




# Planning for Year-Round Stewardship



# Begin with the Basics:

- Thank you!
  - Stewardship is about choices:
    - Lifestyles
    - Generosity
    - Joy
  - Stewardship doesn't happen in a vacuum. It requires leadership that is:
    - Inspiring
    - Engaging
    - Intentional
    - Purpose-Driven and Vision-Oriented
    - Willing to model and mentor the God-given choice to be generous disciples
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# More Basics:

## ➤ Stewardship is not the same as Fundraising:

- Fundraising is about specific giving for a designated purpose—bake sales to raise money for the Youth Ski Trip, selling Easter flowers to provide scholarships for church camp.
- Fundraising is about one-time or short-term giving—donations toward a Heifer project or a well in a third-world nation. (This is important stuff, as it grows out of our understanding of what it means to steward God's creation. But it is still about raising sufficient capital to meet a particular goal.)

## ➤ Stewardship is:

- First and foremost, rooted in God, who is the source of all life and the first steward of creation.
- Also a decision and an action of the heart. We respond generously to God's love and care out of gratitude—not because God rewards us with more resources, but because the gifts we've been given are a rich blessing that make our lives full. We want to say "Thank you, God."

# The Theology of Stewardship 101

- It's in God's nature to be benevolent and generous. God gives bountifully out of love. God wants and chooses to care for us all.
- As recipients of God's love and care, we are invited to gratefully receive and respond to God's gifts—also with love and with care.
- Stewardship grows out of an awareness that God has created all that we have and all that we are.
- Such awareness leads us to see that we are called by the Spirit to be stewards of God's good gifts.
- Stewardship takes many forms, including the care of creation. But, for today's purposes, we will look at the stewardship of our resources as a congregation.
- Good Stewardship—giving generously to God and God's creatures through the work of the church—is a spiritual discipline that takes time to develop but grows us as disciples.
- For impactful stewardship to really take root in the hearts and souls of believers, our spiritual leaders must work at creating a **congregational culture of generosity**.



# Creating a Congregational Culture of Generosity

## Mission First

- ▶ Stewardship involves asking what God is calling your church to do—what is your mission?—and then putting this mission and vision first and foremost in all that you do as a congregation.
- ▶ Good church stewards fund their mission first.
- ▶ Good church stewards do not fund a budget—they fund a mission.
- ▶ Creating a culture of Generosity takes intentional planning and time.

## Why? Because...

- ▶ Disciples of Jesus Christ will give generously to a **missional purpose**.
- ▶ Believers yearn to see lives being transformed by their gifts and they will give to a mission that is making a difference.
- ▶ Church members give far less generously to budgets than they do to mission.
- ▶ Church leaders need to be lifting up key themes of generosity and gratitude all year long, not just in one season.



# Stewardship is *not* merely Money-Talk— Stewardship is...

- ***Discerning a vision*** and empowering that vision with our gifts of time, talent and treasure.
- ***Having a love for God***, a love for all God's children, a love for God's created order and a love for the body of Christ which is called to offer its life for the sake of others.
- ***A lifestyle***—a commitment to living and serving as agents of grace, compassion and mercy in the world.
- ***Saying "thank you"*** for all that has been done in the past—missions supported, ministries empowered, lives changed—and inviting the good stewards of our congregations to join their spiritual leaders in taking the next step along our journey of faith together.



# Stewardship is not merely Money-Talk

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## Stewardship is...

- ***A form of hospitality.*** Good stewards offer themselves in thanksgiving to others with grace, joy and generosity.
- ***Laying a seedbed for faithful discussions*** about God's generous nature and our response.
- Stewardship is ***not just an annual campaign*** for funding a church budget.
- ***One of Jesus' most frequent topics***—perhaps second only to his “Kingdom” parables, which are often also about God's generous nature.



Pastor Karl Travis' Theory on **Money-Talk** vs. Stewardship:  
Money-Talk tends to focus on the icing and not the cake

### The Icing

- The icing is attractive—and so we want to know how we can make it more attractive.
- The icing is tasty—and so we want to know how to make more of it, to satisfy our church-y taste buds.
- The icing is easy to apply—and we like easy answers and quick fixes to every problem, including our stewardship problem.
- Icing without cake is okay—but it's still just icing.

### The Cake

- The Cake is key. Travis suggests that there are 3 essential ingredients to baking a cake of generosity:
  1. Leaders who teach, preach and talk money with integrity.
  2. Congregations who model financial transparency and organizational accountability.
  3. Donors who are committed to living their faith with thoughtful generosity and charitable intentionality.





# Focusing on a Culture of Generosity takes Time and Intentionality.

- Pastors need to be ***preaching on Stewardship, Generosity and Gratitude*** on a regular basis, not just on four Sundays a year.
- Leaders need to be ***willing to do*** precisely what they are asking others to do—give faithfully, generously, even sacrificially, to the mission of the church.
- Leaders need to be ***willing to face pushback*** from those who are resistant to change—even what would seem like a positive change.
- Leaders need to be ***united and transparent*** in fostering a culture of generosity.
- Leaders need to have an ***intentional plan*** for the year.



# Creating a Culture of Generosity

- **Create a Stewardship Team**—Ours at Chapel Lane PC is called a Generosity Team.
- Select and **Empower a Chair** for the team who has a heart for God and believes that the practice of generosity will grow us all as disciples.
- Make sure the team understands that their **task isn't to fundraise**—it's to create a culture of generosity by modeling generosity and inspiring others to be generous too.
- ***Why generosity?***
  - It's an ancient spiritual discipline that brings us closer to God.
  - It's an antidote to the idolatrous spirits that abound in this age—consumerism, materialism, individualism, etc.
  - It begins with the individual, who responds to the Incarnational Christ by offering themselves in devotion to the Lord.



# Generosity is more than a concept.

Despite what our modern culture might want us to believe, life is not about getting what we deserve. ***We “get” what God gives.***

- ▶ Perhaps the single most important word in the Bible is “gave.” “For God so loved the world, that he ***gave***....” (*John 3:16*)
- ▶ While we are enculturated to compare ourselves to others and to always want more, the gospel speaks of a Lord who gives his life for the sake of humanity and receives the kindness of strangers with thanksgiving. There’s **a healthy balance** here.
- ▶ Generosity **helps reframe our view** of the world—not as something we exploit for our own benefit, but as something we value and care for on behalf of the One who gives unendingly.
- ▶ Generosity, as a spiritual discipline, takes practice.
- ▶ Generosity is not wishful thinking.
- ▶ Generosity is self-giving, genuine and earnest.



# Generosity is more than a concept.

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- Generosity is **not a “gimmick”** or a “magic pill.” If a church looks to have generous members, it must be generous too. “Stinginess” breeds stinginess. Generosity breeds generosity.
- **Plan out your year** to include biblical texts and topics that lift up the 3 G’s of Generosity, Grace and Gratitude:
  - Host a Gratitude Sunday.
  - Preach and teach on Gratitude—even in your Sunday School.
  - Prepare a Gratitude Devotional and invite members to contribute a piece that fills in the blank: “I am grateful for....” “I am thankful for....”
  - Invite your small groups and affinity groups to offer prayers of gratitude.
  - Design and implement a mission trip as a way of expressing gratitude.

# Invite God Into the Mix

- Instead of “Stewardship Talks” in one season of the year, invite members to share a few words in worship throughout the year about how God has been generous to them and how they choose to **respond in gratitude**. (At Chapel Lane PC, we call these Generosity Ministry Testimonials.)
  - You can align this with the Offertory Invitation or do it separately.
- **Reframe events** in the life of your congregation around the themes of generosity and gratitude as lived out through time, talent and treasure:
  - **Time:** We donate our time to a Soup Kitchen, a Habitat for Humanity build, a blood donation center, etc. in thanksgiving to God for our blessings of food, shelter and health.
  - **Talent:** We share our talent (music, math, community-building) with God’s children through free lessons or concerts, tutoring, mentoring etc. in gratitude for having been mentored and taught by others ourselves.
  - **Treasure:** We offer a healthy share of our financial well-being to help accomplish God’s will for the body of Christ.



# Make Generosity part of an Ongoing Conversation

- **Preach and Teach** generosity.
- Don't just "take a collection." Invite the congregation on Sunday to "**share an offering with the Lord.**"
- **Say "Thank you, thank you, thank you."** (You can never say thank you enough.)
- **Talk about generosity** in pre-marital counseling and new member classes.
- **Witness** to the impact the church's generosity is making on the lives of those who are touched.
- **Post pictures** that reflect Generosity on your social media outlets.



# Make Generosity a part of an Ongoing Conversation *(Continued)*

- **Connect Generosity to church Ministries** in Staff Meetings, Session Meetings, Leader Training etc.—“God is calling us to accomplish these specific mission priorities, and this is how we can do it.”
- Insert **stories of Generosity** in your monthly church newsletter.
- **Post Generosity quotes** on your church Signboard and invite actions of Gratitude.
- **Create worship art** that lifts up the themes of Generosity and Gratitude—Banners, Paraments, etc.



# Make Generosity a part of an Ongoing Conversation *(Continued)*

- Find a creative way to use **quarterly giving statements** to speak of transformative ministries empowered by our financial commitments.
- Use tools like “Not Your Parents’ Offering Plate” to have **open and honest discussions about stewardship** in the church. As leaders, we must take the lead and set the pace. If we are not generous in our witness, speech, and use of our resources (Time, Talents, Treasure), we can’t expect the congregation to be so.
- Say “Thank you, thank you, thank you.”
- Consider attending one of the annual “Stewardship Kaleidoscope” events co-hosted by the PC(USA) and the Presbyterian Foundation.





# Make Generosity a part of an Ongoing Conversation *(Continued)*

- ▶ Develop a **ministry-based budget to supplement the line-item budget.** (“With your generous support, we will accomplish these important ministries and fulfill these vital missions on Christ’s behalf.”)
- ▶ Become familiar with Generational Theory re: stewardship.
  - Generations are shaped by life events that occur in their youth. For instance, the Millennial Generation witnessed many fractures to institutions that cause them to be skeptical of institutions—including the institution of the church.
  - Generosity is not missing in millennials—they just choose to give in ways that support people rather than institutions. (Such support often makes its way secondarily to institutions—but the initial giving is for improved lives. If they don’t see an institutional body making a difference in people’s lives, they are not likely to give.)



# Make Generosity a part of an Ongoing Conversation *(Continued)*

- Generational Theory, continued:
  - Theorists say there are 4 types of generations that repeat themselves over and over again throughout history:
    - ❖ Idealistic—they are motivated by models of idealism, trusting that they can help empower a better world/nation/community/family by replicating characteristics of self-giving care & generosity.
    - ❖ Reactive—they seek pragmatic solutions to problems and see money as a means to an end; often independent, individualistic and, sometimes, cynical.
    - ❖ Civic—they are committed to rebuilding institutions and use and understand words like duty, sacrifice and commitment.
    - ❖ Adaptive—generally reared during a social crisis, they are overly protective and value fairness & cooperation.
  - So, **there is no “one size fits all” stewardship campaign.**



# Make Giving Easier

- Investigate **options for online giving**.
  - The Presbyterian Foundation can help you with this, as can your local bank.
  - Create an instrument that “Electronic Givers” can put in the offering plate on Sunday mornings. (We once had a visitor to the church say, “What kind of church is this? Nobody puts money in the offering plate!”)
  - CLPC creates Generosity Cards for each Sunday that include the date and a Scripture citation or quote re: Generosity on one side. And, on the other side, a statement that confirms the card represents an electronic gift to the Lord’s work.
    - ❖ Use the Generosity Quote of the Week in other ways. At CLPC, whatever is the quote of the week is also uploaded to our roadside Church Sign.



# Make Giving Easier

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- ▶ Consider adding a **Paypal access** to your website.
- ▶ Remembering that **most Millennials** may have checking accounts but **rarely use checks**, and many do not carry more than a few dollars of cash in their pockets, give serious thought to alternative forms of giving.
  - ▶ Some churches are investing in an iPad and a Card Reader that can be used for electronic giving.



# Annual Stewardship Programming

- Convene a **Stewardship Team** that's reflective of various generations.
- **Choose a Theme** for the year. (For 2017, CLPC's Generosity Theme is "Abundance Beyond Imagining!")
- **Begin with the End in Mind.** Set a date for Commitment Sunday and work the calendar back from there.
- **Articulate your Mission**—not just why we give but why we give *to the church*.
- **Create your Marketing Materials**, including Commitment/Pledge Cards, Weekly E-Card, Website tab for Stewardship/Generosity Ministry, etc.
- **Choose topics for monthly newsletter** and, if all are agreeable, assign one topic to each member of the Team. (Don't let the pastor be the only one talking about Stewardship and Generosity.)



# Annual Stewardship Programming

- ▶ Choose and interview those who will be approached to give a **monthly reflection on Generosity and Gratitude**.
  - Whether you call it a Generosity Testimonial, a Stewardship Talk, a Witness of Gratitude or something wholly other, you need to choose and schedule these missional moments in advance.
- ▶ Hold a **Ministry Fair** at least once a year that “shows” the church’s ministry at work transforming lives.
- ▶ Schedule a **Legacy Event** that lifts up Planned Giving, End-of-Life Giving, Wills Emphasis, etc.
- ▶ Develop a **Narrative Budget**.



# Creating a Narrative Budget

- ▶ As the name suggests, a Narrative Budget is intended to **tell a story** of how our financial commitments help fulfill the church's Mission.
- ▶ Having Articulated our Mission, we use this information to design an annual Narrative Budget.
  - At CLPC, we completed a Strategic Plan that helped us articulate 5 Vision Priorities around key themes: Worship & Music, Spirituality & Discipleship, Mission Outreach, Hospitality & Member Care, Church Infrastructure.
  - In our yearly Narrative Budget, we **use photos, graphs, images & language to tell the story of the church's Mission being lived out** in vivid terms.
    - ❖ We use Pie Charts to show the wide expanse of our ministry.
    - ❖ We use Photos and other Imagery to create a "picture" of our ministry.
    - ❖ We use Scripture Quotations to explore the biblical foundations for our ministry.
    - ❖ We divide the anticipated income and expenses in portions vital to each Vision Priority and show that sum with each category.



# Creating a Narrative Budget

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- ▶ We make it a point to **connect our Mission and Vision** to the Narrative Budget each year.
- ▶ No two Narrative Budgets are exactly the same—using creativity, we strive to bring **a new flavor to each** year's publication.
- ▶ We work at having our annual Narrative Budget into the hands of our church members **well in advance of our Commitment Sunday** so that we all have a chance to see what our faithful giving has helped the Lord accomplish in the past and to pray over what we may accomplish in the future, with God's help.
- ▶ Creating the Narrative Budget **takes time, creativity and skillsets** for math and publishing software. It also takes an intimate knowledge of the church's mission and ministry to effectively communicate how the budget "translates" from numbers and data to application and transformed lives.





Q & A

As time allows.

