**Following up responses after a stewardship campaign**

There are a number of reasons why people don’t return their confidential response form by the date requested after a stewardship campaign.

* They may be unhappy with the whole idea of being asked to review their giving
* They may have an issue with something which is happening in the church
* They may be in a position where they can’t increase, and feel embarrassed
* They may be unsure how to complete the forms
* They may intend to fill in the form, but haven’t got around to it yet

The clear objective of following up after a stewardship campaign is to encourage collection of as many responses as possible.

**How does it work?**

* The congregation should be reminded and encouraged to return their response forms on more than one occasion after the presentation (or receiving the stewardship materials if there was no presentation), either during the notices or in the pew sheet, or by email.
* A few days after the date when people were asked to respond, make a list of those who haven’t.
* Find some volunteers willing to approach people to ask for the response form. The more people you have the less onerous the job will be. It doesn’t matter who these people are but we would hope they are pastorally sensitive.
* Volunteers should make contact with each person on their list. Ideally and in normal circumstances this would be in person, but in the current situation of social isolation contact must be by phone or email. This would be in person, but phone, email or social media such as WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger could work. Think about timing. When are they likely to be most receptive? (Probably not when busy preparing the meal or putting children to bed, for example.)
* ‘The ask’. This is where you ask people to respond to the request to review their giving.
  + Pray for yourself and the person you are about to approach. You are doing God’s work here and it’s good to keep God involved.
  + Be familiar with the content of the presentation, if there was one, or the materials which were sent out if there wasn’t.
  + Thank the person for their contribution to the life of the church, financially and in other ways.
  + Make it crystal clear that what they give is their business, that the response form is confidential and only the treasurer will know how much they contribute. Then ask them to make their response, and return it via email. Say thank you again.

**Remember**

* You won’t come as a surprise – everyone will have been told to expect a contact if they haven’t returned their response form.
* This is a really important job, supporting the mission and ministry of the church.
* It can be a good opportunity to engage pastorally and in friendship with another member of your church community.
* What is the worst thing that could happen? Someone may say no.