

Stewardship Resource for November Newsletters

Have you ever held a youth fundraising event like a pancake breakfast and set a price for the meal? If your congregation is typical, people gladly support the event and pay the price. Have you ever held a similar event and asked for a free-will offering? Again, if your congregation is typical, you raise more than you expected. It is a good lesson during this season that is many things including “stewardship” season in many places.

Many congregations conduct a fall response campaign. There is a wide variety of types and names that are used, but I like including the word “response” the best. While the response campaign is often aligned with making a ministry and financial plan for the coming year, they are really two very different things.

So, the question then, is, “do you know what you are responding to?” If I am responding to a budget, my response is to a finite number. In turn, my response will tend to be finite. I will do my share to help pay the bills. Even if the response is for my time and talent, my response will have limits.

On the other hand, when I consider God’s love and grace poured out for me, I think of words like limitless, abundant, generous, steadfast. I can only think of responding in the same way. It is like the set meal price versus the free-will offering. When I make a free-will offering I am responding in support of God’s work that will be done with the money. When I purchase a ticket for the meal, I am responding to the pancakes on my plate.

As you consider your response for 2018, whether your church asks for one or not, what free-will offering will you make to support the spread of God’s love and grace that you so freely enjoy?