

CREATING A SPIRITUAL CULTURE OF GENEROSITY IN YOUR CHURCH

The creation of a congregational culture of generosity is the result of intentional planning and ministry. The annual stewardship campaign and special capital campaigns are like the icing on the cake. In the creation of a culture of generosity the focus is on the cake not the icing. Sadly, most money-talk in churches focuses on the icing; how do we make more icing, how can we become more creative in decorating the cake? The creation of cultures of generosity takes time.

Three ingredients are essential in baking the cake of generosity:

1. Leaders, who teach, preach and talk about money with theological and financial integrity.
2. Congregations who, in their business practices, model organizational accountability and financial transparency
3. Donors who are committed to living their faith with thoughtful generosity and charitable intentionality

Pastoral leadership is the lynchpin in the generosity triad. Without pastors who are committed to the hard work of leadership in the face of serious challenges, cultural transformations will not occur.

STEWARDSHIP TEXTS

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| Tithing | Parables of Jesus |
| • Leviticus 27: 30-32 | Luke 7:41-43 two forgiven debtors |
| • Numbers 18:20-32 | Luke 10:29-37 the good Samaritan |
| • Deuteronomy 14:22-29;26:12-15 | Luke 12:13-21 the rich fool |
| | Luke 12:42-48 the faithful and wise steward |
| Gods' ownership of all things | Luke 13:6-9 the fruitless fig tree |
| • Leviticus 25:23 | Luke 16:1-9 the unjust steward |
| • 2 Corinthian 8 + 9 | Luke 16:19-31 rich man + Lazarus |
| • Matthew 6:19-24 | First Timothy 6:6-10 |

THE CIRCLE OF GENEROSITY

Prospect identification; identifying members

- Good Church data base, data is the foundation of fund raising, keep data updated
- Inputting and updating information into data base, attendance, volunteer activity, interests, past service, interests, individual giving
- Peer group prospect identification and outside prospect research; DonorSearch

LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

- Generosity Team Chartered by Session
- Establishment of the Generosity team
 - Generosity team, confidential prospect identification of major prospects
 - Generosity team made up of cross section of committee heads, finance, stewardship, endowment, Christian education, worship
 - Establishment of Generosity calendar
- Leadership set pace for giving, Session, Deacons, Generosity Team title

Cultivation, building Relationships and Sharing the Vision

Scripture 1 Timothy 6:18, 19; Stewardship is Strategic

- Strategic Plan for your Church is a must.
- People will invest when they know where you are going and why
- Publicize your strategic plan, refer to it in your daily life of your church, preparing budget, hiring staff, setting priorities
- Make your budget a narrative budget, what impact will the line items have on the strategic plan
- Produce an annual report on success and challenges of the plan
- Hold Town meeting or small group sessions to get knowledge of plan to your people and receive feedback on the plan. Do your members of the Church own your plan?
- Education during offering time; video of impact of program with budget
- When you ask for support, refer to the plan and how the investment will impact the plan and people.
- Celebrate the successes of your plan at Church Services, meeting etc.
- Pastor or leader sends out e-mail updates on the plan and success of plan.
- Visit with your people, especially the ones who can help you accomplish your plan

Solicitation, Opportunity for Stewardship and Generosity

Generosity springs from the conviction that God owns everything and that we are temporary managers of his treasures.

Scripture 1 Chronicles 29:14-18; Psalm 24:1, 2; Colossians 1:15-20; God owns everything

- Generosity should become a part of the culture just like missions, youth, worship. Generosity should be celebrated all year. Examples around the offering.
- The Generosity Team coordinates the entire generosity program, endowment, finance, planned giving, annual stewardship campaign, celebration
- The Generosity establishes the annual generosity calendar; solicitation dates. Preaching schedule, presentations at worship, celebrations, church school lessons, minute for mission presentations, etc.
- Annual stewardship campaign tie solicitation to Strategic plan of Church.
- Budget preparation, volunteer teams around ministries understand their budget, helps to get buy in for budget and campaign.
- Make the budget a narrative budget.
- Ask for the investment not a gift, Easy of giving, web, electronic transfer from checking, stock gifts.
- Preach a minimum of once per quarter about Generosity put on generosity calendar
- Solicit more than once per year. If annual stewardship campaign is in the fall, do special one time gift campaign for special project in the spring.
- Understand the Generational giving differences, Rev. Karl Travis handout.
- Alternative ways of making contribution, automatic checking deductions; tokens for offering
- Restricted giving could focus on second ask.
- Always ask people to consider the Church in their estate planning

- Establish an Estate Planning Sunday with recognition of people who have left the Church in their will
- Establish a youth generosity campaign, celebrate their success
- Tie giving to missions of the Church, Food bank Sunday, people use their generosity to bring in shopping bags of food bring to alter, end of service, people grab a bag and take it to the food bank.

Recognition; Expressing Appreciation and celebrating Generosity

Scripture; II Corinthians 9:6-7; Our attitude matters

- Greatest reward is the relationship of donor with God
- Updates on Web and from pulpit on success of campaign. Tie to what will be able to be accomplished in Strategic Plan if goal is met.
- Thank you sent once gift or pledge is made, let them know what impact their gift will have on the Strategic Plan
- Thank you note sent by Pastors for volunteer service
- Youth classes make presentation of generosity at worship service.
- Better utilization of offering time, videos, testimonials
- Celebration Sunday, success of campaign
- Testimonials throughout the year on how Generosity/ Stewardship have impacted people's spiritual life.
- Testimonial from member of congregation on how Tithing has blessed them
- Recognition moves us back to prospect identification the joy of giving spreads to others

QUESTIONS

RESOURCES

Books

1. A Stewardship Scrapbook by William R. Phillippe
2. Growing Givers' Hearts by Thomas H. Jeavons and Rebekah Burch Basinger
3. Revolution in Generosity by Wesley K. Willmer
4. Not Your Parents Offering Plate by J. Cliff Christopher