



Central Houston Methodist Church

Stewardship 2027

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." 1 Peter 4:10

How to Use This Guide

For three weeks, set aside three short times of prayer each week, about fifteen minutes apiece. Each week is anchored in one passage of Scripture and moves through the same three prayers:

1. **Pray for the Church.** Intercede for Central Houston Methodist Church, our leaders, our ministries and our future home.
2. **Pray through the Scripture.** Read the text slowly and let it read you.
3. **Pray about My Role.** Ask honestly what God is calling you to give in the coming year: your prayers, your presence, your gifts, your service and your witness.

A suggested rhythm is Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday of each week. Keep a pen nearby. The questions are meant to be answered, not admired.

Week 2 ends with a discernment page to help you complete your pledge card. Bring your card to worship on **Sunday, October 25**, where we will offer our commitments to God together. Week 3 continues in prayer after the offering and leads toward **All Saints Sunday, November 1**.

A word about the word *steward*. Peter's Greek word is *oikonomos*, a household manager who owns nothing and administers everything. That is the posture this guide asks you to pray from. Nothing here is yours to keep, and everything here is yours to tend.

Week 1 · Stewards of God's Varied Grace

WEEK OF OCTOBER 11 · 1 PETER 4:7-11

Day 1 · Pray for the Church

Read 1 Peter 4:7-9. *"The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling."*

Peter's instructions to people under pressure are strikingly ordinary: pray clearly, love hard, open your door. *Earnestly* translates a word for something stretched out to its limit, like an athlete's effort. Love that covers sins refuses to keep another person's failures in circulation.

Pray:

- For CHMC to be a people of clear and sober prayer in a season of change, not anxiety dressed up as planning.
- For love among us that is stretched out and costly, and that covers rather than repeats one another's failures.
- For our search for a new church home, that we would hold it as stewards and not as owners.
- For our church leaders, our Stewardship team and our pastor, that they would lead in the strength God supplies.

Ask yourself: Whose failure in this congregation am I still keeping in circulation, even in a tone of concern? Bring that name to God today.

Day 2 · Pray through the Scripture

Read 1 Peter 4:10-11 slowly, twice. *"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."*

Two words carry this verse. *Steward* (oikonomos) is a household manager who owns nothing and administers everything. *Varied* (poikilos) means many-colored, the word for a woven or dappled fabric. The differences among the people in our pews are not a problem to be smoothed out. They are the shape grace takes when it lands on a community. Peter then sorts every gift into two kinds, speaking and serving, and gives each a standard: *"whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies."* The purpose governs everything: *"in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ."*

Pray the text:

- Thank God by name for three people at CHMC whose gifts are unlike yours.
- Confess any place where you have treated grace as something to keep rather than something to administer.
- Ask God to show you whether your gift runs more toward speaking or toward serving.

Ask yourself: The last good thing I did at church, whose glory did it serve, honestly?

Day 3 · Pray about My Role

If you are a steward and not an owner, then your time, your abilities and your money are entrusted to you for the household. Peter assumes every believer "has received a gift." The question is not whether you have one but where it is being spent.

Discern:

1. What has God placed in my hands that I have started to treat as mine alone?
2. Where am I serving on my own strength right now, and what is it costing the people closest to me?
3. Is my hospitality, at home or at church, accompanied by an internal ledger?
4. What is one gift I hold that this church does not yet know about?

One sentence I want to carry with me:

Pray: Lord, I own nothing and You have entrusted me with much. Show me what is mine to administer for Your household this year, and give me the strength You supply to do it, so that in everything You may be glorified through Jesus Christ. Amen.

NOTES

Week 2 · Stewards of Our Presence

WEEK OF OCTOBER 18 · ROMANS 12:3-8

Presence is the one gift that cannot be delegated, streamed or outsourced. Paul's argument in Romans 12 is not "come to church." It is that your body is your offering, and the people beside you are your own limbs.

Day 1 · Pray for the Church

Read Romans 12:4-5. *"For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another."*

Paul's phrase is stronger than we usually hear it. We are not only members of a body; we are members *of one another*.

Pray:

- For the members of CHMC by name, especially those whose absence you have felt this year.
- For those who are sick, grieving, homebound or drifting, that they would know they are still members of us.
- For our children, youth, college students and young adults, that they would find their place in the body early.
- For unity in a season of change, so that a move to a new home does not scatter the body.

Ask yourself: Whose absence have I actually felt this year, and did I tell them? Consider writing that note this week.

Day 2 · Pray through the Scripture

Read Romans 12:1-8. Begin at verse 1, because verse 3 depends on it. *"I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."*

The *therefore* reaches back over eleven chapters of God's mercy. Worship, Paul says, is what you do with your body. Then he lists gifts, and each one comes with a manner: giving *"in generosity,"* leading *"with zeal,"* mercy *"with cheerfulness."* The word behind *generosity* also means singleness, giving without a second motive. How you exercise a gift is part of the gift. Paul is illustrating, not cataloging, so do not treat this passage as a personality test.

Pray the text:

- Offer God your body for this week: your hands, your calendar, your Sunday mornings.
- Ask for a renewed mind where you have been conformed to the habits of this age.
- Ask God which gift on Paul's list you are using, and whether you use it in the manner he describes.

Ask yourself: In the thing I am most invested in at church, what is my second motive?

Day 3 · Pray about My Role

Read Romans 12:3. *"Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned."*

Sober judgment rules out two errors, not one. Inflating yourself is a failure of honest self-assessment, and so is false modesty that excuses you from an assignment. When we joined this church, we promised to support it with our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service and our witness. Presence is the promise under the most pressure.

Discern:

1. Where am I overestimating myself, and where am I using humility to avoid something God has asked of me?
2. What would faithful presence look like for me in the coming year, on Sundays and between them?
3. Which ministry area at CHMC has been on my mind, even if I have not acted on it?

Pray: Lord, by Your mercies I present my body to You. Give me sober judgment about myself, neither inflated nor falsely humble. Make me present to Your people as one of their own members, and let me use the gifts You have given in the manner You intend. Amen.

NOTES

Discernment Page: Preparing My Pledge

Use this page on Week 2, Day 3, before Sunday, October 25. It follows the two sides of your pledge card: the ministry opportunities you will offer, and the financial pledge you will make. Pray before you write anything.

My Prayers and Presence

1. Who in this congregation will I commit to pray for regularly this year?
2. What does faithful presence look like for me: how often on Sunday, and where during the week?

My Gifts and Service

Which gift did God keep bringing to mind over the past two weeks? Mark the areas you would like to learn more about, then check the same boxes on your pledge card. Church leadership will connect you with the ministry contact.

☐ Congregational Care: cards, calls, meals and visits	☐ Facility & Maintenance: setup, cleaning, grounds, repairs
☐ Missions Ministry & Evangelism: local and global mission, outreach, trips	☐ Discipleship: joining or leading a small group, band or Bible study
☐ Prayer Team: interceding for requests, leaders and the altar	☐ Worship: Altar Guild: communion preparation, candles, special services
☐ Worship: Usher / Greeter / Communion Steward: welcoming and serving once a month	☐ Worship: Music / AV: music teams, equipment, audio
☐ Communications: design, social media, data entry	☐ Children's / Young Families: Sunday school, events, special programs
☐ College / Young Adult: rides from Rice, meals, Bible studies	☐ Youth Ministry: youth nights, events, trips, prayer for students

My Financial Commitment

Work through these honestly before you write a number on the card.

1. *"Of your own have we given you."* If I begin from the conviction that all of it is God's, what does that change about the amount?
2. Is my giving planned and regular, or is it what remains at the end of the month?
3. Which describes my next faithful step: continuing a tithe, beginning to give regularly, or increasing my commitment?
4. Can I give this *"with a whole heart,"* without a second motive and without grumbling?
5. Is there any fear I need to name before God before I commit?

My pledge for 2027: \$_____ weekly / monthly / annually (circle one)

Your current giving statement is in this envelope for reference. Gifts can also be made online by scanning the code on your pledge card.

Offering Our Commitments

Bring your completed pledge card to worship on **Sunday, October 25**. We will offer our commitments to God together, as Israel did in David's day, and give thanks for what He has entrusted to this household.

Closing Prayer: Lord Jesus, You have made us stewards of a grace that is not ours. Thank You for the many colors of that grace in this congregation. Make us present to one another as members of one body. Teach us to give as David's people gave, willingly and with joy, for a house we may never see finished. Keep these purposes in our hearts long after this season ends, and in everything may You be glorified. Amen.

Week 3 · Stewards of Our Blessing

WEEK OF OCTOBER 25 · 1 CHRONICLES 29:10-19

Giving is not a transfer of our property to God. It is the return of His. David's last public act was to give toward a house he would never enter, and then to pray one of the great prayers of Scripture over the people's offering. This week we pray after making our own commitments, looking toward the saints who handed us the faith and the generations who will receive it.

Day 1 · Pray for the Church

Read 1 Chronicles 29:15 and 18. *"For we are strangers before you and sojourners, as all our fathers were. Our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no abiding." "O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep forever such purposes and thoughts in the hearts of your people, and direct their hearts toward you."*

David gave for a temple that Solomon would build and David would never worship in. Chronicles was first read by people who returned from exile to a second temple far plainer than the stories, and they needed to hear that their offering still counted. We are also building toward something we cannot yet see.

- Pray:**
- For CHMC's future home, and for wisdom, patience and integrity in every step toward it.
 - For the children and grandchildren who will worship in rooms we prepare now.
 - That God would keep generous purposes in our hearts after this campaign ends, since willingness does not keep on its own.
 - For our finances as a church, that every gift would be handled faithfully and spent on mission.

Ask yourself: What am I helping to build here that I may never see finished, and can I be at peace with that?

Day 2 · Pray through the Scripture

Read 1 Chronicles 29:9-14 aloud. *"Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours." (v. 11) "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you." (v. 14)*

Notice the order in verse 9: *"the people rejoiced because they had given willingly."* The joy follows the giving. Notice also what this prayer does not promise. Verses 12 and 14 are often used to suggest that God repays givers with wealth. David is saying the opposite: everything was already God's, and giving is only handing it back.

- Pray the text:**
- Pray verse 11 slowly as your own words of praise.
 - Name before God the specific gifts you hold: income, home, skills, health, time, relationships. Say over each one, "Of Your own."
 - Ask God where your joy is waiting on an outcome instead of following an offering.

Ask yourself: Looking back on what I gave this year, in money and in hours, did it feel like returning something or like losing something?

NOTES

Day 3 · Pray about the Faith I Pass On

Read Deuteronomy 6:6-7. *"And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."*

David asked God to keep generous purposes in His people's hearts "forever" (1 Chronicles 29:18). Willingness does not pass from one generation to the next on its own. Moses names how it does pass: at tables, on the road, at bedtime and at breakfast. Every one of us received the faith from someone.

Pray:

- Give thanks by name for the people who handed the faith to you: parents, grandparents, teachers, pastors, friends.
- Pray for the children, youth, college students and young adults of CHMC by name.
- Pray for parents and grandparents in our church, that faith would be spoken of at home and not left to Sunday.
- Ask God whom He is giving you to disciple in the coming year.

Discern:

1. Who handed me this faith, and have I ever thanked them, or thanked God for them by name?
2. Who is watching how I live my faith, at home, at work and at church?
3. Who is one younger believer I could invest in, and what is a first step I could take?

The saints I give thanks for this All Saints Sunday:

Pray: Faithful God, You have kept covenant with every generation. Thank You for the saints who handed me this faith. Keep these purposes forever in the hearts of Your people, and make me faithful to pass on what I have received, at my table and along the way. Amen.

Notes and Prayers

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.