

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY AND MEMORIAL FUNDS
By David A. Rash, Stewardship Matters of Virginia, LLC

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY is always the first Sunday in November. This is a day to remember the members of your congregation who have died in the last year. Many of them will be much loved persons whose memory is sweet. Make it BIG! Make it special. List their names on the front of the worship bulletin. Make sure they are noted in your newsletter and on your website. Do you have screens for worship? Put their pictures up for all to see. And/or invite families bring framed pictures to place on a table in a prominent place. Make sure the families get a personal invitation to worship that Sunday and invite them to stand when their loved ones name is called. Tell a story.

And, this is a great time to highlight your church's memorial funds. Most of your congregation may know there is a 'fund for memorials' but do they know how it is used? Let them know and invite them to use this fund throughout the year. Put a note in your newsletter and on your website. But most of all prepare a dedicated insert for your worship bulletin in recognition of All Saints Sunday. Say 'thank you'. Doing so will increase confidence in how your church handles memorial funds and invites further giving.

Identify memorials that have been received since last All Saints Sunday. Were any special projects supported with this fund – new hymnals, choir robes, improvements? Highlight those. Provide a very brief financial report showing the present balance. If you have a memorial committee, identify its members. Have the chairperson give a personal 'thank you' for the gifts received. If you have a policy for how memorials are received and how they are used, make copies available to be picked up. (Not everyone wants a copy). If not, create a policy.

Online giving make memorial gifts easy. Regularly posting obituaries on your website along with information on how to give electronically can be a great convenience for many. And if the newspaper obituary can carry your website even better! Loved ones and friends of the deceased from near and far can give easily with this helpful tool. Remember: people want to give. Make it easy for them.

During the year note memorials received by listing who they are from. The amount is not necessary. The fact of it is. Keep it in front of your people all year long.

So as you honor deceased members on All Saints Sunday celebrate and promote your Memorial Fund also. And don't forget to say 'thank you!'

Additional information about memorial giving and other stewardship matters are available by contacting me, David Rash, Stewardship Matters of Virginia, at info@stewardshipmattersva.org or via my website www.StewardshipMattersVa.org

Stewardship: It's Not What You Think. It's What You Believe....and do!
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