



Compassion Coalition

Ways to Connect with Financial Stewardship

“Train the church to be a light in the darkness. Educate people: Here is God's promise of abundant life versus the lie of instant gratification. ... We must speak into people's lives the truth that a sense of victory in providing for yourself and not living in financial stress is part of the life that God offers us.”

~Kim Nicolaus, Cokesbury United Methodist Church

Make a Difference through Prayer

- Pray that people overcome with anxiety about finances would turn their lives and possessions over to God, put their trust in God, and allow God's peace to prevail.
- Pray that Christians would repent of putting greed, self-indulgence and love of material things ahead of God's kingdom (Matthew 6:33).
- Pray that leaders in our city, state and nation would make wise and just choices about money held in public trust.
- Pray for an end to exploitive lending practices in Knox County that keep people trapped in debt.
- Pray that programs helping people develop financial health would themselves have sufficient resources and volunteers, as the demand for services grows.
- Thank God for the many families in the Knoxville area who have experienced liberation from economic bondage through ministries promoting financial stewardship.

Make a Difference through Your Life

- There are a lot of financially hurting people in East Tennessee, though people are often reluctant to admit their situation. Be attuned to people weighed down by financial burdens and be prepared to share information and referrals.
- Invite a co-worker or neighbor to join you in studying a good book on Christian principles of financial stewardship, such as *Financial Peace* by Dave Ramsey.
- Decide as a family to make generosity a key value. Kids will enjoy helping parents choose a ministry or charitable cause and setting a goal for giving that the whole family can participate in together.
- Are you a business leader? Employers can play a pivotal role in connecting employees with opportunities for savings and financial management.
- If you or anyone you know is facing extreme financial pressures, get help! Don't let the situation escalate. It's never too late to start living by God's economic principles.

Make a Difference through Your Church

- Make sure that your church's budget models principles of biblical stewardship.
- Organize small groups around financial stewardship where people can learn about biblical financial principles together, pray for and encourage one another, and hold one another accountable in lifestyle and financial choices.



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- Look for ways to build a bridge from short-term relief to long-term financial problem-solving. Does your church already have a ministry that provides food, diapers, help with emergency expenses, or other short-term assistance? Connect with one of the ministries below to be able to offer people more in-depth financial services, such as budget coaching or a financial education class.
- Start a Crown Financial Ministry at your church. Crown Financial Ministries (423-626-5562) wants to come alongside churches to help pastors equip their congregations to become generous givers of their time, talents and treasures.
- Host "Making Money Work" budgeting classes. Locations are needed in every geographical area of the city, particularly along bus lines. For more information call Compassion Coalition (865-251-1591 x 2).
- Help set up an IDA (Individual Development Account) program that rewards savings with high interest or matching funds, to encourage people with limited incomes to save as an investment in their future.
- Reach out to businesses in your church's community that provide alternative banking or loan services to families in poverty, such as payday loans and rent-to-own stores. Explore options for connecting with families that use these services to provide financial and spiritual counseling. It can become a win-win situation if the church helps keep families from defaulting on their debts.
- Create a prayer and referral hotline for people who are despairing over their financial situation.
- Have information available at the church to refer people to reputable credit counselors, tax assistance, and other financial services.

Make a Difference as a Volunteer

Connect with the following organizations that focus on financial stewardship:

Budget & Credit Workshop/Personal Finance Class (Knox Area Urban League): 865-524-5511, www.thekaul.com

Teaches the importance of good financial planning and money management practices. Helps clients understand their personal spending habits and give them guidance and tools to control their daily spending habits and accomplish their goals.

- Become a mentor to program participants.
- Assist staff members with the workshops or classes.
- Help with general office duties.

Consumer Credit Counseling Service: 865-584-5222, <http://cccsinc.org>

Offers advice for developing budgets, managing money, using credit wisely and building a savings plan. Counselors review clients' current situations and work with them to determine the best possible solutions to current financial problems as well as plans for preventing future financial pitfalls.



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Crown Financial Ministries of East Tennessee: 423-626-5562, www.crown.org

Teaches people how to apply Christ-centered financial principles in their lives, businesses, homes and marriages. Gives participants the wisdom and practical help to be successful in handling all the money issues in their lives.

- Training is available to those who want to serve in their church as a team member.
- Join a local team that helps churches to start a Crown Financial Ministry.

Knox Housing Partnership: 865-637-1679, www.khp.org

A partnership of local governments, businesses and the private sector that provides affordable housing opportunities to residents of Knox County, and offers financial products and education to help low and moderate income households obtain affordable housing.

- Provide administrative support by answering the phone, signing people up for various programs, and referring people to other relevant agencies or resources.
- Provide childcare during homebuyer or financial literacy workshops.
- Assist staff with homeownership education workshops on budgeting and credit.
- Attorneys could offer pro bono services for questions concerning bankruptcy, housing issues, credit issues, establishing wills, etc.

Making Money Work: 865-251-1591 x 2, <http://www.compassioncoalition.org>

A collaboration between Compassion Coalition partner churches, Knoxville/Knox County CAC, and the Knoxville Utility Board. Classes are held weekly at local churches for people who need assistance with their utility bills. The class teaches the difference between essentials and non-essentials and the basics of developing a budget.

- Lead a class at one of the various sites (teaching materials are provided).
- Serve as a mentor to someone who attends the class.
- Donate supplies for the class such as calculators, paper, and pencils.
- Churches: Become a host site for a class.

How to Learn More

- Compassion Coalition (865-251-1591 x 2) offers training for church staff who take assistance calls or walk ins, called "Working on the Front Lines." This training offers guidance on wise benevolence policies that meet the needs of people who ask the church for help, without creating dependency. Learn how to develop systems for helping people move from short-term to long-term solutions.
- The Knoxville Housing Partnership (865-637-1679) provides homebuyer education and financial literacy education.