

STEWARDESS GUIDE

Modeling Excellence In Ministry



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TABLE OF CONTENTS



The Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:17-24)	3
Acknowledgements by Pastor David B. Cousin, Sr.	4
The Composition, Duties & Amenability of Stewardesses	5
Demonstrated Qualities of A Stewardess	6
The Role of Stewardesses at Bridge Street AME Church	7-8
Baptism ♦ Weddings ♦ Funerals ♦ Memorials	
Holy Communion ♦ Wednesday LoveFeast	
Weekday, Saturday and Sunday Afternoon Services	
Sundays: Invitation to Christian Discipleship	
Altar Work throughout the Liturgical Year	9
Advent ♦ Christmas ♦ Ash Wednesday	
Palm Sunday ♦ Maundy-Thursday ♦ Good Friday	
Easter ♦ Pentecost	
Meaning of Liturgical Colors	10
The Liturgical Year: Seasons, Emphasis, Message & Colors	11
Season ♦ Emphasis	
Message ♦ Colors	
Official Uniform: Shoes, Hosiery, Dress & Head Covering	12
Junior Stewardesses: Training Our Youth for Service	13
Stewardess Commitment Form	14
Stewardess Recommendation Form	15
Notes Page	16

The Lord's Supper

1 Corinthians 11:17-34 [NRSV]

Abuses at the Lord's Supper

¹⁷ Now in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. ¹⁸ For, to begin with, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you; and to some extent I believe it. ¹⁹ Indeed, there have to be factions among you, for only so will it become clear who among you are genuine. ²⁰ When you come together, it is not really to eat the Lord's supper. ²¹ For when the time comes to eat, each of you goes ahead with your own supper, and one goes hungry and another becomes drunk. ²² What! Do you not have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you show contempt for the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What should I say to you? Should I commend you? In this matter I do not commend you!

The Institution of the Lord's Supper

²³ For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Partaking of the Supper Unworthily

²⁷ Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For all who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgment against themselves. ³⁰ For this reason many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. ³¹ But if we judged ourselves, we would not be judged. ³² But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

³³ So then, my brothers and sisters, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. ³⁴ If you are hungry, eat at home, so that when you come together, it will not be for your condemnation. About the other things I will give instructions when I come.



acknowledgements

"Serving as a stewardess is one of the most sacred and reverent offices one could hold in the kingdom of God because stewardesses oversee the altar work and the Elements [the body and blood] of Christ."

I am so grateful to the Executive Minister, Rev. Valerie Cousin, Sister Thomasena Williams and the Stewardesses for coming together to discuss the layout of this manual so that it might guide the work we have been called and commissioned to do concerning God's kingdom.

As you may have read in 1 Corinthians 11:17-24, overseeing and partaking of the Lord's Elements is serious sacred work, and those who are responsible for such tasks should not take their responsibilities lightly.

Not only are those who handle the Sacraments responsible for maintaining piety and purity of heart and spirit before approaching the work they have been commissioned to perform, but they are also responsible for ensuring the God's peace is present during the disposition of their duties. To partake of the Lord's Elements apart from purity of heart is to bring judgment upon oneself. Let me reiterate, Altar work is serious, sacred work and it is not to be taken lightly.

Persons who have been appointed as Stewardesses are required to continually examine themselves: their hearts, actions and motives to ensure that their will and spirit aligns with God's will and spirit as they attempt to fulfill the duties of a Stewardess. Covering the altar for Communion Sunday, weddings, funerals and Holy Services occurring throughout the year are major aspects of the work stewardesses have been called and appointed to do. Stewardesses should therefore live righteously and work together in a unified, harmonious manner if they are to oversee the sacred Elements of Christ [cf. 1 Corinthians 11:17-34].

I pray that this manual and our Stewardess Training will serve as guideposts for the work you have been called to do and will thus engage throughout the Christian Year!

May God's richest blessings be upon you.

Pastor David B. Cousin, Sr.

The Composition, Duties & Amenability of Stewardesses

Source: The Doctrine and Discipline of the AME Church

Composition

- a. The pastor in charge may nominate one or more Boards of Stewardesses, according to the size of the local church. The persons nominated shall be in good and regular standing in the local church and of good character.
- b. The pastor in charge shall submit the nominations to the stewards, who shall either confirm or reject them. Those stewardesses who are confirmed shall be held responsible by the stewards for their duties.
- c. There shall be appointed a Junior Board of Stewardesses which shall operate under the direction of the pastor and the Senior Board of Stewardesses.

Duties of Stewardesses

The function of stewardesses is outlined in the 2012 Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church as is recorded as follows:

- a. To provide the implements and elements of the Holy Communion and Holy Baptism.
 - 1 Prepare the bread itself as a service of love and devotion rather than purchase it.
 - 2 Make adequate preparations for all baptisms. Where there is not a baptismal font, they shall provide a basin of water, clean white linen towels, and such other items as may be required.
- b. To dress the pulpit and altar rail with suitable clean white coverings for these rituals.
 - 1 The linen used for the table should always be white and perfectly clean. The linen may be embellished with embroidered or crocheted Protestant religious symbols.
 - 2 The utensils should be polished.
 - 3 As the washing of hands is both ceremonial and practical, special care should be given to sanitizing the ministers' hands for serving the Holy Communion. Using soap, warm water should be poured over the hands of the ministers for appropriate washing. Small white towels should be applied for each minister to dry their hands before administering the sacrament. The common bowl of water must be avoided. Hand sanitizers or antibacterial agents are acceptable. Stewardesses should practice health-conscious and safety methods in preparing the elements of the Holy Communion consistent with a standard that meets or exceeds local health laws regarding the preparation of food for public consumption.
 - 4 To dress the pulpit and altar with suitable, clean, colored coverings for the various seasons of the Christian year, for funerals and memorials.

Amenability

- a. There shall be a training course for stewardesses under the supervision of the pastor and senior stewardesses.
- b. Whenever it is necessary, the pastor and stewards shall remove a stewardess(es) for the good of the church and fill the vacancy(ies).

DEMONSTRATED QUALITIES OF A STEWARDESS

An effective Stewardess is one who...

- ❖ Tithes and gives generously.
- ❖ Honors and respects the pastoral leadership.
- ❖ Has a polite, caring and cooperative spirit.
- ❖ Is spiritual and reverent in carrying out their duties.
- ❖ Attends monthly meetings, and respects the leadership of their board.
- ❖ Is in uniform when her board is on duty.
- ❖ Attends Sunday worship services on a regular basis, even when her board is not on duty.
- ❖ Is prepared to serve when their board is on duty.
- ❖ Believes in basic Christian principles, and practices Christian living.
- ❖ Practices religious piety.
- ❖ Engenders character that commands respect.
- ❖ Strives for a circumspect life.
- ❖ Sets good examples as a Christian, and in leadership.
- ❖ Has sound judgment.
- ❖ Loves people.
- ❖ Knows and loves the Methodist Doctrine and Discipline.
- ❖ Has a strong potential for learning.
- ❖ Is forward thinking and progressive.
- ❖ Gets along with others.
- ❖ Has a servant heart and a compassionate spirit.
- ❖ Is effective in their Christian service.
- ❖ Is punctual, dependable and trustworthy in completing assigned tasks.
- ❖ Is willing to learn and change when situations warrant the same.
- ❖ Has the ability to work alone and in a team.

THE ROLE OF STEWARDESSES IN BRIDGE STREET

The Sacrament of Baptism

Baptism is the outward sign of our becoming a Christian. It is one of the two sacraments observed in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The chief duty of stewardesses in relation to baptism is to assist the Pastor.

- ❖ Fill Baptismal Font with water before congregation assembles for worship.
- ❖ At Baptismal Font, assist candidates with removing articles of clothing, if necessary, so that the white towel (for adult candidates)/bib (for infant candidates) can be placed around candidate's neck and shoulders. Have two towels on hand for each candidate being baptized.
- ❖ Fasten baptismal towel securely around shoulders.
- ❖ Provide towel for use in drying water from candidate's head.
- ❖ Assist parents and godparents when an infant is being baptized.

Funerals & Memorials

- ❖ Cover the altar furniture with black cloth.
- ❖ Provide water and glasses on the pulpit.
- ❖ Have tissues available for the family.

Memorials

- ❖ Cover the altar furniture with black cloth.
- ❖ Provide water and glasses on the pulpit.
- ❖ Have tissues available for the family.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Lord's Supper is so sacred that every effort must be made to avoid uncomely acts by Stewardess, during the administration of the sacraments such as fumbling, procrastinating, and not knowing what to do during the Celebration. In preparing for the service, the following guidelines should be observed by all Stewardesses scheduled to be on duty:

- ❖ Begin work with prayer and refrain from gossip and vain chatter. An attitude of reverent silence is the order of the day.
- ❖ Use whatever means necessary to create an environment around the Altar Table and Chancel Rail that maintains and preserves the sacredness of the occasion.
- ❖ Place in a convenient place the hand sanitizer or lavabo, the bowl of water for the Chief Celebrant and pulpit associates to sanitize/wash their hands before beginning the ritual.
- ❖ Provide sufficient glasses to avoid refilling or washing glasses at any time during the ceremony. If for any reason a task has to be performed, use every precaution to keep from disturbing the service.
- ❖ Complete all preparations related to administering the sacraments prior to the congregation assembling for service. Keep receptacles for collecting used glasses in a convenient place.
- ❖ Be reverently alert and graceful in movement while the sacrament is being administered.
- ❖ Be familiar with the cues of the Pastor, Chief Celebrant, and Board President.

- ❖ Assist the handicapped communicants who come to the Altar, also the children who may need help.
- ❖ Follow the instructions of the celebrant relative to returning to your seats to join the congregation for the benediction.
- ❖ Clear away the vessels and linens at the conclusion of the service, after the Pastor and ministerial staff have vacated the pulpit. Left over communion wine may be returned to the container and given to the Pastor for his use or disposal.
- ❖ To assure smooth operation, dignity, reverence, and efficiency, each Stewardess to serve at a service should have a specific assignment – what she is to do, when it is to be done. Newly appointed stewardesses may need to rehearse their duties prior to the worship service so that they can perform their assigned duties effectively.
- ❖ When a limited number of Stewardesses are on duty, a Stewardess may have to perform extra duties in preparing for and during the service. A well-rounded Stewardess will seek to know and perform all of the duties required of the office. Ongoing training should be provided to stewardesses to prepare them for all the duties for which they are expected to perform.

REMEMBER:

Once Stewardesses have completed setting up for Holy Communion and covered the elements on the Communion Table with the Linen Cloth – Stewardesses will uncover the elements immediately prior to the celebrant sanitizing his/her hands, and before the congregation is led in the Collect. The Chief Celebrant or his/her designee covers the elements on the table at the conclusion of the service. Stewardesses are to clear away the vessels and linens at the conclusion of the service, after the Pastor and ministerial staff have exited the pulpit.

Sunday LoveFeast

- ❖ Prepare the water glasses and bread for LoveFeast.
- ❖ Cover with white linen the table and the elements.
- ❖ At the conclusion of the celebration, put away all elements to prepare for bible study.

Weekday, Saturday and Sunday Afternoon Services

Stewardesses are expected to review the weekly calendar of activities for the church to identify when worship services are being held, and schedule a board to be present for those services.

Every time the doors are opened for prayer or worship, a stewardess should be present and in uniform to assist where necessary with opening the doors of the church and with altar work.

For the invitation to Christian Discipleship, Stewardesses stand with a member of the junior or senior steward board (one on each side), letting their countenances reflect the message. When a soul indicates his/her acceptance of Christ by coming forward, a Stewardess could be very helpful in directing souls to where they need to go for prayer or confession of faith. Persons carrying infants and / or very young children during these serious moments should immediately be relieved of them by Stewardesses.

Sundays: Invitation to Christian Discipleship

For the invitation to Christian Discipleship, Stewardesses stand with a member of the junior or senior steward board (one on each side), letting their countenances reflect the message. When a soul indicates his/her acceptance of Christ by coming forward, a Stewardess could be very helpful in directing souls to where they need to go for prayer or confession of faith. Persons carrying infants and / or very young children during these serious moments should immediately be relieved of them by Stewardesses.

ALTAR WORK THROUGHOUT THE LITURGICAL YEAR

To dress the pulpit and altar with suitable, clean colored coverings for the various seasons of the Christian year, funerals and for memorials.

Liturgical Season	Color(s)	Duties
Advent	<i>Purple or Blue</i>	Dress the pulpit with the appropriate color for the liturgical season; place drinking glasses, bottled water or the beverage of choice for the Pastor or guest preacher on the pulpit; place bible and hymnal on pulpit.
Christmas	<i>White or Gold</i>	See Above. Sometimes Bridge Street will dress the altar in red.
Ash Wednesday	<i>Purple or Blue</i>	See Above. The Holy Stewards burn the ashes and deposit them in an urn.
Palm Sunday	<i>White or Gold</i>	See Above.
Maundy-Thursday	<i>Purple</i>	See Above. Bridge Street dresses the altar in white since Maundy-Thursday is a Communion service.
Good Friday	<i>Purple or Black</i>	See Above. Bridge Street does not dress the altar on Good Friday.
Easter	<i>White or Gold</i>	See Above.
Pentecost	<i>Red</i>	See Above.

MEANING OF LITURGICAL COLORS

Listed below are the colors of the liturgical seasons and their meaning.

COLOR	MEANING
Black	1. The color symbolizes grief, sorrow, sickness and death. 2. It is a liturgical color used on Good Friday.
Blue	1. The color signifies Heaven, wisdom and charity. 2. Blue symbolizes the Virgin Mary. 3. Blue is often connected with the angelic class know as the Cherubim. 4. Blue is a liturgical color in some churches and is sometimes substituted for violet during the season of Advent.
Brown	1. The color symbolizes the rejection of the world.
Gold	1. The color symbolizes worth, wealth, kingliness, and splendor. 2. It can symbolize Jesus' kingly office.
Green	1. The color symbolizes growth, life, hope, fidelity, and immortality. 2. Green is a liturgical color used on the Sundays after the Feast of the Holy Trinity. It is also worn by the clergy when no other colors are specifically called for.
Grey	1. A color reminiscent of ashes, which symbolizes repentance and humility.
Pink (Rose)	1. The color of the third Advent candle symbolizing Joy.
Red	1. The color symbolizes love, fervor, holy zeal, and youth. 2. It is a color closely connected with blood and martyrdom. 3. It is also a symbol of the Holy Spirit. 4. Red is connected with the angelic class know as Seraphim. 5. Red is a liturgical color used for Pentecost, Harvest Festival, Reformation Sunday, a church anniversary or dedication, martyr's days, Thanksgiving and All Saint's Day.
Violet (Purple)	1. The color symbolizes penitence, referring to the purple garments put on Jesus when He was mocked (John 19:2). 2. It is a color used to symbolize royalty. 3. It is symbolic of preparation, mourning, humiliation, and the Passion. 4. Purple is a liturgical color used during the seasons that call for repentance: the four Sundays of Advent, Lent, Holy Week, and Maundy Thursday.
White	1. The color symbolizes light, purity, innocence, joy, virginity and purification. 2. It is the color of all saints who did not suffer martyrdom. 3. White is a liturgical color used for Christmas, Epiphany, the Transfiguration of our Lord, Easter, Ascension Day, and the Festival of the Holy Trinity.
Yellow	1. A non-liturgical color that is rarely used. 1. Yellow symbolizes cowardice, disloyalty, treachery, jealousy and treason and is therefore closely connected to Judas Iscariot. 2. If yellow is used as a substitute for gold it symbolizes love, constancy, dignity, and wisdom.

Source: www.christiansymbols.net

THE LITURGICAL YEAR: Seasons, Emphasis, Message & Colors

Source: *theafricanamericanlectionary.org*

The Christian Calendar follows the life of Jesus. Our Liturgical colors are symbolic of the Christian message of the day and season. The proper use of the liturgical colors adds to the effectiveness of the service. Listed below is detailed information about the Liturgical Seasons that comprise the Christian Year. Particular attention should be paid to both the emphasis, meaning and colors for the liturgical season being observed when preparing the altar for worship services.

Advent Season: The four Sundays before Christmas day. *Emphasis:* Readiness through a patient waiting for the coming of Christ-in Bethlehem, in our hearts, and at the end of history. *Message:* We examine and prepare our hearts that we may be renewed in repentance, patience, anticipation to welcome the coming of Christ. *Colors:* Purple or Blue.

Christmastide: December 25 - January 5. *Emphasis:* The prophecies have been fulfilled; the Messiah is born; the Savior of the world has arrived. *Message:* Express your joy, give thanks to God and embrace God's presence in Jesus Christ. *Colors:* White or Gold.

Epiphany Season: January 6th. *Emphasis:* The manifestations of Jesus as the Savior to the Jews and to the whole world. *Message:* We welcome Jesus as the light of God, and his manifestation to the world. *Colors:* White.

After Epiphany: The period after January 6 until the beginning of Lent. *Emphasis:* A journey with Christ in his ministry as he manifests himself as the Son of God. *Message:* Growing with a new commitment to manifest the life of Christ through our own witness. *Colors:* Green.

Lenten Season: Begins on Ash Wednesday, six and a half weeks before Easter- includes Palm Sunday and ends at sunset on Thursday of Holy Week. *Emphasis:* A time to travel with Christ through his suffering and preparation for death; though under attack he continues to the cross. *Message:* A time for self-examination, repentance, and renewal through our identification with the journey of Jesus. Often a time for prayer, meditation, fasting and almsgiving. *Colors:* Purple or Blue; Red during Holy Week.

The Great Triduum: "The three great days" -includes Thursday, Friday and Saturday of Holy Week. *Emphasis:* The most critical time in the history of salvation. The church recalls in its worship the events of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Paschal Vigil of Saturday. *Message:* These "three great days" are a time for fasting and prayer; reflection on the suffering and death of Jesus; and a commitment to live in the pattern of his death and resurrection. *Colors:* Red.

Easter tide: Extends for fifty days after Easter, includes Ascension Day and ends on Pentecost. *Emphasis:* The continued ministry of Christ after his resurrection gives credence to his resurrection and ascension and is a time for us to reflect on his reign as the Sovereign Lord. *Message:* We reflect on the implications of Jesus' resurrection and ascension, commit ourselves to live as those who are "risen with Christ," living under his reign. *Colors:* White or Gold.

Pentecost Season: Pentecost Sunday, 50 days after Easter. *Emphasis:* The powerful outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the church for witness and service. *Message:* We are called to walk with the Spirit and participate in the growth and spread of the Christian Church in the world. *Colors:* Red.

After Pentecost (Ordinary Time): From Pentecost Sunday to the beginning of Advent - about a six-month period - ending on Christ the King Sunday. *Emphasis:* Through the finished work of Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit of the Church of Christ enters the world with the Gospel and experiences both growth and trials. *Message:* We embrace the teachings of the church, go deeper into the truths of God's saving events in history, and grow in our obedience and service. *Colors:* White or Green.

OFFICIAL UNIFORM: Shoes, Hosiery, Dress & Head Covering

General Guidelines

The traditional uniform for Stewardesses is white, symbolic of the Creator, of perfection, and of peace. It represents light, joy, peace, and purity. The recommended uniform is the professional nurses' style.

It is also essential that uniformity for a group be observed as strictly as possible, otherwise the attention of worshippers may be distracted. The uniform should be reasonable length and sleeves at least three quarters in length. Both of these observances are potential to inspire a deeper reverence and manifest the highest respect for our Lord of the wearer and worshippers.

In churches that are inadequately heated during the winter months or highly air conditioned during the summer, Stewardesses may provide themselves with white sweaters, capes, shawls or stoles of appropriate material to wear on duty. On special occasions such as worldwide communion Sunday, Easter, or Thanksgiving celebrations, Stewardesses should wear the all white uniform.

Keystone and basic in all matters of Stewardesses' attire are simplicity, modesty, dignity, and reverence. It is never a matter of elaborate display.

SHOES AND HOISERY

Shoes and hosiery should be suitable for the occasion and harmonize with the dress uniform. The shoes should be of medium heel height to enable the Stewardess to walk with ease, comfort, dignity, and reverence.

Plain black or white pumps, closed in. No boots and no open toes. Never should red, blue, purple, or other colors be worn.

The preferred hosiery should be flesh colored, a shade which all the women can wear well.

HEAD COVERING AND ACCESSORIES

Uniform means conforming to a given standard or likeness. Dress hats, costume jewelry, fancy handkerchiefs, gloves, and other decorative ornaments must be avoided as they do not inspire reverence; rather, they detract worshippers' attention from the God, which should be the focal point of worship.

BRIDGE STREET OFFICIAL UNIFORM

- ❖ Designated white dress and seasonal hat (winter months September – May/ summer months June – August).
- ❖ White gloves
- ❖ White stockings
- ❖ Black closed-in shoes and handbag (no shoulder bag)
- ❖ No jewelry or make-up

JUNIOR STEWARDESSES: Training Our Youth for Service

Guidelines for Training Junior Stewardesses

As members of the family of God we have been given a biblical mandate to train children in the right way, so that when they are old, they will not stray (Proverbs 22:6). If the African Methodist Episcopal Church is to continue as a thriving and viable church it is imperative that we nurture young ladies in the faith and train them for service.

The following guidelines are offered to assist in training girls / youth in the Ministry of the A.M.E. Stewardess.

HOW DO YOUNG LADIES BECOME JUNIOR STEWARDESS?

Junior Stewardesses are not official; they are young ladies in training. They can become Junior stewardess by being recommended by the Pastor to the Senior Steward Board.

Stewardesses may recommend to the Pastor young girls of upright piety to serve as junior stewardesses; however, it is important for stewardesses to exercise spiritual discernment in their recommendation of junior stewardesses for altar work.

Once junior stewardesses have been approved by the Pastor and Senior Steward Board, they must complete a mandatory stewardess training before they can begin shadowing senior stewardesses.

WHAT IS THE APPROPRIATE AGE RANGE?

It is important that the youth have adequate motor skills and be able to read and write. Developmentally it has been determined that the average child is able to think abstractly and comprehend information by nine years of age. Therefore, an appropriate age range for girls to be eligible for shadowing as a Junior Stewardess is between 13 to 21.

ORGANIZING A JUNIOR STEWARDESS BOARD

Junior Stewardesses in training and are not official members of the Stewardess Board; rather, they are shadowing the senior Stewardesses. A Junior Stewardess Board is organized under the auspices of the local church Stewardess Board. In order for the Junior Stewardess Board to be successful, it is important for the local Stewardess Board to have an affinity for working with youth and be inclusive of the participation of youth in both worship services and monthly meetings. Minutes of all Stewardess meetings should be kept and a copy forwarded to the Pastor so that s/he can remain informed of the work of the Stewardess Ministry.

Establishing and organizing a Junior Stewardess Board in the A.M.E. Church is an attempt to prepare our youth to serve as vital officers in the local church.



Rev. David B. Cousin, Sr., Pastor
Rev. Valerie E. Cousin, Executive Minister

STEWARDESS COMMITMENT FORM

In an effort to better serve the membership of our church, all stewardesses are asked to indicate their level of commitment to their church by completing this commitment form.

I _____ have read the duties of being a Stewardess and I would like commit my spiritual gifts, time and treasure to my church and to the office of Stewardess for the _____ Annual Conference Year. I attest that I am a Christian of good character and I am in good and regular standing in Bridge Street Church.

I am committed to:

- Growing in Christ
- Holy Living
- Serving others through my gifts
- Leading others to Christ
- Studying God's Word
- Prayer, praise and worship

I am a committed: (Please check ONE)

- Tither (*give minimally 10% of my income*)
- Proportionate Giver (*give what I can, when I can*)

Signed: _____

(Sign Your Name Here)



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Rev. Valerie E. Cousin, Executive Minister

STEWARDESS RECOMMENDATION FORM

In an effort to better serve the membership of our church, and to provide support to the stewardess boards, please use the space below to recommend names of members who you think would be able to successfully fulfill the office of Stewardess.

Recommendation #1

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____ (Home) _____ (cell)

EMAIL _____

Recommendation #2

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____ (Home) _____ (cell)

EMAIL _____

