

## 10 Ways to Avoid Building Community within the Church

*Creating a **Culture of Generosity** (see page 2) requires developing community; here's a satirical view on how to defeat your fellowship & stewardship goals.*

1. **Keep conversations short.** You are busy, you have a lot to deal with in your life, if you talk to someone you might get close to them and that takes time and energy that you don't have. Just keep it short and sweet, don't bother talking about anything more than the weather. If you don't know a person is hurting, then you don't have to do anything about it.

2. **Always sit in your "assigned" seat.** By always sitting in the same seat you always sit around the same people. These folks know the deal, and stick to the appropriate 30-second conversations: weather, sports, how the new preacher is doing, etc. Also, this keeps you from having to venture out, meet new people, and possibly sit next to someone you aren't familiar with.

3. **Avoid new people.** It's one thing to deal with all the people that you already know at church, but it's another to actually meet new people. Seriously, you aren't good with names, you don't have the time, or the energy, so just walk right past anyone you don't know. After all, they won't notice that you totally avoided them.

4. **Come in late.** Don't overlook the beauty of this one. By coming in late you totally avoid even the 30-second conversations. And (bonus), you avoid the new people! It just makes life easier.

5. **Leave immediately after the service (or early).** This has the same benefits as coming in late, with the added benefit of getting on the road more quickly to beat those other churches to eat. This way you get out of that crowded church building so that you can go sit with your people and eat a meal. If you add this method with the coming in late method you could go to a church for years and never meet anyone.

6. **Be physically present but mentally absent.** When talking to someone, pretend to listen by nodding your head and saying "uh huh" while you are really thinking about what show comes on TV later that night. Basically, just don't engage anyone on any level. After all, you're just there to put in your "time" and then get on with your life.

7. **Don't share a meal.** If your goal is to avoid community, this step is of the utmost importance, don't ask people to lunch! Sharing a meal is an intimate thing that creates deeper relationships. So, when someone asks you to lunch fake a stomach ulcer or something, just get out of it.

8. **Stay very, very busy.** The busier you are, especially on a Sunday, the less time you have to "deal" with people. In fact, attempt to be so busy that when speaking to someone you never even

stop walking past them as you say hello.

9. **Make your default response "everything is great."** People will always ask how you are doing. Make sure that you have your "default" answer ready so that when they ask you are ready to say, "everything is great!" This must be your default response, otherwise you might actually let on that your life is not perfect, or worse, that you are struggling. This colossal mistake could lead to deeper conversation and deeper relationship. If you are going to really avoid community while in church, this is probably your best weapon.

10. **Don't show up.** This is definitively your best method of avoiding community overall because there is no community where there are no people.

Source:

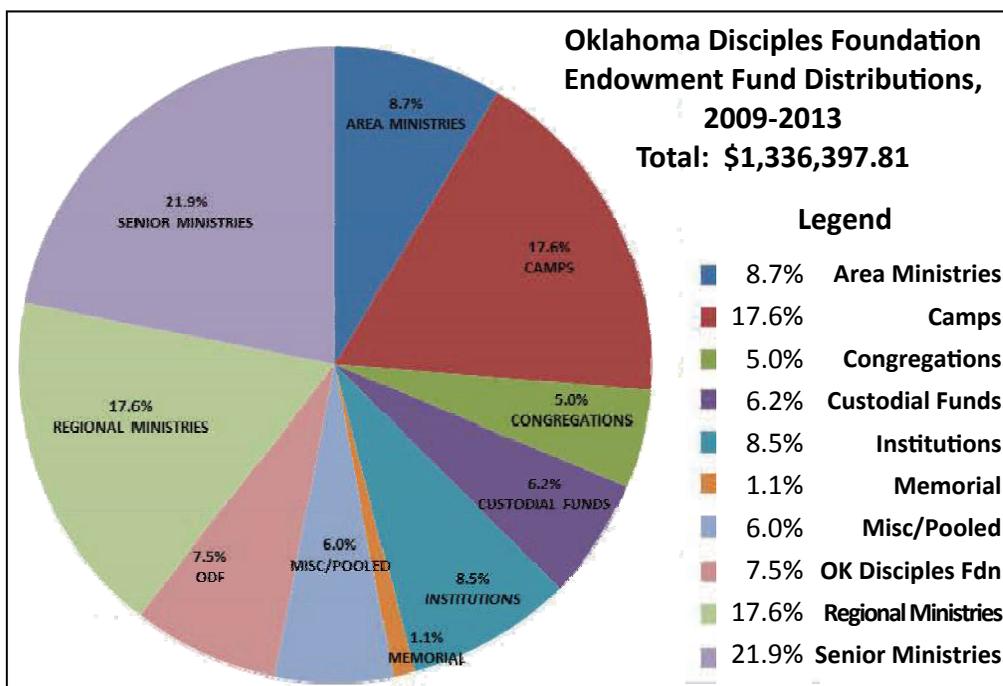
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### Endowment Highlights ~ 2012 ~

During 2012, gifts totaling over \$585,250 were added to the named endowment pool. A large percentage of that growth was a result of the establishment of custodial fund accounts. During 2012, four Disciples congregations established new custodial funds with the Foundation totaling over \$375,000, and three congregations added to their existing custodial funds.

Within the named endowments, the Jewell Endowment for Practical Parish Ministry Skills was established in October and the Phillips University Legacy Foundation endowment fund was established in December.

**The mission of the foundation is to sustain an enduring financial basis for Christ's ministry through the prudent investment of funds to ensure a legacy of Christian principles and institutions.**





## Creating A Culture of Generosity in Your Congregation: A Workshop

What does the word "stewardship" mean to you and members of your congregation? Is it a topic raised only once a year when it is budget time, or is it understood to be a spiritual discipline that informs all aspects of faithful living?

Come discover methods that make conversations around money more effective. This time for learning and sharing will provide a more complete grasp of scriptural and theological understandings of how God's people can live in response to Divine generosity. Plus you'll discover the joy of giving and processes for building the capacity for greater expressions of generosity among the people in your congregation.

A combination of biblical exploration and examination of best practices will lead attendees to be able to face their fears and handle the challenges that are present when the words "money" and "church" are used in the same sentence!

**Designed for clergy and laypersons interested in gaining practical tools and ways to inspire and encourage the living of a generous life in response to a generous God!**

A sense of **fellowship & community** is integral to creating a culture of generosity. *(please refer to article on page 1).* Often the best way to do something is to learn how NOT to do it. For a fresh sarcastic approach read the front page of this newsletter.

The workshop is designed for both clergy and laypersons who serve the church in stewardship. It is offered at no cost to you or your church, compliments of Oklahoma Disciples Foundation.

**Saturday, September 21, 2013**

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Phillips Theological Seminary**

901 N. Mingo Road  
Tulsa, OK

**Registration required by 09/14/13**

*Lunch provided at no charge*

To register contact one of the following:

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**Facilitator:**

Rev. Bruce A. Barkhauer,  
Minister for Faith and  
Giving for the Christian  
(Disciples of Christ)  
Church.



For 25 years, Rev. Barkhauer has led congregations in Ohio and Indiana in achieving high levels of financial support for local and global missions and he now shares his experience across the life of the whole church. He brings a biblically based understanding about stewardship combined with theological integrity and weds them to the current trends and best practices related to spirituality and money.

For more information contact:

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