



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.



**“And 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.”**

2 Corinthians 9:8  
—NRSV



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**Competencies**  
in a well-formed  
stewardship  
leader

What qualities should a stewardship leader have?

These competencies are a way of thinking about what attributes or assets a well-formed stewardship leader would have. This list is meant to be a guide for leadership formation in this church. Those who work with stewardship in congregations may find these competencies helpful for their work. These competencies can help calibrate stewardship health for all who lead, no matter the number of years of service to this church or what title is held.

The list assumes that every leader in the ELCA grounds stewardship behaviors in beliefs about one's relationship with God. The *core perspectives* column reflects beliefs; the *core practices* column reflects abilities or behaviors; and the *core leadership skills* column reflects behaviors the leader uses to lead others.

This document has been developed (as directed by the 2007 Churchwide Assembly) by the Stewardship of Life Institute and has been reviewed and favorably received by ELCA seminaries. These competencies are offered to this church for guidance and advice in forming and supporting effective, healthy, missional public ministers with clear perspectives, sound personal habits and confident leadership skills in stewardship.

<b>CORE PERSPECTIVES</b> The stewardship leader believes that	<b>CORE PRACTICES</b> In personal life, a stewardship leader embodies	<b>CORE LEADERSHIP SKILLS</b> A stewardship leader can
<b>Trusts God's abundance</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>as caretakers of all that we have and are, we are called and freed to participate in and with God's generosity for the health of the whole world.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an attitude of abundance rather than scarcity.</li> <li>generosity and sustainability in stewardship practice.</li> <li>ongoing assessment of the integrity of our choices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>motivate a faith community's stewardship journey through mission interpretation and gratitude for partnership.</li> <li>reframe conversation to highlight assets (not just money).</li> <li>cast a vision for a vital future.</li> </ul>
<b>Grounds oneself in biblical and theological principles</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>stewardship is biblically grounded.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an ability to listen to and interpret all of Scripture with an ear for stewardship themes.</li> <li>an awareness of the history of stewardship in the life of this church.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>teach and preach Scripture from a holistic stewardship orientation.</li> </ul>
<b>Holds a holistic perspective</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>we are stewards of our whole lives including our time, energy, wisdom, bodies, money and other resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a total response to the gospel that does not compartmentalize faith, and thus includes care of the earth, money, family, communal relationships and self.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>articulate their personal stewardship journey.</li> <li>help others articulate their stewardship journeys.</li> </ul>
<b>Perceives connectedness</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>stewardship is corporate; that is, it expresses a fundamental connectedness within the body of Christ.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a sense of responsibility to peers and this church regarding personal steward practices.</li> <li>accountability for decisions and a commitment to collaboration/collegiality around stewardship practice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>encourage in others both accountability for and openness to the gifts of a greater whole (both church and culture).</li> <li>make use of current stewardship resources and conversation.</li> </ul>
<b>Engages and critiques culture</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>we give <b>through</b> this church, not <b>to</b> this church. Non-ELCA agencies/initiatives that can and do align with God's purposes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an ability to speak of economic systems and the realities of business with some sophistication.</li> <li>a reflective stance toward consumer culture.</li> <li>a commitment to a baptismal understanding of the implications of our choices (both commission and omission) for the generations that follow us.</li> <li>a concern about present injustice as well as the long-term sustainability of our decisions and systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>frame questions insightfully—how is God at work here? What is God providing for the work before us?</li> <li>teach often, broadly and prophetically on stewardship themes.</li> </ul>
<b>Embraces financial health as an expression of faith</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>our relationship with money is an integral part of our relationship with God.</li> <li>we have an understanding of the power that money can hold in our family, church and community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>transparency with self and others regarding our relationship with money.</li> <li>a commitment to manage and monitor our own financial health.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>foster a climate that supports others as they deal with the power of money in their lives (giving, saving and spending).</li> <li>assess a congregation's money/finance/stewardship culture (ethics, transparency, etc.).</li> <li>comprehend how the basics of congregational finance (budgeting, balance sheets, risk management, etc.) impact the mission of a congregation.</li> </ul>



### Three questions to measure Stewardship Competencies

- Perspective**—as a person develops into a steward, what core messages about stewardship will a well-formed steward be able to articulate to self, church and society?
- Practices**—as a person develops into a stewardship leader, what core practices should we expect to see in a well-formed leader?
- Skills**—as a person develops into a steward, what core skills should we expect to see in a well-formed steward who can help bring capacity to this church's mission in witness and service to God?