



# "What can we do to motivate members about their response to God's blessings?"

This was the question that the Stewardship Board at Grace Lutheran Church, Eau Claire pondered at the beginning of the year.

Retired Pastor Wallace Hunstad said, "The blueprint for a good stewardship emphasis in any congregation is to be found in the ambitious, resourceful, cooperative, willingness on the part of members of its Stewardship Board. At Grace Lutheran Church, the chemistry was there in abundance."

Working with Senior Pastor Rolf Nestingen, the Board decided that the key to receiving a better return is to be found in a better proclamation of God's abundant blessings. And with that focus, the stewardship thrust *Showers of Blessings* was born.

A large, clear glass "blessing bowl" appeared in the sanctuary, and parishioners were asked to jot down blessing experiences and drop them in. With a bursting bowl of hundreds of blessings, parishioners were then asked to draw one out as they left the worship service.

A parish newspaper article followed up the blessing bowl idea by reminding readers, *God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything you may share abundantly in every good work.* - II Corinthians 9:8.

From Ezekiel 34:26, the theme, "**Showers of Blessings**" came: *I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing!* Congregation

members began watching for the weekly "showers of blessings" message in the bulletin. Even a hymn, "There Shall Be Showers of Blessing" by James McGranahan was sung,

"It became an easy matter for us to begin counting our blessings! " exclaimed Pastor Hunstad.

Realizing that repetition makes for enthusiasm, and enthusiasm brings commitment, the Stewardship Board presented a litany based on Psalm 103 and Ezekiel 34 to be read each Sunday during worship.

Temple Talks focused on the 90-year history of the congregation, the variety of blessings that people were now carrying in their billfolds, and a recognition of talents found within the congregation.

Culmination to the project came on Stewardship Sunday, when those entering the sanctuary witnessed 15 white fluffy clouds appearing with 40 over-sized raindrops suspended from the clouds. Each raindrop suggested a blessing.

Out of gratitude for the blessings God has showered upon the congregation, each member came forth to the Blessing Bowl, this time with their Faith Promise Card indicating their financial commitment for the year.

The final blueprint for a stewardship emphasis had pressed its image upon the Grace Lutheran Congregation.

Following the arrow link below to find documents provided to show you the whole stewardship program, including some samples of publications, the blessing slips, bulletin announcements and inserts as well as a description of the dramatic sanctuary transformation shown below.

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