

## Stewardship

As you read this article, we are already half way through 2015. I hope you are looking forward each week to the Stewardship Seconds, in order to hear about how our unified budget supports the various types of ministries that have become so important to FUMC's goals and objectives. I want to thank all of the church leaders who have presented the Stewardship Seconds each service, each week. As you will continue to hear each Sunday, FUMC has great plans (and needs) for our offerings, above and beyond the "normal" giving levels. Our total budgeted shortfall is estimated to be about \$50,000 (about 5-6%). If we can make-up this deficit during 2015, we can continue to provide (or expand) the church ministries and missions.

Whether it is a birthday, an anniversary, or Christmas, giving presents has become a special part of any celebration. And at some point in our lives, most of us recognize that it is truly more blessed to give than to receive. What a wonderful experience it is to provide a loved one with a special treat and see their joy and happiness. In 2 Corinthians (chapter 9), Paul discusses gift giving with the young church in Corinth. He wants the church members to give out of generosity, not out of obligation. In verse 7, he says, "So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity, for GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER". Whether it is our money, our time, our expertise, or our love, what a great joy it is to give. God doesn't need our money, but he does want our heart.

During July's "Stewardship Seconds", we will concentrate on the church facilities, and all that goes into providing us with the beautiful church building, where we worship each week. With all the various church ministries, outside organizations that use the facilities, the multi-purpose room, the kitchen, the Little Friends Nursery School, and the Juniper Tree Counseling services, our church is used just about every day of the year. A large portion of our annual budget goes towards support, maintenance and upkeep of the church building. The care of the church assets is under the control of the Trustees. Along with the Facilities Manager, they review, monitor and control the costs related to the church buildings. Utilities, maintenance, janitorial costs, service contracts, snow removal, security, and insurance are just a part of their day to day operational costs. When you consider long term costs, such as roof repairs, stain glass window maintenance, and upkeep of the organ and sound systems, it keeps the Facilities Manager and Trustees quite busy. During July, be sure to listen and watch as we water and nourish the "Facilities' Root". If we have roots "**Grounded in Faith**", we will be able to "**Grow to Serve**".

