be generous with their time, talents and treasures. Commit to attending worship and/or events, connect with other members and spread the word about Old First.