

## Make *Saving Grace* an Adult Study Choice

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I started tracking my spending when I attended Central Michigan University back in the 1970's. I earned my spending money at summer jobs and the money had to last until the end of the school year. I counted every penny, adding up the cost of every tank of gas and slice of pizza. Often, I was down to my last dollar when I drove my VW van home to Lexington, Michigan in May.

I've been tracking my income and expenses ever since and, through the years, I've budgeted specific goals for giving, saving, and spending. It has not always been easy. I remember my frustration as a young professional, just breaking even at the end of each month.

What has come more gradually for me is an understanding of my relationship to money and the place of money in my spiritual journey. In my experience that many Christians resist connecting faith and the use of money. It's as if the divide between the two keeps faith the "safe" subject and money off limits.

However, **how we relate to money and what we do with our money is a spiritual issue.** Everything we have belongs to God and we have been called to be stewards of God's resources. Our financial goals and our spending indicate our values and reflect God's influence in our lives.

What might happen if we offered a course in personal finance, as part of our church programming? How might we begin to connect this important aspect of our lives to our faith walk? Discipleship leaders, as you plan for studies and small group focuses in 2022-23, consider including the course *Saving Grace*.

The six-session course, [\*Saving Grace: A Guide to Financial Well-Being\*](#), graciously connects faith and money through biblical teaching, Wesleyan insight, and basic financial practices. One does not need to have a "financial expert" lead the course. With the help of the course *Leader's Guide* and session videos, facilitators learn alongside participants.

Rev. Suzy Hutchison (First UMC Plymouth) recently lead a *Saving Grace* course. She shared, "The course offers a safe, covenantal space for people to get to know each other on an intimate level. Money is such a vulnerable topic and this curriculum gently guides participants to examine underlying attitudes and experiences that impact their relationship with money. This led to some great conversations, new friendships and a greater openness."

**Faith communities live out their mission generously when they talk openly about money and connect money and their spiritual lives.**

Find *Saving Grace* materials at [cokesbury.com](http://cokesbury.com). If you are interested in learning more about offering this course at your church, please contact me at [sherry@umfmichigan.org](mailto:sherry@umfmichigan.org). I will be offering a [Saving Grace Facilitator Webinar](#) on Tuesday, August 30 at 7:00 pm.

