

FINANCIAL FOUNDATIONS



JOURNALING AND WELL-BEING

Keeping a journal can be very helpful in becoming and staying well. This easy tool helps reduce stress, builds positive thoughts and feelings, and helps understand thoughts and feelings that may be holding each of us back. There are different kinds of journaling.



- Gratitude Journal: List five things are grateful for each day. This helps re-think bad days and stay positive in the face of difficulties.
- Thoughts and Feelings Journal: freely write your thoughts and feelings. See common themes and consider how to make changes and better manage feelings.
- Artistic or Graphic Journal: Use images to show your feelings. Photographs, online clips, pictures you create, and things you cut from magazines.
- Prompts Journal: explore different thoughts and feelings.
- Spiritual Journal: Passages from the Bible, or other spiritual text, write about what each one means to you and what you want to change or improve in your life.
- Goal Focused Journal: use your journal to set goals and work on achieving these goals every day.
- Nature Journal: notice what the outside world looks like each day. Use this to think about your own feelings and concerns. Journaling is an easy no cost way to feel better, work through issues and be your best.

There is no right or wrong way to keep a journal. You may prefer a free or low-cost journaling app for your phone. Find a time when you have few distractions. Try to do this at the same time each day so it becomes a habit. Keep your journal private — if you share it you may begin writing it for others instead of yourself. Do not try and write the perfect words — just write what you think and feel. Try it for at least two weeks — it will take a bit of time to get used to it. Reread your journal entry at times and see if you spot any patterns you want to change.

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TIME, MONEY, AND HAPPINESS

Personally and at your Church, are you in control of your money or are financial issues controlling you?

Time and money are both precious resources that matter for happiness. More people than not are temporally and financially constrained in their day-to-day lives, wishing that they had more time and more money. Money is controlling their lives.

When we value time over money, we create an impact of happiness. For instance, inexpensive, everyday pleasures, such as eating ice cream on the porch may exceed happiness beyond a major life event, moving or starting a new job. It has been argued that intentional changes in happiness involve spending time on activities that do not require a lot of money. These simple inexpensive experiences will initiate small boosts in one's mood. Exercise and religious practices have been known to increase people's mood and without excessive expenses involved. Now you are controlling your money.

The same is true in your Churches - once you spend time to determine the mission of your church (it's happiness), the health of you church will be in a much healthier place to make financial decisions. Valuing who you are as a church and less time worrying about the financials of what you can't do, your church will have a better impact of happiness.

IS YOUR CHURCH IN GOOD STANDING WITH THE STATE?

For our North Dakota churches, February 1st was the due date for the Annual Report to the Secretary of State. This is that form that you complete with the \$10 payments (\$15 if you're late). In South Dakota, the Annual Report is due on the anniversary month with the same fees. Most of our churches have been incorporated because this can make it easier to handle property transactions as well as provide some protection through the corporate umbrella to its leaders.

If your church fails to file the Annual Report, it begins the path of being involuntarily dissolved. This isn't the end of the world. I recently worked with a church that hadn't filed their Annual Report for over 20 years. 20 years! We were able to work through the process and get the church back in Good Standing. You can find out more on how to check your status and, if necessary, how to get back in Good Standing by going to my blog: www.JCTaccounting.com.

JEFF POSPISIL TO LEAVE LEADERSHIP POSITION

Jeff Pospisil, who serves as the Executive Director of Finance and Administration for the Dakotas Conference, will step away from his role on August 1, 2022. He has accepted an offer to teach accounting and business at Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell, SD.

Since 2008, Jeff has faithfully provided leadership to equip churches. In a letter announcing his transition, Bishop Laurie Haller wrote, "Jeff has served the Conference and the entire United Methodist denomination faithfully for the past 14 years. His professional wisdom and skills have guided many individuals and congregations in stewardship. However, his commitment to faith and to serve Jesus have inspired all of us to grow in discipleship."



For Jeff, it has always been about Jesus. "When I came on board, I remember we made a mission or vision statement. The statement, 'We are faithfully serving churches in the name of Jesus Christ,' changed things," said Pospisil. "We went from being Conference-centric— focusing on what churches could do for the Conference, to focusing on the local church. It is all about how we can equip churches and the clergy." Pospisil states that making connections and seeing growth in financial giving and stewardship has highlighted his ministry.

What's next? Bishop Laurie writes: "I invite you to join me in praying for Jeff, his wife, Betty, and their children, Liam, Ella, and Gus, during this season of transition and adjustment. Also, please keep the Dakotas Conference Leadership team in your prayers as they seek to fill the position in the coming months."