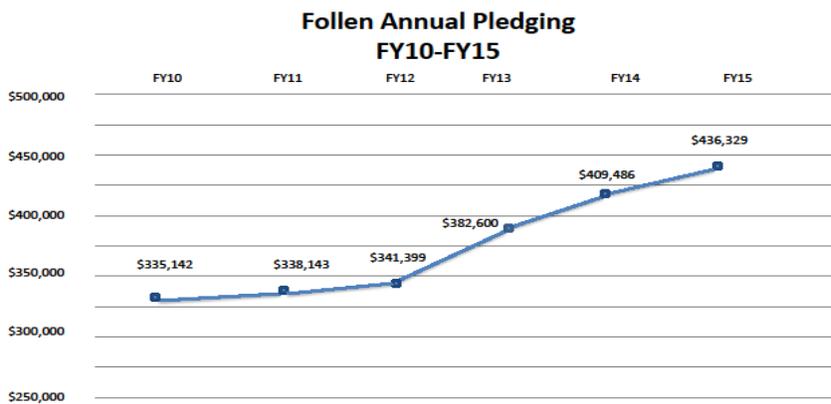


Follen Stewardship Summary Annual Report Spring 2014

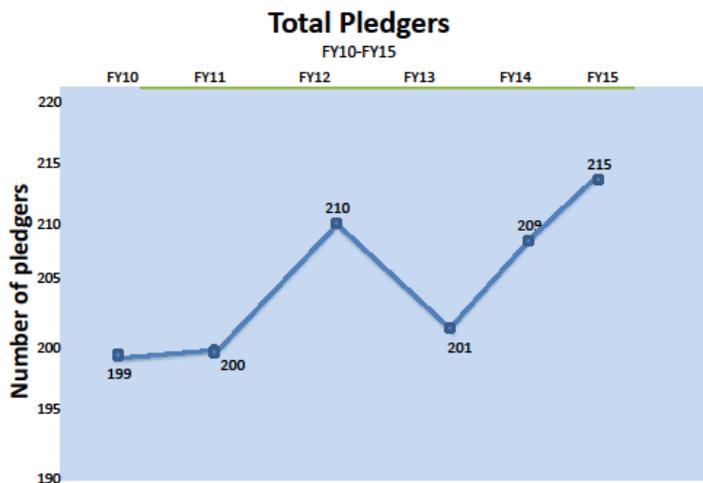
Reaching In, Reaching Out, Reaching Up!

A vibrant and energetic Stewardship Team continued to implement and build upon the work of the ReThink process and the success of the FY2013-14 campaign. The FY 2014-15 campaign set a new record pledging total of over \$435,000. The campaign for FY 2014-15 successfully continued initiatives, developed enhancements, implemented recommendations, recognized other factors that affected our work, and identified areas of future opportunity.

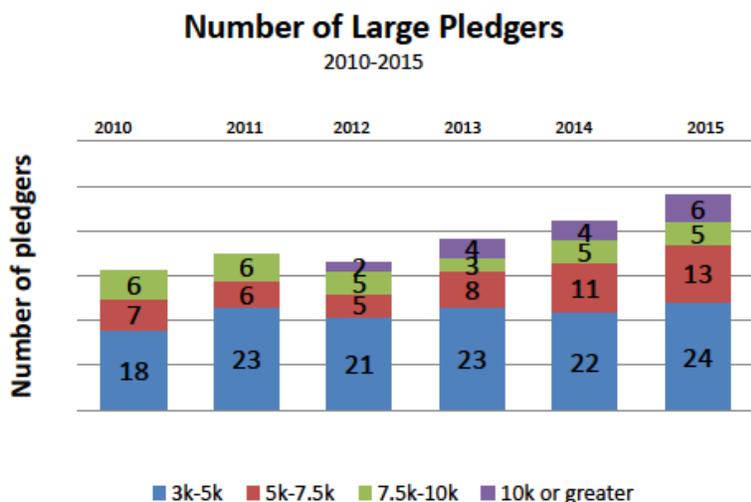
Follen continued its upward trend in total annual pledging.



The number of pledgers also increased. This data, however, may be less accurate because of potential variation in how pledging units are counted.



As illustrated below, Follen also had continued growth in the number of large dollar amount pledgers. As reflected in the ReThink report and last year’s stewardship summary report, it is normal and healthy for a congregation to have “skew” in the form of substantial amounts and percentages being raised from the pool of top dollar givers. That said,



Continuing Initiatives

The Stewardship Team continued to build upon the ReThink processes and successes of the last drive

- 1. Pre-drive meetings with Follen leadership to develop the drive message and to communicate goals:** Throughout the Fall, the Stewardship Team Co-Chairs met with Program Council, FHRAT, and Parish Board to look in the rearview mirror, listen, and then look ahead to craft the major pillars of the Stewardship Campaign theme and case.
- 2. Initiating a leadership and large donor “quiet period”:** Recognizing that a substantial percent of pledge dollars come from a small number of Follenites, we formed a team to solicit pledges -- before the drive kickoff -- both from large pledgers and from lay leadership. This resulted in a substantial level of pledges raised before the official launch of the drive. We also continued the practice of a pre-drive leadership launch event to test the campaign message.
- 3. Returning to a specific dollar ask method of solicitation:** We continued the renewed practice of asking pledges to consider a specific, targeted pledge dollar amount for the drive. Visiting stewards were informed, confidentially, of the previous pledging levels and asked pledgers to consider a target dollar amount of pledging.
- 4. Changing the culture of money:** At the Fellowship dinner, the theme of the drive was announced twice, at moderate length. Throughout January, Stewardship messages were delivered at services in the style of East Village Fair. The Stewardship service included a personal point and Reverend Claire delivered the memorable “pledge versus nightstand” sermon. We created a brochure with more drive details, and we communicated drive updates periodically through Follen Friday Updates. At services we began clearly recognizing and thanking Follenites for financial contributions when the offertory baskets are brought forward, and have engaged with WMAT regarding how to make that recognition meaningful.

Enhancing Developments

The Stewardship Team developed the following enhancements.

1. **Increased Transparency:** We developed a “spectrum of giving” with specific percentages and dollar amounts to illustrate the breadth and depth of financial generosity of Follenites.
2. **Confidentiality Policy:** We developed a written confidentiality policy (published on the church website) that was included at the trainings for stewards.
3. **Systematic Identification of Potential Pledgers:** Through outreach to the minister, membership, the church administrator, the DRE, and others, the Stewardship Team sought to identify all potential pledging units
4. **Train the Trainers:** We implemented a training session for trainers to provide reduce key-person dependency on our longtime stalwart trainer Brian Cali.
5. **Legacy Society:** Legacy Society contact information was included in the brochure and in most Stewardship communications.
6. **Steward Identifying Tags:** All stewards were offered a “Reach Up!” badge so that they were easily identifiable.

Recommendations Implemented

The following recommendations from the previous Annual Report were adopted and implemented.

- **Created a stewardship leadership triad**, similar to the EVF leadership succession, to improve succession – Nominating Committee and Stewardship.
- **Continued to hold a pre-drive meeting with Follen lay leaders** – Stewardship, Program Council, Parish Board and Minister
- **Continued to solicit leadership and large donors before the drive** - Stewardship
- **Continued to request pledgers consider pledging a specific amount** - Stewardship
- **Linked stewardship efforts with membership** and investigated inflow/outflow of pledgers in previous years – Stewardship and Membership Committee
- **Expanded stewardship committee involvement** – Nominating Committee and Stewardship Note, while we significantly increased the size of the overall Stewardship Team, the size of the core work group was not substantially increased.
- **Revitalized Legacy Society:** Under Cas Groblewski’s leadership, Legacy Society increased its outreach and re-established the Legacy Society Dinner.
- **Capital Campaign:** Stewardship requested the Parish Board to consider a Capital Campaign for its next five year planning cycle.

Recommendations

- **Continue Summer planning Start and Early Fall Team meetings** - Stewardship
- **Recruit Stewardship Communications Director to Communicate Stewardship messaging** throughout the year, not just during the drive – Stewardship, Program Council, Parish Board and Minister. The Team identified this position and developed a job description, but was unable to fill the position.
- **Consider Full-Spectrum Stewardship** to include RE participants, FUUY, and youth (until they are settled elsewhere).

Other Factors Affecting Our Work

The campaign results were affected by many factors. There was great enthusiasm resulting from the settlement of our new minister. We also had a history of substantial pledging increases in previous years which meant that some givers were unable to increase further.

Follen's annual stewardship drive benefitted from the consistently excellent support from **Sarah Garner**, Follen's Church Administrator.

Stewardship Committee and Special Advisors

Committee: Hill Snellings FY14 chair, Marlene Stone FY 15 Chair, Maggie Pax FY13 Chair, Brian Cali Chair Emeritus, Sally Cassells, Herman Marshall, Brad Howe, Jane Spickett, Cas Growblewski (Legacy Society), Bob Halliday, Kim Vandiver, Mark Metzger, Lydia Swan, Fred Johnson; Additional Team Special Advisors: Tempe Goodhue (brochure editor), Amy Yee (brochure additional edits), Social Events for Stewardship Dinner with special mentions for food and entertainment to Jenny Marshall, Rosemary Trowbridge, Laurel Carpenter, Amy Yee, Beth Bernstein, Howie "Pulled Pork" Bernstein, Caroline Walters, Erin Malone, Kyle Johnson, Alex Bromley, Meg Muckenhoupt, Karen Gray Carruthers, Jon Edson, Chris Farnham, Stephen Ervin

Report submitted by Hill Snellings