

# Cultivating Giving Among Younger Generations

## Responses to Focus Group Questions

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These questions and responses were presented to two separate focus groups, each comprised of young adult members, one from a United Methodist church and the other from a Baptist (Progressive National) church.

### 1. What programs (church or otherwise) do you give to and why?

- General Budget
- Community assistance
- “Haiti Initiative”
- Outreach and Missions
- “Claim the Future” (Long term Debt Retirement)
- “Show Hope” (Adoption Ministry)
- “Education Ministry” (Scholarship Ministry)
- Broader Christian Nonprofits in the service of the world

### 2. What are some positive elements of your stewardship program?

- The “You make a Difference” campaign. A local church program that sought to include all members of the church (all ages and demographics) to participate in the giving to the church.
- Thinking about spending elsewhere in the budget (flexibility)
- Personal Examples of the results of giving. Specifics that report how money given has been used in the life of the church/ministry
- Service oriented relationships (This is the community-building element of the life of the church. Stewardship as community building)
- Direct appeals. No stewardship sermon that begins “this sermon is not about money” only to talk about money.

### 3. What are some negative elements of your stewardship program?

- “Asking for pay raise” from the pulpit
- Extravagance in the church
- Disconnect between the appeals for giving and the facilities of the church
- Guilty giving (not enough)
- Guilt trips
- Repeatedly “going to the well”
- Irrelevance
- Not treated as if important to the life of the church
- Confusion about direction of the church in relationship to the appeal for stewardship

**Continued**

4. What are some helpful teaching aides that have helped you understand and promote giving?
- *Enough* by Adam Hamilton
  - Sermons about tithing/stewardship
  - Bible studies dealing with stewardship and tithing
  - Church encouragement of parental responsibility to teach about giving early (allowance/tithing)
  - Leadership examples
  - Personal examples and testimonies
5. What are the most effective ways for you to be solicited/reminded/prompted to give by your church?
- Pressure of giving because of envelopes (mailing)
  - Donor website (Buttons)
  - Multiple ways of giving — Options to make it easy for Younger Adults to participate on their terms
  - Continued donor contact. Foster relationship not built on how much money that can be given.
  - More likely to give online
  - Mail helpful but online giving needs to be an option when making appeal, regardless of strategy.
6. What are some comments that you want a stewardship committee or governing board to know about stewardship in relation to your age group?
- “Ask us.” Can’t be held accountable for what we don’t know
  - Be more accepting of those who give time and money “time vs. talent”
  - “Break the cycle of ignoring the people who don’t give or don’t give as much.”
  - “Don’t forget about us”
  - Church leadership tends to alienate this entire demographic
  - Numbness to the “new ministry” means we need clear distinctions about what is new and not

