

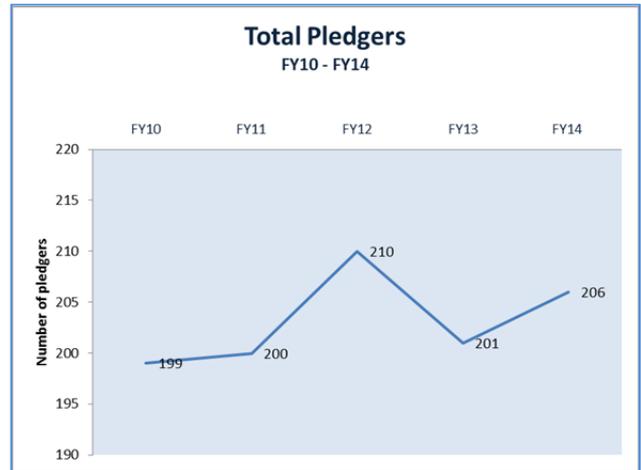
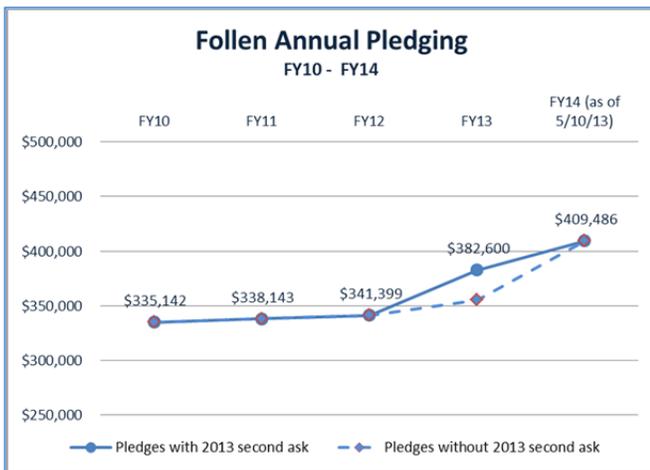
# Follen Stewardship Drive Report

## “Changing Lives, Together”

**TO:** Follen Parish Council, Parish Board, Interim Ministers  
**FROM:** Maggie Pax, Stewardship Chair and the Stewardship Committee  
**DATE:** May 31, 2013

### FY14 Pledge Drive Results

As of May 31, 2013, the FY14 stewardship drive raised \$409,486 from 206 pledgers. This number represents 7.2% growth from FY13 pledges and a 15.2% increase from FY13 pledges that were raised before the second ask in FY13.



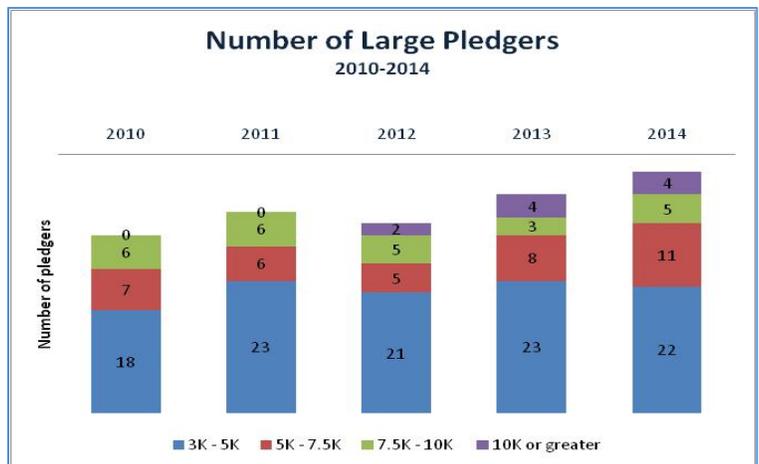
The \$409.5K in FY14 pledges is a new pledging high record for Follen, and represents continued solid growth from last year. This two year pledging trend sets Follen on a stronger growth path vs. the prior three years of relatively flat pledging growth.

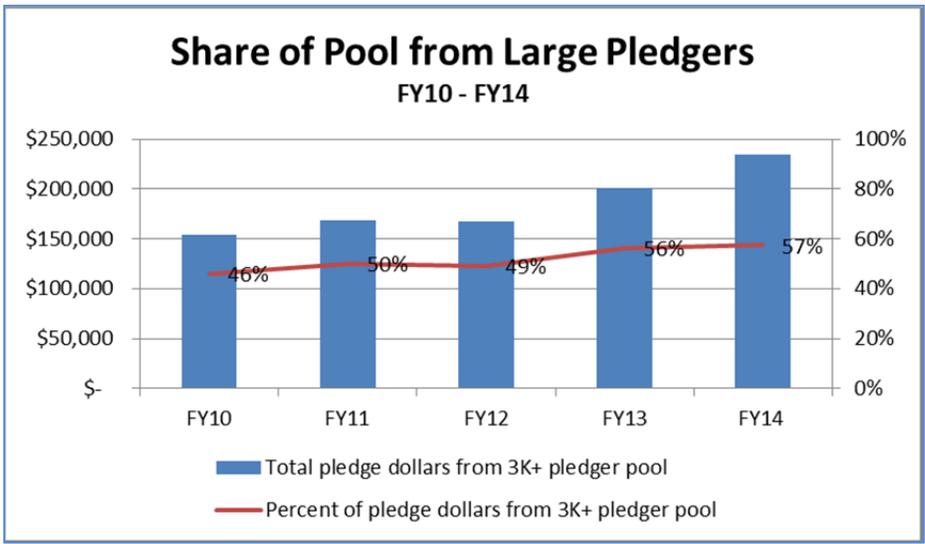
Total pledgers for FY14 were 206, up modestly from FY13, and below FY12 pledgers of 210.

### Large Pledgers

The FY14 drive resulted in modest growth in the number of large pledgers, defined as those who pledged \$3000 or higher. Forty-two (42) Follenites pledged \$3000 or more, up from 38 in the prior year.

The total dollars raised from the \$3000+ pledgers was \$235,900, up 17% from FY13. For the FY14 drive, 57% of total pledge dollars came from the \$3000+ pledging group, slightly up over FY13.





**New pledges and “lost” pledges**

During the FY14 drive, 19 pledgers moved, left Follen or ceased pledging for other reasons. These “lost” pledges may not be permanently lost as some may be due to temporary economic circumstances. Ten new pledgers joined the drive this year. At this point, a comparison to

previous years is not available. We recommend investigating information from previous years, along with Membership, to evaluate trends.

**Changes to FY14 Stewardship Drive during “Changing Lives, Together” Campaign**

This year’s pledge drive included several changes based on the ReThink modifications to Follen’s Stewardship approach. These changes included:

1. **Setting a pre-drive meeting with Follen leadership to develop the drive message and to communicate goals:** In early December 2012, Follen Stewardship met with lay leadership in a session aimed at validating and refining the theme and drive messages. At that meeting, we also set the bar for an increase in giving by describing the financial situation and indicating a need for substantial (~20%) increases in pledging.
2. **Initiating a large donor “quiet period”:** Recognizing that a substantial percent of pledge dollars come from a relatively 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.
3. **Returning to a specific dollar ask method of solicitation:** We returned to the 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 briefly. The Stewardship Service included a personal point and the ministers preached on stewardship as they did the prior year. We created a brochure with drive details, and we communicated drive updates periodically through Follen Friday Updates. At Follen services we began clearly recognizing and thanking Follenites for financial contributions when the offertory baskets are brought forward.

## Other Factors

The FY14 drive success resulted, in part, from the sense of urgency created by both the FY13 second ask and by the loss of the Nextel revenues. We heard comments from Follenites who were motivated to increase pledging this year to avoid a budget shortfall.

Follen's annual stewardship drive benefits from the consistently excellent support from **Sarah Garner**, Follen's Church Administrator. Her contributions are invaluable in the drive process.

## Recommendations

Based on the FY14 drive process and results, we make the following recommendations and suggested *owners* going forward:

### Recommendations

- **Strengthen the stewardship leadership triad**, similar to the East Village Fair model, to improve leadership succession – *Nominating Committee and Stewardship Committee*
- **Continue to hold a pre-drive meeting with Follen lay leaders** – *Stewardship Committee, Program Council, Parish Board and Minister*
- **Continue to solicit large donors before the drive** – *Stewardship Committee*
- **Continue to request pledgers consider pledging a specific amount** – *Stewardship Committee*
- **Communicate the theme** throughout the year – *Stewardship Committee, Program Council, Parish Board and Minister*
- **Link stewardship efforts with membership** and investigate inflow/outflow of pledgers – *Stewardship and Membership Committees*
- **Expand stewardship committee involvement** to avoid volunteer fatigue – *Nominating and Stewardship Committees*
- As more stewardship volunteers are recruited, **focus on planned giving with the Legacy program, and consider capital campaigns** – *new Stewardship recruits*

### FY14 Stewardship Committee

Maggie Pax, FY14 Chair, Hill Snellings FY15 Chair, Brian Cali FY13 Chair, Sally Cassells, Marlene Stone, Jane Spickett, Nancy Sofen, Herman Marshall, John Lempesis (Stewardship brochure), Laurel Carpenter (Fellowship dinner).