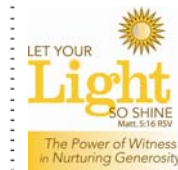


THE 2008 STEWARDSHIP CONFERENCE

APRIL 11 – 12, 2008 KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

Living Wi\$ely

Four Part Training for certification as a Living Wi\$ely Counselor



Workshop Description:

Living Wi\$ely is a personal finances counseling ministry developed by the Stewardship Office of the Episcopal Church. It is designed for any size congregation that wishes to offer such a service to its community.

Did You Know...?

- The average family in the United States has \$9,000 in credit card debt.
- For the past three years, citizens of the United States have spent more than they brought home.
- Young adults are the age group in which the bankruptcy rate is increasing most rapidly.
- College students have an average of 4 credit cards and outstanding balances totaling \$3,000+, in addition to \$25,000 - \$100,000 in educational debt.

Financial problems contribute to stress and feelings of guilt, shame, failure, and hopelessness. They are the most cited factor in divorce and even when the family stays together, finances can make family life painful.

Why should the church get involved?

- We understand the spiritual costs of personal financial problems.
- We have the capacity to offer absolution to those who feel they have sinned in their financial practices.
- We count among our members people who have skills in managing their own household finances and are able to share this expertise.
- We count among our members people who can share stories of their own pain of debt and poorly managed personal finances and a successful struggle to live wisely when it comes to money.

In other words, we can do this work as well as almost anyone else, and more honorably than some.

How can my congregation begin?

1. Pray, asking whether this is a ministry to which God is calling your congregation.
2. Pray, asking God who within the congregation is being called

by God to this ministry. Though the best-case scenario would be four persons who have attended a training session, congregations with an average Sunday attendance of less than 75 may have to start with two.

3. Attend the Living Wi\$ely training that is part of this conference.
4. Once trained, begin, and pray for God's continued support.

Good counselors have these qualities. They:

- ❖ Maintain a regular spiritual practice of prayer, study, and attendance at corporate worship.
- ❖ Have their own finances under control. Don't worry if your history is not perfect. A good story of working it out and overcoming some bad practices can be turned into an advantage.
- ❖ Organize their use of money around habits of sharing first, saving second, and spending third. Persons who do not support their congregation financially will not be effective in this work.
- ❖ Listen attentively before unloading opinions. This is especially important if you are appalled by the mess someone has gotten themselves into.
- ❖ Can work a calculator. Making spreadsheets work for you is an added plus but not a requirement.
- ❖ Can point out consequences of decisions but let clients "learn the hard way" when necessary.
- ❖ Genuinely like people.

The Living Wi\$ely training will occupy all four of the workshop sessions at the conference. There is also an additional cost of \$25 for the counselor's kit.

FACILITATOR'S BIO: [Terry Parsons](#)