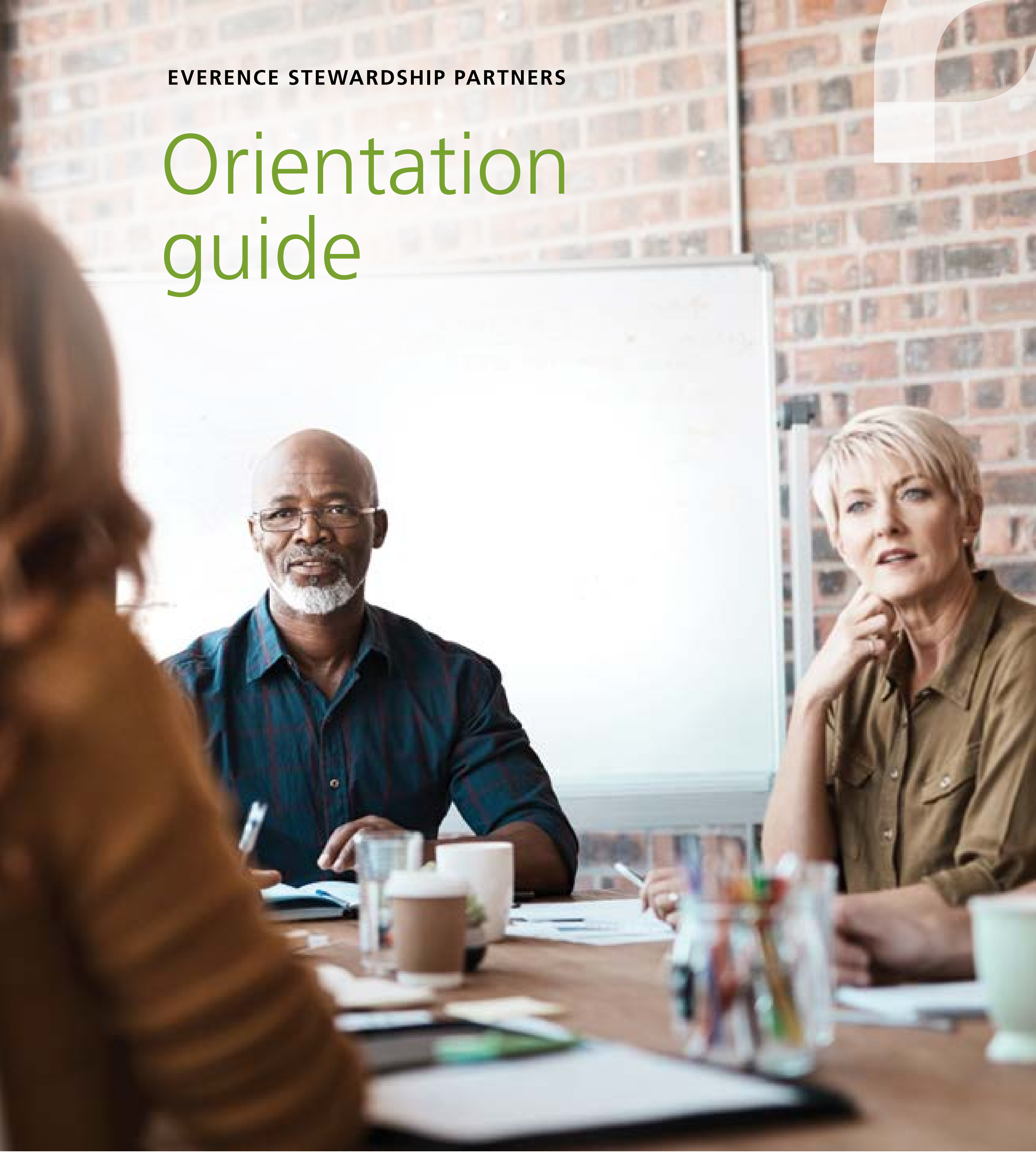
EVERENCE STEWARDSHIP PARTNERS

Orientation guide



FOR PASTORS AND ADVOCATES

Everence®

Welcome to Everence Stewardship Partners!

Christian stewardship encompasses all we are and all we have. It's about aligning our lives – and all that we do – with God's purposes.

> The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.
>
> – Psalm 24:1 (NIV)

Everence® is here to support your church in focusing on this important, but often neglected, part of Christian faith, with an emphasis on the financial side of stewardship. We encourage and assist you as a church leader to build and strengthen financial stewardship ministry in your congregation. This is part of our mission to help individuals, organizations and congregations integrate faith and finances.

Why is a financial stewardship ministry important for my church?

Money plays a huge role in everyone's lives. We make financial decisions everyday: Where will I get my cup of coffee today? Do I go out for lunch or not? Should I put money aside to pay off debt? Or should I put my money towards retirement?

People in your congregation have all kinds of financial situations. Someone could be experiencing pressure from their amount of debt. Another could be in between jobs and concerned about how to pay their bills. Some just graduated from college and are beginning to establish their financial lives, or some have established incomes but lack focus on where their money is going.

Regardless of the situations people face, our finances influence our stress levels, health, relationships and our joy.

As stewardship leaders we have reason to care for and nurture the financial aspect of people's lives – because there is tremendous need. Your church is in a position to nurture and encourage people in this aspect of their lives.

The merging of stewardship and discipleship can help transform people's finance experience.

Maybe that is why there are so many biblical references (2,300+) about finances. In one sense, it is an act of discipleship – of aligning our financial lives to God in an intentional way. The merging of stewardship and discipleship can help transform people's finance experience.

This perspective shapes your congregation's potential for having a healthy financial ministry – a ministry that realizes walking with others and their finances is actually a commitment to helping people grow in greater faithfulness to God.

Why is Everence the right partner for my church?

The vision of Everence Stewardship Partners is to help churches grow a healthy financial stewardship ministry around its own needs. We partner with churches that see the importance of a financial stewardship ministry as a calling for their faith community.

As your stewardship partner, Everence is committed to supporting you in this calling and ministry. Through various resources, we will encourage and equip you to be effective stewardship leaders.

We partner with churches to nurture a vibrant financial stewardship calling in their faith community. Through faith-driven stewardship principles, we can help churches with their congregational finances and their attenders with their personal finances.

What makes Everence unique?

Everence was founded in 1945 by the church, and our relationship with the faith community has remained core to our mission. Our faith heritage traces back to Mennonite/Anabaptist theology from the 16th century. It's a faith tradition that focuses on integrating faith into daily life, including how we use money.

Our Stewardship Consultants can offer faith-based financial resources to churches that share our stewardship values.

How does Everence fund programs like Everence Stewardship Partners?

Part of Everence is a fraternal benefit association – which means the dollars we don't have to pay in government taxes can be used for individual and community benefits. We direct some of these funds to benefit the mission of congregations and their local communities.

Three keys to understanding faith-driven stewardship principles:

Nurture a faith perspective of money.

Create a healthy financial foundation through education.

Encourage a planning approach to financial stewardship.

Stewardship is a team effort

Who does Everence make stewardship resources for?

Experienced Everence staff will support your team every step of the way through Everence Stewardship Partners.

Who: Church leaders

Their need: Congregational finance resources

Focuses of resources:

- The health and vitality of the congregation's financial practices as an organization.
- Financial resources, compensation packages and support for pastor financial wellness.
- Sermon and/or Sunday School material.
- Generosity and benevolence cultivation.
- Financial services, employee benefits and other financial tools for congregations.

Who: Attenders

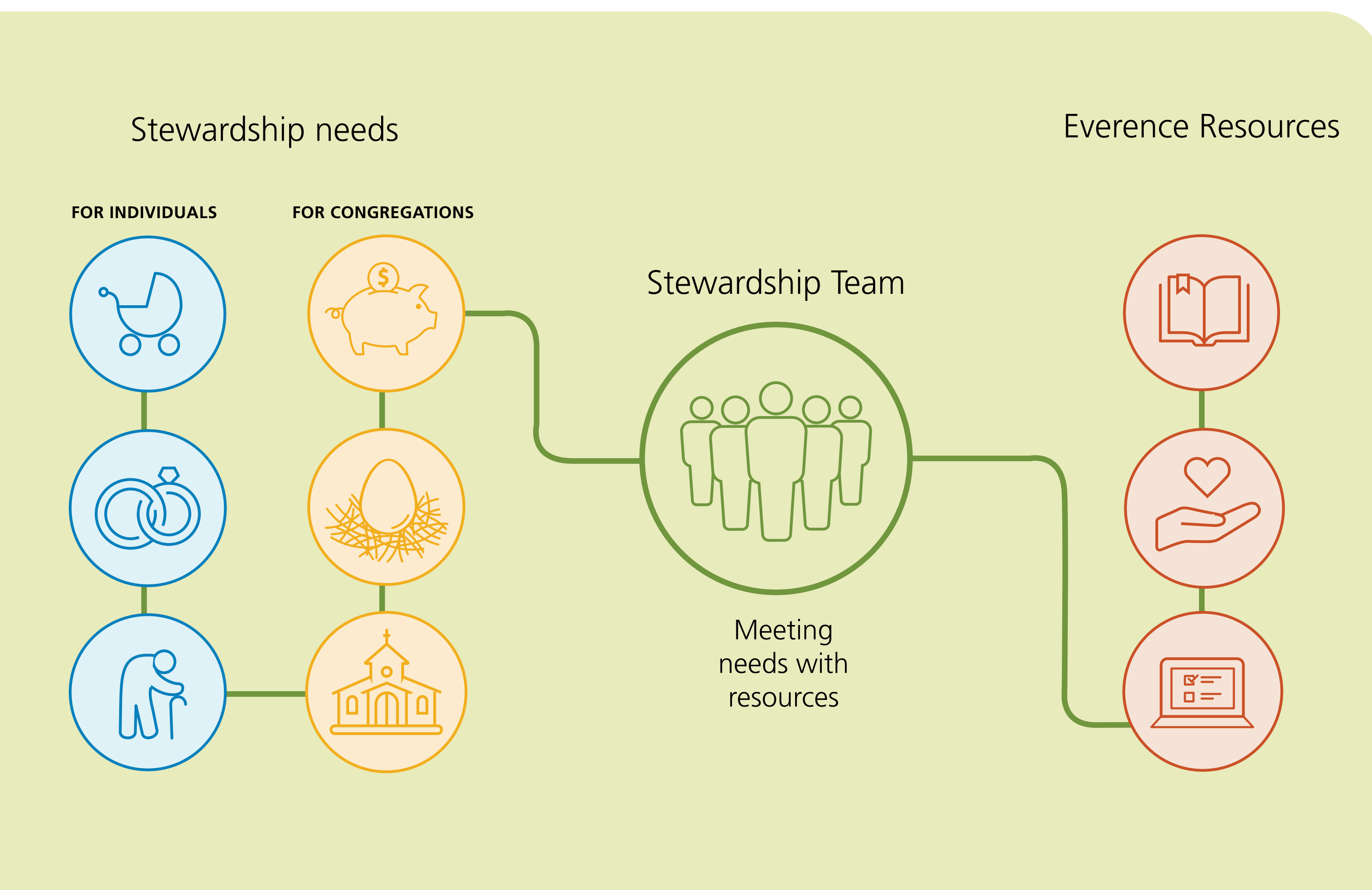
Their need: Personal finance resources

Focuses of resources:

- Practical financial education.
- Faith-based personal finance.
- Generous charitable giving.
- Financial services and tools for individuals.

Your congregation's stewardship team

When your congregation participates in Everence Stewardship Partners, we suggest that one of your first steps is to create a stewardship team.



This team focuses on enhancing your faith community's financial stewardship practices and may include your pastor, stewardship advocate and others you invite to participate.

Your stewardship team:

- **Discerns the needs of the congregation** and how it might grow its understanding of stewardship as a spiritual practice.
- **Discerns the needs of individual attenders** and encourages them on their stewardship journey with resources from Everence and other experts.
- **Develops an annual plan** based on the congregational and individual needs you've discovered.

The Everence stewardship team

Experienced Everence staff will support your team every step of the way through Everence Stewardship Partners.

Your main contact for your stewardship ministry is your Everence Stewardship Consultant.

Role of the Stewardship Consultant:

- Provides orientation and ongoing program support for your church.
- Advises church in growing its stewardship ministry and supports its initiatives.
- Serves as the church's primary partner, connecting it to Everence people and resources.

Depending on your needs, your Stewardship Consultant may put you in contact with a Financial Representative.

Role of the Financial Representative:

- Can support congregational leaders with financial education, advice, services and tools to enhance their stewardship ministry.
- Can support attenders with financial education, advice, services and tools to improve their financial wellness in tune with their faith values.

A wealth of resources

Everence offers your team a comprehensive collection of counsel, tools and other resources such as seminars, webinars, curriculum, books, products, services, grants and more.

Over time, these resources can help you round out a holistic stewardship ministry, and anyone can access most of these resources on our website.

Your Everence Stewardship Partners materials

Find these materials online at [everence.com/partners.](everence.com/partners)

As a participant in Everence Stewardship Partners, you have access to a series of exclusive materials. This material is your guide to creating and nurturing a stewardship ministry that truly thrives.

STEWARDSHIP AND YOU – QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

When you participate in Partners, Everence sends you a quarterly newsletter, "Stewardship and You." This newsletter will always include strategically-chosen resources for your church leaders and your attenders.

What you get: A quarterly newsletter from Everence with resources for both your church leaders and attenders. Watch for the emails on Jan. 2, April 1, July 1 and Oct. 1.

What you need to do: Plan how you will share the resources with your church leaders and attenders.

YOUR QUARTERLY REPORT

Tell Everence which resources from the newsletter met your needs and were used by your church in your quarterly report.

What you need to do: Fill out the quarterly report by the end of the quarter – April 1 (spring), July 1 (summer), Oct. 1 (fall) and Jan. 2 (winter). The report opens one month before the due date; the report's opening and due dates are firm.

What you get: An opportunity to share your church's experience with the stewardship resources we provided and eligibility for Sharing Fund grants the following year.

How to submit: Fill out the form that is emailed to you. You will need your Everence congregational ID to complete the report.

STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY ASSESSMENT TOOL

Plan your future with our Stewardship Ministry Assessment Tool. The tool was created to help your church reflect on its stewardship ministry now and to provide ideas for improvements ahead.

What you need to do: Work with your congregation's stewardship team to plan for the year ahead in the comprehensive PDF version. Then, officially submit your assessment answers to Everence via the abridged online form. You can find both versions of the tool at [everence.com/partners.](everence.com/partners)

How to submit: Send your completed online version to Everence by Aug. 31 annually. You will need your Everence congregational ID to complete the report. All answers are required to all questions unless they are marked optional.

What you get: A framework, goals and ideas from Everence to help you grow your stewardship ministry; Eligibility for Sharing Fund grants the following year.

So, what is the Sharing Fund?

Everence believes in the power of mutual aid in congregations. We support it with matching grants through our Sharing Fund. It's one more way Everence partners with you to help meet financial needs in your church and community.

By being a part of Everence Stewardship Partners and following our proposed framework for your stewardship ministry, our Sharing Fund dollars become available to your congregation.

The grant amounts range from $500 - $3000.

If you submit…	You are eligible for…
1 report	$500
2 reports	$1,000
3 reports	$1,500
4 reports	$2,000
1 assessment	$1,000
Maxium amount	$3,000

How to access Sharing Funds for your church:

- Become familiar with the grant application process, what types of needs qualify, how to gather the necessary information and how to complete the application.
- Talk with your leaders who are responsible for pastoral care and benevolence about how your church will access the grants.
- Follow your congregation's guidelines for its benevolence fund.

Learn more and download the grant application and guidelines at everence.com/sharing-fund.

Take stewardship to the next level

No matter if it's large or small, there's something your church can do this year to enhance your stewardship activities and build a healthier ministry! Everence will walk with you now and on the path that's ahead.

Learn more and find resources at **everence.com/partners.**

Everence®

Everence helps individuals, organizations and congregations integrate finances with faith through a national team of financial professionals. Everence offers banking, insurance and financial services with community benefits and stewardship education.

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