**Called to Be the Church: Lectionary Worship Starters 2025**

**Epiphany: Jan. 12─Feb. 9, 2025**

**Theme Hymns**

VU 582 There’s a Spirit in the Air  
MV 161 I Have Called You by Your Name

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| **Week 1**  **Stewardship as Spiritual Practice** | **Week 2**  **Inspire: Local Mission** | **Week 3**  **Inspire: Mission & Service** | **Week 4**  **Invite** | **Week 5**  **Thank** |
| Stewardship is everything I do after I say, “I believe.” Baptism is the sign of believing and joining. Spiritual practices are designed to deepen our relationship with God and each other. What are the practices of discipleship? Worship (Psalm 29), study, loving kindness, sharing faith, gratitude, and giving are equally spiritual practices of discipleship. | Psalm 36:5‒10. In what ways is our community of faith sharing its resources and stewarding them such that people can “take refuge in our shadow,” “feast on the abundance of our house and drink from the river of delight”?  Don’t talk about the church’s money separate from its mission. | 1 Corinthians 12:12‒31*a*. One body! The church as one body worldwide. Humanity as one body, worldwide. Creation as one body, worldwide. We are all interrelated, and Mission and Service is a sure way to respond as part of the whole to the whole. 12:21 We cannot simply say, “We don’t need you.” 12:26 “If one part suffers, we all do. If one part thrives, we all do.” | 1 Cor 13:1‒13. Are you ready to love? 13:3: “If I give away all my possessions but do not love, I gain nothing!” Stewardship is not just about giving.  True stewards use what they have in order that God’s deep, bold, and daring love can grow and expand.  When inviting people to give, always talk about people’s money in light of their discipleship. | Luke 5:8‒9. When you are astounded by abundance, how do you say, “Thank you!”?  This congregation has been blessed with abundance by your generosity. Now we say, “Thank you!” |

**Lent: Mar. 9─Apr. 6, 2025**

**Theme Hymns**

MV 176 Three Things I Promise  
VU 120 O Jesus, I Have Promised

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| Deut. 26:1‒11. Making an offering is an act of generosity and an act of recalling what God has done for us and through us. There is a clear link between the spiritual practice of generosity and the spiritual practice of gratitude. Ritual helps create habit and faith habits become our living responses to God’s goodness. These are hallmarks of discipleship. | Phil. 3:17—4:1. The spiritual practice of imitation of mentors. As we follow Jesus and those elders of the church who have gone before us, we learn perseverance as we do God’s mission in our local context. Tell an inspiring story of a local mission project that took perseverance or was multi-generational. How is your congregation encouraging others? | Building and following from week 2’s theme of perseverance. Isaiah 55:1‒9. How does the church host a party with no expectation of return? How does God nourish and sustain all of God’s beloved people? Outreach ministries across Canada supported by Mission and Service do this all the time. | 2 Cor. 5:16‒17. Invitation to not just be part of a new creation, but to BE a new creation, in Christ. Transformation. The spiritual practice of letting go. Invitation to generosity as a way to mark the transformation away from greed and scarcity and into the new creation of plenty and blessing and sharing. | John 12:1‒8. Thanking you for whatever you do. Big, small, life changing, apparently insignificant, whatever you give, is like perfume on Jesus’ feet, and Jesus will appreciate it, and you. Tie into week 1. |

**Post-Easter: Apr. 27─May 25, 2025**

**Theme Hymns**

VU 179 Hallelujah, Hallelujah Give Thanks  
MV 136 When Hands Reach Out

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| Acts 5:27‒32. Peter says that as disciples we are witnesses to what the risen Christ can accomplish in someone. Our practice of generosity is a witness to the joy of Easter’s resurrection life. | John 21:1‒19. How does resurrection life surprise and appear and transform your community? The whole boatload of disciples is fishing together, responds together, eats together, because of the call of the risen Christ. Sometimes communities are called to fish on the other side—to do ministry in new ways. What does that look like for you? | Psalm 23. Through our shared Mission and Service, we are walking with many who are also walking as together we seek green pastures, thirst for still waters, need restoration both physical and spiritual, hunger for a table to be welcomed at, comforted to overflowing. Share some Mission and Service stories related to these themes. | John 13:31‒35. The new commandment. Love for one another is our clear calling and mark of discipleship to Jesus. Today you are invited into that command to make love real. What will your generous love look like? | Psalm 67. A psalm of blessing and celebration for all God does. Let the people praise you, O God. Today, we give praise and celebrate your generous responses to God’s grace and action by sharing your gifts. |

**28 Days to Thanksgiving: Sept. 14‒Oct. 12, 2025**

**Theme Hymns**

VU 567 Will You Come and Follow Me  
MV 182 Grateful

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| Luke 15:1‒10. I am worthy and loveable/loved, as God has searched me out and found me (sheep/coin analogy). Realizing this spiritual fact produces great gratitude in me for what God has done. Great gratitude leads to great generosity in return. | Luke 16:1‒13. We really like what *The Message* does with this passage. Be just as shrewd as big business and politicians and those we would expect to be dodgy, but do so for the mission of God. As a sign of its discipleship, how is your community of faith fully faithful with what you have been blessed with? | Luke 16:19‒31 and 1 Tim. 6:6‒9. A message for rich disciples. (Define rich.) Take notice! In order to care, you first have to notice the person and accord them the same rights and worth as yourself. Mission and Service helps us to notice the needs around us (local, Canadian, global) and to respond so that as people made right with God, we can be rich in generous good works. | 2 Tim. 1:5‒7. “I am reminded of your sincere faith.... For this reason I remind [invite] you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.” How could you invite people to rekindle the fire of faith, through generous sharing of their gifts? | Philippians 4:4‒9. Rejoice!! Give thanks for all the ways God has blessed your community of faith and how, as disciples of Jesus, you are committing to sharing them. |

**World Communion to All Saints Day: Oct. 5─Nov. 2, 2025**

**Theme Hymns**

MV 28 God of the Bible  
MV 79 Spirit, Open My Heart

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| Proper 22  Habakkuk 1:1‒4; 2:1‒4. Reading 1:1‒4 is like reading the newspaper or watching the news or staying on X/Twitter. All our spiritual practices, including generosity and stewardship, are meant to help keep us faithfully on watch to see what God will say. | Thanksgiving  Give thanks for your local mission and ministry.  How people’s generosity and giving make local ministry and mission possible.  How thankful we are for all we have been given, that we in turn share to enable our local ministry and mission. | Proper 24  Luke 18:1‒8. Mission and Service advocacy and programming is there for the long-haul, like the “squeaky widow.” We don’t just do the quick fix. If God is not stingy with mercy and justice, how can we be? Share a Mission and Service story. | Luke 18:9‒14. Our giving will change us, whether the amount is easy to give or challenging to give. One way can draw us to examine ourselves and our laissez-faire approach to wealth. One way can push us to hard choices in order to give. Every way can lead us deeper into God’s presence and into our self-knowledge. Today I invite you to give generously. | Ephesians 1:15‒16. For this sermon, take on the role and voice of Paul. What do you need to thank your community of faith for? As you “do not cease to give thanks for... as I remember you in my prayers”? |

[Community of Faith Stewardship](https://united-church.ca/community-and-faith/get-involved/community-faith-stewardship)

[Stewardship in Worship](https://united-church.ca/worship-theme/stewardship-worship)