

Christopher, J. Clif **Not Your Parent's Offering Plate: A New Vision for Financial Stewardship**, Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN, 2008. "Hearing a young attorney speak of the faith-based reasons for which he had just made a substantial monetary gift to a community youth center, Clif Christopher asked the speaker if he would consider making a similar contribution to the congregation of which he was an active member. 'Lord no, they wouldn't know what to do with it' was the answer. That, in a nutshell, describes the problem churches are facing in their stewardship efforts, says Christopher. Unlike leading nonprofit agencies and institutions, we too often fail to convince potential givers that their gifts will have impact and significance. In this book, Christopher lays out the main reasons for this failure to capture the imagination of potential givers, including our frequent failure simply to ask." *Review from Cokesbury.com* **REQUIRED READING.** Along with *Ask, Thank, Tell*, this book ought to be required reading for all vestries and Bishop's committees, stewardship committees, and finance committees—it is certainly **required reading** for ALL CLERGY IN CHARGE of a congregation. Not to be missed, or dismissed lightly.

_____, **Whose Offering Plate Is It? New Strategies for Financial Stewardship**, Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN, 2008. **REQUIRED READING** Last year, Dr. Christopher released this second book that answers many questions from real pastors and ministers who read the first book or saw Rev. Christopher at one of his seminars: "How can we advocate online giving without encouraging some to abuse their credit cards?" "What should letters to different giving constituencies look like?" These among many other questions are addressed in this excellent sequel. **Required reading for ALL CLERGY**, as above.

_____, **Rich Church, Poor Church: Keys to Effective Financial Ministry**
REQUIRED READING for all Lay leaders and clergy.

Dombek, Timothy & Durall, Michael **Making The Annual Pledge Drive Obsolete: How Churches Can Get Out of This Business Once and For All**, CommonWealth Consulting Group, Golden, CO. 2014 Available on Amazon Kindle: "A powerful book that should be required reading for all church leaders. The authors offer thoughts both practically and spiritually grounded that will transform our understanding of charitable giving and the use of money in the church." The Rev. CK Robertson, Canon to the Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church, and author of *Transforming Stewardship*

Jamieson, Janet T. & Philip D. **Ministry and Money: A Practical Guide for Pastors**, Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, KY, 2009. This book is EXACTLY what its title says it is, and so much more. *For any member of the clergy who has been intimidated by money, financial reports and the budgeting process.* But that's not the best part—it's the Theology of Money section that makes this book invaluable. Dare I say it's required? **Strongly Recommended for ALL CLERGY.**

Keucher, Gerald **Remember The Future: Financial Leadership and Asset Management for Congregations**, Church Publishing, New York, NY From Cokesbury.com: "Keucher's primer on sound asset management encourages leaders of congregations to remember the future when they're making decisions so that the needs of the present are balanced against what's best for the long term." Excellent information on managing building for income, endowments (especially!), and fund-raising, too.

Lane, Charles R. **Ask, Thank, Tell: Improving Stewardship Ministry in your Congregation**, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, Minneapolis, MN, 2006. **REQUIRED READING.** *A virtual paint by the numbers book on how we must begin to see Stewardship as a discipleship matter, and how to best ask, thank, and tell our people about what we do as a church and how people's gifts of money to our congregations help transform lives—get it for all your Leaders!!*

Nouwen, Henri **The Spirituality of Fundraising**, Upper Room Publishing, Nashville, TN, 2010. "Rather than viewing fundraising as a necessary but unpleasant task in supporting spiritual endeavors, Henri Nouwen asserts that fundraising is a ministry. The question that Christians must explore is their relationship with money and whether they find security in God or their possessions. Drawing on many lessons from scripture, Nouwen emphasizes that individuals must be moved to a

common vision in order to feel generous in giving to a fundraising effort. For the act of fundraising involves not only the gift of money to a common goal but also the gifts of involvement, energy, and prayer for a common mission.” Review from Cokesbury.com; **REQUIRED READING.**

Sharp, Ronald F. **Living Trusts for Everyone: Why a Will is Not the Way to Avoid Probate, Protect Heirs, and Settle Estates**, Allworth Press, Skyhorse Publishing, Inc., New York, NY, 2010. \$11.72 on Amazon.com: “The misconceptions surrounding the last will and testament need to be put to rest: Wills benefit lawyers. Trusts benefit you. Period. Too often lawyers sell wills to clients only to sit back and wait to sell their probate services to their client’s heirs. Modern estate planning should utilize the Living Trust as the effective, efficient, and inexpensive alternative to a will. Living Trusts for Everyone: Why a Will is Not the Way to Avoid Probate, Protect Heirs, and Settle explains why wills are not the best way to handle an estate and details the many advantages trusts have over wills in not only eliminating probate, but protecting your assets for your heirs.” –Amazon.com

Bassoff, Michael and Chandler, Steve **RelationShift: Revolutionary Fundraising**– Robert Reed Publishers; First edition (November 2001). THE BOOK that absolutely changed my approach to congregational stewardship and introduced me to *Relational Stewardship*. It has become one of my great privileges to know Michael Bassoff as a friend and kindred spirit. He is truly one of the great minds for developing long-lasting mutually satisfying, mutually giving relationships when it comes to fundraising for any type of organization. *Ought to be considered **required reading**, but most won’t.*

The Stewardship of Life Institute, founded in 1994, is headquartered at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, located in historic Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The Institute’s mission is to serve stewardship in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through its seminaries.

The Institute carries on the vision and work of its founder and benefactor, the late Arthur L. Larson, who died in 2000. Because of this gift, you can sign-up to receive a monthly free Stewardship Toolbox with weekly bulletin snippets and a monthly article for use in your newsletter—all at no cost to you! <http://www.stewardshipoflife.org/subscribe/> Stewardship of Life Institute, 61 Seminary Ridge, Gettysburg, PA 17325

Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota offers wonderful free resources for your use from the Lifelong Learning section of their website; click on “Stewardship.” Plenty of free resources to download, especially *Stewardship 101: An Invitation to Financial Stewardship*, a FREE 38-page pdf; sign-up for regular helpful emails, too. See: <https://faithlead.org/ebooks/stewardship-101/>

The Episcopal Network for Stewardship

WWW.TENS.org

TENS is an association of church leaders who understand, practice, and proclaim God’s call to generosity. We are children of God, disciples of Jesus Christ who feel called to a ministry of transformation through stewardship. We believe that it is by virtue of our baptism that we are called to this ministry of stewardship.

TENS’ vision is to provide training and resources for stewardship leaders across The Episcopal Church and beyond, around the following core competencies:

- Training clergy and lay leaders in the spirituality of money, and the skills required to address questions of money in the congregation;
- Mentoring a new generation of stewardship leaders, with special attention to youth, young adults, Generation Xers, and newly ordained clergy;
- Developing and utilizing methods of providing resources using web-based and other electronic techniques.
- Creating tools and *curriculæ* for seminarians on stewardship best practices, the theology of money, and congregational financial standards

TENS Mission Statement

By providing resources and training at low or no cost to clergy and lay stewardship leaders, the mission of The Episcopal Network for Stewardship is to transform stewardship leaders, preparing them to raise money for ministry, to nurture awareness about and to teach the way of generosity, and to promote the full participation of church members through the giving of their time, talent, and treasure.

Making a written estimate of giving can be important to Christians for at least ten reasons:

Estimating giving risks in faith; it reflects the need to put God first. Martin Luther once said that every Christian goes through three conversions in life—first, the heart, then the head, then the purse. For God to be really first in the lives of Christians, all three are necessary. Estimating giving makes God the God of our lives, not just the God of our church. Growing in our commitment each year gives external evidence of our internal priorities. We put God first. We risk in faith. We trust in God to provide. And thereby we are healed from addiction to wealth.

Estimating acknowledges that God asks for our commitment. God asks not just that we give—but that we be committed to justice and mercy and faith in all the world. As Christians, our estimate of giving is foundational to all ministry. An estimate helps our church plan for and provide ministry.

Estimating emphasizes that God is vital to our lives. Our personal support for the Lord's ministry is a way to make a difference in the world. Our estimates of giving provide a witness to others of the role God plays in our lives.

Making an estimate frees. Many Christians affirm that one of the best things about both tithing and estimating their giving is that they win a sense of

freedom. They are free because they are giving as God has blessed them. They are free because they know God receives the percentage or tithe they have committed as a reflection of their spiritual commitment. They are freed to concentrate on other service to God, knowing that their financial commitment for the coming year clears other competing interests out of the way.

Christians lead by example. The only way many people will ever experience the Gospel is through Christians. If our words proclaim our faith and our whole life is exemplary, but we fail to illustrate an effective stewardship of the gifts God has entrusted to us, will that witness stand up under scrutiny? Jesus sets the example in stewardship. Christ was not afraid to undergo His passion. Christians should not, therefore, be afraid to affix their names to estimates of giving for God's work through their church. An estimate is an outward expression of our love for God.

Estimating reflects our disciplined response to Christ's love. Cheap grace merely accepts the gifts of God without making any real commitment. By contrast, “costly grace” is costly “because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs us our life, and it is grace because it is the only true life” (*Dietrich Bonhoeffer*). The discipline of making an estimate and sticking to it is a direct response to a loving God who paid for our life in full on Calvary. The sharing of our estimate of giving is one way to respond to

the gift of life. It does not take for granted the gift of God.

Estimating begets ministry and enables planning. Before any of us makes a cross-country trip, for business or pleasure, we likely make plans: driving routes, lodging reservations, a routine check-up of the car, or detailed flight itineraries. In the same way, every congregation embarks on a journey each year. That journey involves some planning for ministry, and, we hope, undertaking new challenges. A vision for ministry with no new challenges is a near-sighted vision. Estimating our giving enables the church to get an accurate picture of our income for the coming year, so that leaders can plan their ministries by using a rational roadmap.

An estimate is not a contract. We should view our estimate of giving as a personal commitment that flows from our love for Christ, not as a legally binding promissory note. Most Christians want to give. Thus, an estimate is a voluntary commitment given freely. It expresses a Christian's hopes and cares for the programs of ministry that proclaim Christ's love in the world.

An estimate enables intentional decisions. Lack of an intentional decision usually begets lower giving. People who toss a “buck” or even a “few bucks” into the plate are hardly conscientious stewards. Such a practice amounts to usually giving God a token of their

leftovers—what is left after the bills are paid. Biblical stewardship involves first-fruits giving—giving off the top. Estimates enable members to be truly intentional about their personal stewardship.

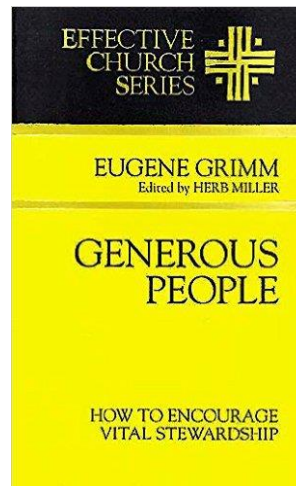
Christian stewardship, and specifically the focused part of stewardship which relates to the giving of our tithes and offerings, is merely a reflection of our spiritual commitment to Christ. ***Stewardship is first of all our response to God.*** It is God's gift of Jesus Christ as our Savior that triggers our commitment. Christians are called to grow in grace and knowledge of the truth. We expect that we will grow spiritually every year. We want to have a better understanding of Scripture next year than we do this year. As we make our estimate of giving, we renew our covenant with God. We are committing ourselves to being intentional about our stewardship of the financial blessings God has given us. The side benefit is that we expect to grow spiritually in the coming year, even as we grow in our giving. We're never too old to grow.

Adapted from the book, *Generous People: How to Encourage Vital Stewardship*, from the chapter of the same title, by Eugene Grimm, published by Abington Press, Nashville TN, 1999.

To Pledge or Not to Pledge

“Remember: A stingy planter gets a stingy crop; a lavish planter gets a lavish crop. I want each of you to take plenty of time to think it over, and make up your own mind what you will give. That will protect you against sob stories and arm-twisting. God loves it when the giver delights in the giving.”

2 Corinthians 9:6-7,
from "The Message"



To Pledge or Not To Pledge: Why Estimate Giving?

by Eugene Grimm

*Christian stewardship... is merely a
reflection of our spiritual
commitment to Christ.*

Every congregation knows its responsibility to help its people grow in faith and discipleship. Growing in giving often enables and augments growth in other areas of the Christian life. Christians who estimate their giving know the need of the giver to grow. For every reason that a person can invent for not estimating giving, there are several better reasons for doing so.

Grace is the God-given undeserved love that enriches our earthly lives and brings wholeness. God's grace reaches out to us, even when we feel unreachable, and moves us to a firm commitment to Jesus Christ. God's grace virtually compels a response; for how can even the most callous heart not respond to love such as this?

Nearly everyone makes an estimate of their giving. Many just do not put it on paper. But if they do not write it in black and white, their giving is usually much smaller. Not making a written estimate usually means they have not given it serious, prayerful consideration.

12 BEST CHURCH WELCOME IDEAS - TURN VISITORS INTO MEMBERS

Lindsey Baker Bower
11–14 minutes

Typically, 20% of people who attend your church for the first time will become long-term members. That's only one in five. If you can get these visitors to return for a second time, that number jumps to a 40% conversion rate.

The best way to engage new attendees – and get them to come back! – is with a solid welcome plan that makes them feel like a part of your community already. If you want to try out some new church welcome ideas, we're here to help!

These 12 church welcome ideas will help you turn all different types of church visitors into lasting, valuable church members.

Types of Church Visitors

Welcoming every visitor to your church with open arms is a step towards stewarding them into long-term members of your congregation. But it also makes them feel like a part of things and creates a better sense of community in your church.

What you may not know is there are different types of church visitors – and different ways to welcome them. Here are five types of visitors to keep in mind.

1. Partner visitors

These are visitors who attend church with their partner, friend, or family member. They may or may not be looking to develop a long-term relationship with your church, but they're more likely to return with the person who brought them if they have a positive experience.

2. Curious visitors

Spiritually curious visitors may not have a past relationship with any church but are interested in learning more about your religion.

Welcoming them warmly shows all your church has to offer.

3. Sampling visitors

These visitors try out several different churches to find one that fits them. The more welcome you make them feel, the more likely they will choose your church!

4. Hopeful visitors

When someone has a bad experience with a church, it's difficult for them to find one that's a better fit. Hopeful visitors attend your church with the hope that it's their new home.

5. Long-haul visitors

This visitor plans to get deeply involved. Maybe they just moved to town or are looking to make a switch. Like sampling visitors, they try out different options to see what fits – only their goal is finding a church home where they can really get involved.

Welcoming them will require showing all you have to offer, including opportunities to get involved and volunteer.

12 CHURCH WELCOME IDEAS TO TURN YOUR VISITORS INTO CHURCH MEMBERS

1. Have greeters outside your building

A great way to welcome visitors to your church is to greet them in your parking lot or outside your church building. Bad weather? Place them right inside the main entrances. Attending a church for the first time is intimidating, so seeing friendly faces right away makes for a more welcoming experience!

Plus, if your building layout is unclear, it's nice to have someone to help guide visitors to your entrance.

2. Install a welcome kiosk or table

A welcome kiosk can be a tablet with FAQs, information about your church programming, the history of your church, and more. This gives visitors a pressure-free way to get to know your church because they can independently browse that info.

3. Give a welcome speech

A good welcome speech sets the tone for your service and introduces your church leadership. This helps all types of visitors get a good sense of what your church is like – and can encourage them to come back next week! Here's a sample done effectively by one church:

Good morning. We're so grateful to have you join us at (Church's Name) this beautiful Sunday morning to praise God and his Son. My name is (Name), and I'm the (Title or position). I also want to introduce you to our Pastor/Rector/Priest (Name).

Every week, we gather together to share in God's blessings, and this week is no different. If you're new to our church, we want to welcome you and ask you to reflect on the ways God has made a difference in your life. As the service continues, you'll have plenty of opportunities to meet other members and join our community.

We also want to remind everyone that cell phones are welcome during the service, but please keep them on silent. Feel free to take notes on your phone during today's service or share a comment on our Facebook page.

Also, if you feel so moved, you can always share your tithe or offering via text. Information to donate by phone or online is in your bulletin. Once again, welcome to (Church name). Now, let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship.

Your welcome could tell visitors so much about the values of this church, including concrete information about church leadership. We also love the hint about cell phones – a new visitor will feel more comfortable knowing the rules!

4. Get your website in shape

Did you know that 80% of church visitors will visit your website before they ever attend an in-person service?

Welcoming new church visitors these days starts online. Make sure your website is full of useful information about your church, including logistical information about attending like where to park and how long services last. You can also include details such as how formal your service is and what congregants typically wear. Your website should be easy to navigate and attractive, so it gives visitors a good impression.

5. Play a church welcome video

Video is a powerful element to add to your church, especially if you're considering switching to a hybrid church model. For example, you could post your welcome video to your website to encourage new visitors to attend your virtual service. It can also help welcome members to your church in person, too! You can play it in your church lobby on a low volume with subtitles so church visitors can get an idea of what your church is all about. Have screens in your worship space? Play the video as people are finding their seats!

6. Create connection cards

Connection cards welcome church visitors by allowing them to share their information, potential volunteer interests, prayer requests, and more, whether you share your connection card digitally through QR codes or in person.

7. Send follow-up communication

Once you have a way to contact your church visitors, you can begin to build a relationship with them by sending follow-up communications.

This could include the most recent issue of your church newsletter as well as a thank-you message for attending.

8. Encourage mingling

After your sermon, encourage your congregants to stand and greet those around them. This helps build community among your regular members and welcomes church visitors

at the same time. This encouragement creates lasting relationships, which leads to returning church members!

9. Give them swag

Swag, *aka* merchandise like t-shirts, pens, and lanyards with your church logo on them, can be a lovely gift to church visitors. It shows them your generosity while encouraging them to return. After all, they have the t-shirt now!

10. Host a new visitor reception

While this may not be possible every week, hosting a monthly reception for visitors is a great opportunity to get to know them better. Provide some light refreshments and encourage visitors to mingle with long-standing church members.

11. Make your church leadership accessible

Gone are the days of the superstar pastor who exits out the back door! To engage and steward church visitors, your church leadership needs to be friendly and willing to mingle with the crowd.

This is so important because they can help answer any questions or concerns church visitors might have while creating a good impression! After all, isn't connecting with the public why you planted your church in the first place?

12. Plan a fun church event

A new visitor might be more likely to check your church out at a fun event instead of attending a service.

Church events are fun, pressure-free ways to welcome new members. They are also fantastic for fundraising.

Conclusion

If you've been wondering how to welcome visitors to your church, you're not alone. Your welcome ideas won't work on every visitor, but it's still important to try out new strategies and make a real effort when it comes to connecting with your prospective congregants. Regardless of the type of church visitor you're trying to engage, making them feel welcome is the first step to building that lasting relationship.

Put these 12 church welcome ideas into action to increase your conversion rate for new church members. And, to help grow your church even more, make sure you have the fundraising infrastructure in place to support your growth.

—from *donorbox.org* website, *alt.*

Examen for Stewardship Storytelling

About the Examen

One way to pray is to look for God's providence and generosity in the "sacred text" that is your own life. About 500 years ago St. Ignatius Loyola encouraged prayer-filled mindfulness by proposing what has been called the Examen (often prayed daily but can be a review of any time in your history). The Examen is a practice of prayerful reflection on our experience in order to detect God's presence and to discern its direction. Try this version to enhance your money awareness and story—



1. Become aware of God's presence, and choose gratefulness.
2. Review the time period or experience, noticing both the positive and negative.
3. Pay attention to your emotions: where do a lot of feelings come up?
4. Choose one aspect of the experience and pray from it. What might be the lesson?
5. Ask God what you might do with this renewed awareness.

Telling Your Story for Yourself and Others (Public Narrative)

1. What happened? Choose some aspect of your experience to describe, using first person affective (feeling) terms whenever appropriate.
2. What challenged you? What choice did you make? Did something new happen as a result? (The narrative arc).
3. When appropriate, consider how your choice connects with others or the outcome enhances the common good.
4. Invite others to join you in your choice, or contributes to the common good.

(Very Abbreviated) Example

I remember my first conversation about tithing, an unfamiliar concept for me, as I had grown up unchurched. It was unnerving. I was trying to figure out what I was supposed to do as a new Christian, and tithing seemed to be part of the conversation, but I couldn't figure out how to make it happen, from a household budget perspective. And it seemed so countercultural (even in my then Presbyterian church). My pastor, who knew the spiritual journey I was on, looked at me with great compassion (see Mark 10:17-22) and said "a tithe is not enough."

She wasn't asking for a bigger pledge, she was acknowledging my own deep calling to respond more fully to God's love. That started my journey to proportional giving, which is now more than a tithe. It's still not enough... but along the way I learned that it's impossible to give "enough" to God. There is plenty of joy in giving a bit more every year, though!

Join me in stretching yourself to give "not enough," and discover the joy in giving more than you thought you could.

Did you hear about (1) an experience with some feelings attached to it? Was there a (2) challenge and a choice (especially one that (3) others could connect with)? An outcome that changed things for the better? (4) An invitation to others to contribute to the common good?

The Ignatian Examen

One way to pray is to look for God's presence in the "sacred text" that is your own life. More than 400 years ago St. Ignatius Loyola encouraged prayer-filled mindfulness by proposing what has been called the Daily Examen. The Examen is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence and to discern his direction for us. Try this version of St. Ignatius's prayer—

1. Become aware of God's presence. ****Listen for your name.* Look back on the events of the day in the company of the Holy Spirit. The day may seem confusing to you—a blur, a jumble, a muddle. Ask God to bring clarity and understanding.

2. Review the day with gratitude. Gratitude is the foundation of our relationship with God. Walk through your day in the presence of God and note its joys and delights. Focus on the day's gifts. Look at the work you did, the people you interacted with. What did you receive

from these people? What did you give them? Pay attention to small things—the food you ate, the sights you saw, and other seemingly small pleasures. God is in the details.

3. Pay attention to your emotions. One of St. Ignatius's great insights was that we detect the presence of the Spirit of God in the movements of our emotions. Reflect on the feelings you experienced during the day. Boredom? Elation? Resentment? Compassion? Anger? Confidence? What is God saying through these feelings? God will most likely show you some moments you regret. Look deeply for other implications. Does a feeling of frustration perhaps mean that God wants you consider a new direction in some area of your work? Are you concerned about a friend? Perhaps you should reach out to her in some way.

4. Choose one aspect of the day and pray from it. Ask the Holy Spirit to direct you to something during the day that God thinks is particularly important. It may involve a feeling—positive or negative. It may be a significant encounter with another person or a vivid moment of pleasure or peace. Or it may be something that seems rather insignificant. Look at it. Pray about it. Allow the prayer to arise spontaneously from your heart—whether intercession, praise, repentance, or gratitude.

5. Look toward tomorrow. Ask God to give you light for tomorrow's challenges. Pay attention to the feelings that surface as you survey what's coming up. Are you doubtful? Cheerful? Apprehensive? Full of delighted anticipation? Allow these feelings to turn into prayer. Seek God's guidance. Ask God for help and understanding. Pray for hope.

St. Ignatius encouraged people to talk to Jesus like a friend. End the Daily Examen with a conversation with Jesus. Ask for forgiveness. Ask for protection and help. Ask for wisdom about the questions you have and the problems you face. Do all this in the spirit of gratitude. Your life itself is a gift, and it is adorned with daily gifts from God. End the Daily Examen with the Lord's Prayer.

*Adapted from <http://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-examen/how-can-i-pray/>
Also try <http://www.pray-as-you-go.org/>
(Scripture-based daily prayer for your MP3 player)*

With thanks to the Rev. Julia McCray Goldsmith, Priest-in-charge, Trinity Cathedral, San Jose, California.

STARTING A LAY PASTORAL CARE MINISTRY TEAM

Lay Pastoral Care Team is a group of people dedicated to supporting people with specific needs. At a time when our population is aging, caring for older adults is especially relevant. This is an ideal ministry for laity as they often have long-term relationships with older members. And there is a role for people with different skills. Those who are good at listening and caring can be visitors. Those who like to DO things can buy or prepare food, schedule visitors, write notes, gather information and resources, serve as drivers, etc.

What's important is that you have a team of people who can respond to needs in your congregation. Older adults are the primary recipients of pastoral care. But this can also extend to those who need a break from caring for someone who is ill or shut-in, those whose loved one has died or be with someone who has a chronic illness or disability.

Congregations cannot depend on the clergy to provide pastoral care. They do, of course, provide care when people are dying, struggling with death or an illness or need to speak with a priest. But routine visits to the lonely, sick, elderly, homebound, etc., are best done by the laity both because this is a core ministry of the laity and because there are more laity in a congregation than clergy so those needing care will receive it more frequently! Lay pastoral caregivers find that this ministry is deeply meaningful and that it usually deepens their spiritual life. The following notes are suggestions on how to start a lay pastoral care ministry in your congregation.

Recruit members of a team. Look for people who are:

- Willing to make a two year commitment
- Are able to respect confidentiality
- Have some understanding of what they would be doing
- Are able to devote two hours a week (or whatever amount fits your situation)
- Are good listeners
- Are willing and able to learn
- Are able to work with others on a team

Recruit vs. Volunteer - it is hard to say "no" to an inappropriate volunteer.

- Interview volunteers, knowing that you may need to help the interviewee focus on a different ministry if you likely already know this isn't a good fit
- Have adjunct tasks available that volunteers can do - sending cards/notes, buying or cooking food, serving as a driver

Develop a mission such as:

"Provide a ministry of hope and caring so that no member of our congregation need be alone. We will visit the ill at home or in the hospital, support those going through a life crisis, maintain contact with those unable to attend church due to illness or disability, support friends and family involved in care giving, and comfort the bereaved" (*River Road UU Congregation, Bethesda, MD*)

Provide training:

- Build the team (c. 4 hours on relationship development, general discussion of what this ministry entails, the needs of older adults, etc.)
- Develop skills (1 or 2 day-long workshops or several shorter sessions) on skills like:
- Visiting people in the hospital, nursing home, home, etc.
- Issues related to death and bereavement
- The religious component of pastoral care
- Importance of confidentiality
- Knowing your limits
- Communication
- Active listening
- Referrals and community resources
- Extended training over time might include topics such as: Dementia
- living wills
- advanced medical directives
- CPR
- options for retirement living
- bereavement
- depression
- planned giving, wills that give wisdom/values
- advanced medical directives
- how to manage older parents

Decide what you want to and can do (start slow, build over time)

Easiest to do is sending cards/handwritten notes or making phone calls. Next is coordinating and conducting regular visits — both Lay Eucharistic Minister visits and just visits to chat.

Coordinate respite care for caregivers

- Manage a buddy system for older adults living alone
- Develop and manage a Medical Equipment Loan Program (this could be for a cluster of churches or, if you have lots of unused space, for the diocese's churches)
- Help members moving to local retirement communities get connected with other Episcopalians there and try to find them transportation back to the church on Sundays
- Make hospital, nursing home or hospice visits
- Support those going through life crises
- Support members and their families with terminal illness
- Provide information and support at the time of death and try to support the bereaved person for the following two years
- Provide educational materials about living wills, advanced medical directives, retirement communities, support groups, etc.
- Establish a Memory Cafe at your church or in partnership with other faith communities or agencies (<http://www.dementiatraining41ife.com/ri-memory-cafes.html>)

Meet monthly

Share experiences, ask questions, discuss best practices

Choose a book to read together or have someone do a presentation on a topic, demonstrate and practice skill, etc.

Be accountable to one another — develop norms, best practices, policies, etc. and check in regularly to make sure everyone is observing them.

Some examples are:

- All visits are done in pairs — never go alone.
- Take safe church training and review those practices periodically.
- Don't talk about what someone shared with you
- Don't reveal a diagnosis unless you have the person's permission to do so.
- Don't create a dependency on you.
- Make sure you are meeting the person's needs, not yours.
- Be discrete, polite and gentle.
- Pray for the people you visit.
- Spend time in spiritual reflection, Bible study and prayer. Pray for the people you serve and pray for each other.

Starting a Lay Pastoral Care Ministry Team - from The Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island

What do you want your relationship with Jesus Christ to look like at Precious Blood of Jesus Episcopal Church?

The church exists to help people grow in their relationship with Jesus – to become his followers or disciples. When Jesus is our focal point, our lives will naturally show forth acts of kindness and generosity and ministry becomes a way of life.

For us, Precious Blood of Jesus Episcopal Church is the community of people with whom this relationship is lived out and nurtured. It is important to remember that the congregation is not the end – it is the means to the end. Sometimes people focus more on their relationship with the congregation than with Jesus – sometimes because of the ways congregations work this is encouraged. We wish to focus on Jesus.

Below is a brief outline of some of the distinctions between membership, which tends to focus more on the congregation and discipleship which focuses on Jesus. What kind of community do you want us to be? What kind of follower of Jesus do you desire to be?

MEMBERSHIP

The Member of a congregation is expected to:

1. Give money to support others who do ministry. Ministry is done by professionals – people like the priest, a missionary or those engaged in social service.
2. Maintain the institution. Members are expected to give enough money to keep the building cooled and heated, lit, and maintained, and to make sure that enough people take their turn on committees.
3. Live an upright life and be a good citizen. It is important and expected, that members of congregations contribute to the larger good in the community and don't become public scandals.

Some assumptions inherent in the paradigm of membership...

1. The mission field is elsewhere.
2. The goal of the congregation is to get and keep members. In many congregations the death rate far exceeds the birth rate – so it is important to get members and keep them.
3. Congregations have low expectations of members. The reason for this is obvious: If we expect too much of members, people probably won't join, and if they do join, they won't hang around for too long.

DISCIPLESHIP

The Disciple as a follower of Jesus is expected to:

1. *Do the ministry.* Disciples don't rely on the priest to do the ministry needed – they understand that ministry belongs to all God's people.
2. *Be transformed* through daily prayer, scripture reading, weekly worship, growth in giving to the tithe or beyond, serving others in Jesus' name, and sharing the faith story with those who need to hear it.
3. *Live in community.* The larger community is the congregation. In many cases a smaller community is a small group that gathers for prayer, study and service.

Some assumptions inherent in the life of discipleship...

1. The mission field starts at the front door of the church.
2. The goal is to make disciples for Jesus Christ. It is not that membership in the congregation is a bad thing; it just isn't enough.
3. There are high expectations of disciples. The traits of discipleship listed above are understood to describe the life of followers of Jesus, and all disciples are expected to be diligent in their practice of them.

Effective Stewardship Communiqué

August 2014

God Owns It All

by

Ken Williams

The “Effective Stewardship” program is based on a simple principle found in Psalm 24:1 — “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.” In other words, God owns it all. According to other Scriptures, God owns the “cattle on a thousand hills” and the gold and silver in every mine.

Our role as God’s children is that of managers and stewards. Think about it: God could have chosen Fidelity, T. Rowe Price, Vanguard or some other fine investment firm to handle His resources, but He chose you and me. We are handling the resources of the universe for the God of the universe! But in doing so, each of us owns exactly the same amount: Absolutely nothing.

Why is this truth so important? Why is it a point of reference again and again in the “Effective Stewardship” program? Well, on the surface, the answer might be because “God owns it all.” But beyond that bit of redundancy, the truth of God’s ownership is very important because until an individual comes face to face with it and modifies his or her lifestyle accordingly, that person will not be trained as a steward. And he or she will continue to see his or her role as an owner rather than a manager.

What’s the difference? An owner has rights; a steward has responsibilities. An owner holds onto possessions; a steward invests them for another. An owner develops a sense of self-worth based on the things owned; a steward derives a sense of self-worth from the relationship with the real owner. An owner looks to things as the primary source of satisfaction; a steward realizes that God is our Source and that our expectation of all that we need is found in God and God alone.

Those definitions and more — based on God’s ownership and our role as managers and stewards — constitute a major distinction that sets the “Effective Stewardship” program apart from other financial programs. Those definitions and more are why our emphasis is not on next Sunday’s offering as much as it is on the offerings two and three years in the future. And those definitions and more are why the “Effective Stewardship” program is not fund raising per se, but education and training based on the Word of God.

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Dandelion by [pippalou](#).

Richard Rohr's Daily Meditation

Letting Go

Letting Go into God

Tuesday, July 22, 2014

To Western or comfortable people, surrender and letting go sounds like losing. But it's actually accessing a deeper, broader sense of the self, which is already whole, already content, already filled with abundant life. This is the part of you that has always loved God and said "Yes" to God. It's the part of you that is Love, and all we have to do is *let go and fall into it*. It's already there. Once you move your identity to that level of deep inner contentment and compassion, you realize that you're drawing upon a Life that is larger than your own, and from a deeper Abundance. Once you learn to do that, why would you ever again settle for some scarcity model for life?

But sadly, we continually do just that. The scarcity model is the way we're trained to think: "I am not enough. This is not enough. I do not have enough." So we try to attain more and more, and climb higher and higher. Thomas Merton said we may spend our whole life climbing the ladder of success, only to discover that when we get to the top our ladder is leaning against the wrong wall. Wow!

A daily practice of contemplative prayer can help you fall into the Big Truth that we all share, the Big Truth that is God, that is Grace itself, where you are overwhelmed by *more than enoughness*! The spiritual journey is about living more and more in that abundant place where you don't have to wrap yourself around your hurts, your defeats, your failures; but you can get practiced in letting go and saying "That's not me. I don't need that. I've met a better self, a truer self."

Adapted from *The Art of Letting Go: Living the Wisdom of Saint Francis*,
disc 6 (CD),
and *Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life*, p. xvii

Gateway to Silence:
Let go and let God.

Why You Need to Pursue Planned Gifts (And Why to Start Today)

by Viken Mikaelian

Sick and tired of hearing this? That's a danger sign. Because resistance to common sense puts you and your nonprofit on the fast track to extinction.

"But we need the cash now!" Sound familiar? Many fundraisers were saying the same thing 10 years ago. And even then it didn't apply...because many planned gifts are not deferred.

Because only 5% of this nation's wealth is in hard-to-get cash, and 95% is in easy-to-get assets, *the time for planned giving is now.*

Ten more reasons you need to pursue planned gifts:

1. If you're not asking your prospects for planned gifts, *someone else is.*
2. Eventually that "someone else" will *steal your cash gifts, too.*
3. Cash-starved times *are best times* for planned giving.
4. Those who even dabble in planned giving eventually earn *50% to 100% more* than those who don't.
5. A typical planned gift is *200 to 300 times the size* of a donor's largest annual gift.
6. Planned gifts *do not affect prospects' cash flow.* They're easy to give (and to receive).
7. Prospects are *eager to make a planned gift*, but simply don't know how.
8. Prospects making gifts through their wills typically *increase their annual support.* Why? Because they've made you part of their family.
9. *Anyone* can make a planned gift.
10. It's *easy* and it *works.*



Valley Forge, Pennsylvania
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25 ESTATE DOCUMENTS YOU NEED TO PUT IN ONE PLACE*

The Essentials

- Will
- Letter of Instruction
- Trust Documents
- Financial Power of Attorney (POA)

Marriage and Divorce

- Marriage License
- Divorce Papers
- Military Documents (DD214)

Health-Care Confidential

- Personals and Family Medical History
- Durable Health-Care Power of Attorney
- Authorization to Release Health-Care Information
- Living Will
- Do-Not-Resuscitate Order

Proof of Ownership

- Housing, Land and Cemetery Deeds
- Escrow Mortgage Accounts
- Proof of Loans Made and Debts Owed
- Vehicle Titles
- Stock Certificates, Savings Bonds and Brokerage Accounts
- Partnership and Corporate Operating Agreements
- Tax Returns

Life Insurance and Retirement

- Life-Insurance Policies
- Individual Retirement Accounts
- 401(k) Accounts
- Pension Documents
- Annuity Contracts

Bank Accounts/Social Media

- List of Bank Accounts
- List of all User Names and Passwords
- List of Safe-Deposit Boxes

*From Saabira Chaudhuri's 7/2/2011 article
in the *Wall Street Journal*



Why Churches Should Have a Ministry of Legacy Giving

The Top Ten Reasons *by Chris McLeod, JD*

The Greatest Generation is disappearing. Younger donors give differently or not at all. Annual operating costs of churches are increasing exponentially due to health care expenses and physical campuses suffering from deferred maintenance.

A legacy giving initiative can help build a pipeline of major gifts that can grow a church's endowment and provide long term stability.

1 Legacy giving manages risk.

The most generous members in a church congregation are often its oldest. What would happen if the three most generous members were to die in the same year? In some cases, it could take ten or more giving units to replace each member's annual stewardship commitment.

2 Legacy giving conversations can be transformational for the church and the member.

The desire to make a difference is almost universal, regardless of one's religious tradition. Your members are already making legacy gifts to World Vision, the Salvation Army and their alma maters because *they've been asked*. Many members want to make a difference for their church, an institution with which they generally have a much more intimate and long term relationship.

3 Legacy giving can unlock the generosity of your congregation.

National research shows that donors with documented bequests give twice as much

annually as donors who have not made a bequest. While it is not clear whether the more generous donors are more likely to make a bequest or those who make bequests also contribute more annually, there is a relationship between the two that churches cannot afford to ignore.

4 Many families want to document and celebrate their family's history with the church.

The opportunity to create a named endowment for outreach, education, pastoral sabbaticals, facilities or music excellence is a timeless way for families to document their history with the church.

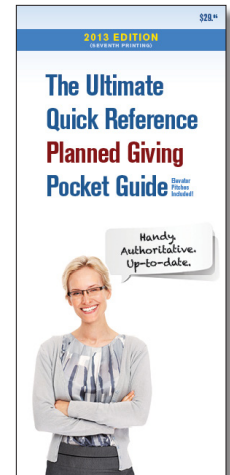
5 Increase Return on Investment (ROI).

"Return on Investment" is a business term that is especially relevant to the conversation about church members' giving. Members who have attended a church for 15 or more years have a greater investment in the church and often contribute more annually than members who have joined the church more recently. Long-time members have often baptized, confirmed and married their children in the church, and perhaps even buried their spouse or other loved ones.

A legacy gift is often **the largest gift** a member makes in his/her lifetime since such gifts usually are made from a member's assets, not their annual income.

Over...

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OUR CLIENTS**



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800-490-7090

Every fundraiser needs this planned giving pocket guide.

6 Legacy Giving is a healing ministry.

Many church members, both those who are wealthy and those of average means, suffer from the *wounds of wealth* and often feel burdened by decisions about the distribution of their assets at their death. For church leadership with a scarcity mindset, it may be difficult to appreciate that some church members worry about leaving too much money to their children and may be inspired by the opportunity to express their values by making a significant bequest to the church.

7 Imagine a Blue Sky Scenario.

What could your church do differently if you learned from a local attorney that one of your long time members left the church an unrestricted \$5 million bequest? It happens.

8 Legacy giving is a lot less complicated than you think.

You do not need to master the technical aspects of planned giving to launch a legacy giving initiative. Close to 90% of all legacy gifts are bequests – or beneficiary designations from a retirement fund or life insurance policy.

9 Talking to members about the importance of a will is a ministry to families.

Today, more than 55% of individuals do not have a will.



Chris McLeod, JD, is President of Giving Matters, Inc. and a Ministry Strategist with Horizons Stewardship. She can be reached at chris@givingmattersinc.com.

Many pastors have ministered to families when a young parent suffers an unexpected death. Without a proper will, the surviving spouse may have to endure the unnecessary and time-consuming hardship of probate. The Church can convene legacy conversations in Sunday school or workshops that provide parents with support to make these important decisions.

10 Legacy giving is the most inclusive strategy for giving.

Many churches think that a congregation is made up mostly of people of average means and that only the wealthy make legacy gifts. Many older members live well below their means and hold the majority of their wealth in liquid assets such as land, small businesses or collectibles.

Women are often the most overlooked donors in a church. Since many single, divorced and widowed women are concerned about outliving their assets, few feel confident enough to make major gifts during their lifetime. However, they often are inspired to make significant bequests to their “church family” to demonstrate their commitment and devotion to the church.

According to a donor survey conducted by the Partnership for Philanthropic Planning, 70% of donors who make a legacy gift, do so because they are asked.

Make it your ministry to ask.



I hope you found this white paper stimulating and useful.

My mission is to make available to you the best know-how, insight, and tools so you can keep yourself, your career, and your organization permanently ahead of the curve.

Contact me. Let me know how you're doing. And let me know how I'm doing.

Let's improve and succeed together.

Viken Mikaelian
Founder, PlannedGiving.Com
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SAMPLE WORDING.....

A CHRISTIAN PREAMBLE TO YOUR WILL

Preamble 1

First, realizing the uncertainty of this life I place full confidence and trust in my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who promised: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die (John 11:25-26).

Second, knowing that the wages of sin is death, I believe that Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, suffered and died for the forgiveness of all my sins, which I neither deserve nor merit, but receive as a free gift of God, who is rich in grace and mercy.

Third, I urge my heirs not to set their hopes on uncertain riches, but to take hold of the life, which is life indeed through faith in Jesus Christ.

Preamble 2

I commit myself to God's care, secure in His love for me and trusting in the salvation purchased for me through Christ's suffering and death. I leave those who survive me the comfort of knowing that I have died in this faith and have now joined my Lord in eternal glory.

Furthermore, I commend my loved ones to the protecting arm of God, knowing that He will continue to provide for them despite my absence; and I encourage them to place their faith and trust in Him alone.

Preamble 3

I commit myself to God's care, secure in His love for me and trusting in the salvation He has promised me as His child. "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) These words, first learned as a young child, have brought me peace throughout my life, and I hope in the same way, these words bring comfort to you.

Preamble 4

I, the undersigned _____ of _____ in the province of _____, realizing the uncertainty of this life, but with faith and trust in God the Father, who created me; in God the Son, my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who died for my sins upon the cross and rose again to justify me and give me eternal life, and in God the Holy Spirit who has called me by the gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith; do hereby make, publish and declare this to be my Last Will and Testament, and hereby will and dispose of all property of which I am the owner at my death in the following manner...

(Then follows the body of the Will.)

SAMPLE FORMS OF BEQUEST

Specific Amount:

I, _____, hereby give, devise, and bequeath to the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry of Your Episcopal Church, 123 Main Street, Anywhere, MyState, 00000, the sum of \$XX,XXX to be used at their discretion to assist in the ministries of the Church.

* * * * *

Percentage Amount:

I, _____, hereby give, devise, and bequeath to the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry of Your Episcopal Church, 123 Main Street, Anywhere, MyState, 00000, XX% of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate, to be used at their discretion to assist in the ministries of the Church.

* * * * *

Contingency Bequest:

In the event the beneficiaries of bequests and devises herein predecease me, or, in the case of institutions, cease to be organizations described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, I, _____, hereby give, devise, and bequeath to the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry of Your Episcopal Church, 123 Main Street, Anywhere, MyState, rest, residue and remainder of my estate, to be used at their discretion to assist in the ministries of the Church.