

Living Into a Culture of Abundance

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Session #1

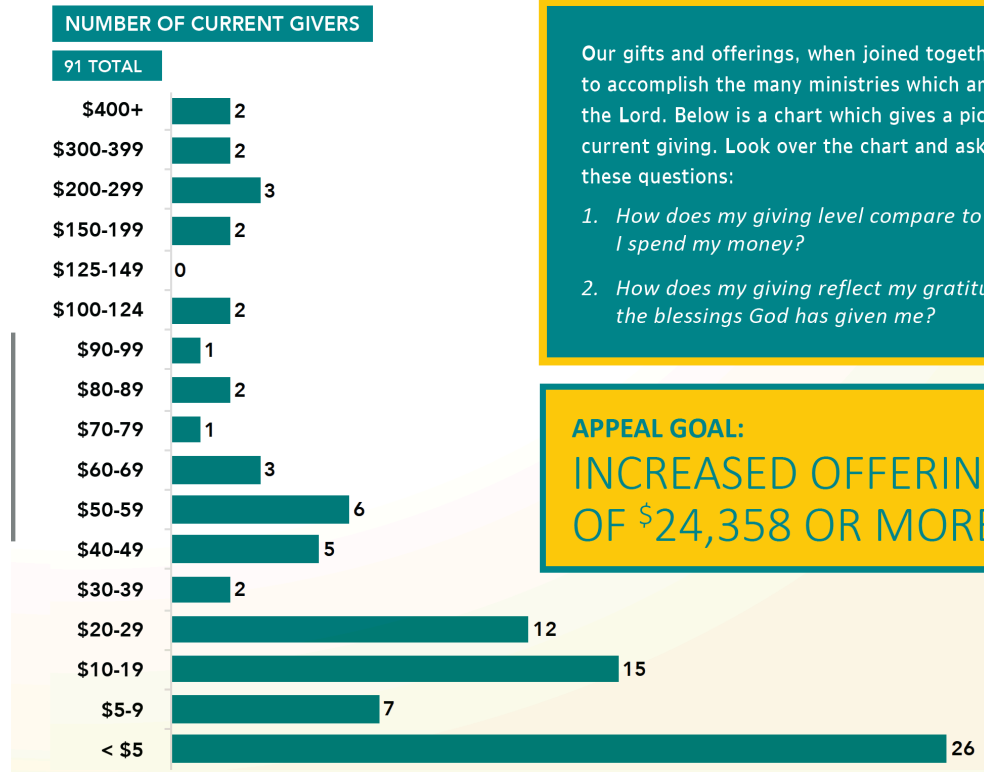
From Scarcity to Abundance

OMG we are out of money!

- Induces anxiety
- Assumes it is someone else's problem
- Doesn't come close to the whole story
 - Did someone die or move?
 - Did a lump sum donor give early last year
- Doesn't show people a path forward
- Lucky to get a 10% return
- Will stifle future giving

We aren't all at the same place

- Chart has little to do with wealth. Everything to do with intentionality
- Messaging often assumes “pretty generous”
- People at the top are willing to move people from bottom to middle



Our gifts and offerings, when joined together, allow us to accomplish the many ministries which are blessed by the Lord. Below is a chart which gives a picture of our current giving. Look over the chart and ask yourself these questions:

1. How does my giving level compare to other ways I spend my money?
2. How does my giving reflect my gratitude for all the blessings God has given me?

APPEAL GOAL:

INCREASED OFFERINGS
OF \$24,358 OR MORE

Poll

In thinking about my own giving, the biggest reason I don't increase my giving is:

- don't think I can afford to
- congregation doesn't need money
- congregation can't handle more money
- leaders don't encourage growth
- no accountability, so I just keep steady
- Actually, I regularly increase and am working toward a tithe or more

Toward Understanding Scarcity

1. Inability to give more
2. Not feeling church needs more money
3. Ignorance of need
4. Lack of trust in council/staff
5. Low expectations of donors
6. Feeling others are not generous
7. Secrecy
8. Occasional Donors

1. From Passing the Plate

Ground Rules

1. Don't blame anyone for being ungenerous
2. The church shares obligation to better inspire people to the mission and vision
3. No place for shame in Stewardship

Send them away, we are out of food? Or, Tell them to sit down, there is plenty!

5,000 people

5 loaves + 2 fish

In John was a lead gift from the child

Gave thanks for what was not enough

They were satisfied

They had leftovers

How we tell our story matters!



It all starts with a good story

Key is the impact on a person's life

Then, the connection to the congregation, whether it is a program, person employed, person volunteering, or other means by which the congregation was involved in the outcome.

Finally, connect the outcome to gifts given.

(just audited materials from a church that said “we get this storytelling”—it was all asking for stuff, no cultivation/deposits

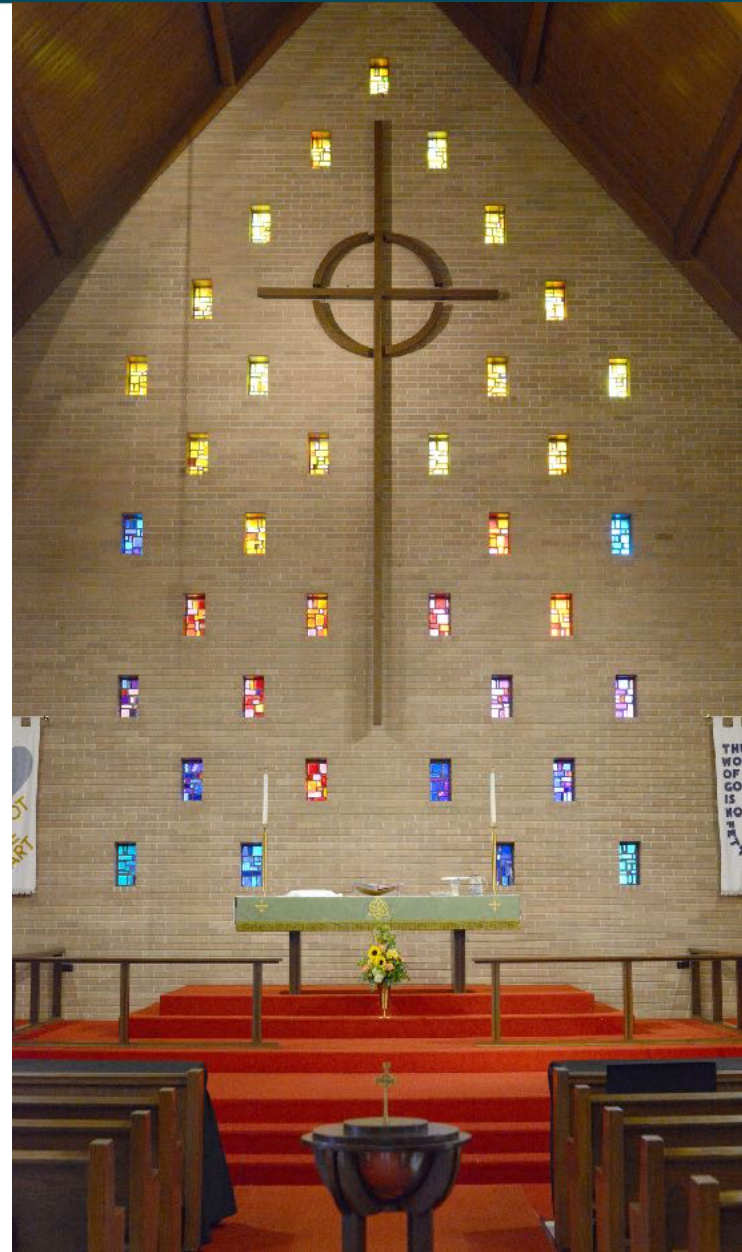


It all starts with a good story—Service to Church—Altar Guild

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The Altar Guild Needs You!

- The Altar Guild is responsible for setting up for communion, taking care of the paraments, and making sure all of our worship resources are in good working order. We sign up for one month per year so it isn't a burden on anyone. No experience necessary, contact Sara for more information.

We tell stories from a scarcity mindset

- Tell people to pledge, then figure out what to do
- Assume Scarcity
- Tell people how far behind budget we are
- Don't tell the whole story

Our current reality

- Median Protestant give 0.62% of income to church
- Largest category of donors in most congregations is under \$5 per week (nearly 50% in most congregations)
- Theological and biblical understandings of giving are not well developed
- In many congregations, giving is about “paying the bills”

Our current reality

- There is little accountability in our congregations for lack of giving
- Congregations often wait to see what money is available instead of visioning what could be when more money is given
- We often don't articulate the value of worship, care, faith formation in people's lives
- Majority of money stays in the congregation

Our current reality

- We accidentally stifle generosity
 - Box score
 - Treat everyone the same
 - Keep the budget flat
 - Make excuses for people to cut back
 - (story--doubled giving in 6 years on fixed income)
 - Don't mentor generosity—keep quiet on matters of giving
 - Too much in savings (PPP)

Factors of low giving

- Lack of Biblical/theological understanding
- Low expectations of churches
- Lack of confidence in church vision
- No accountability
- Occasional giving
- Lack of inspiration
- Nobody teaches generosity

Should the Pastor Know

- Care issue
- Spiritual issue
- Leadership issue
- Generous people want to have conversations around generosity—more offensive to not know
- Can't share deeper story of generosity

Actual results in a Southern Ohio Congregation--SAS

- One household increased from \$3380 to \$4160 23%
- Another from \$2000 to \$2500 25%
- Another from \$2400 to \$3600 50%
- Another from \$2580 to \$3312 28%
- Another from \$1500 to \$2,080 38%
- Another from \$1800 to \$2400 33%
- Another from \$11,000 to \$15,000 36%
- Another from \$780 to \$1040 33%
- Another from \$1380 to \$1800 30%

- How should we message this?

Actual results in Thrive campaigns

- St. Paul, Reading--\$33,350 from 41 households, \$813 avg gift
- Trinity, Marysville--\$50k+ and annual fund increased
- St. Luke, Marietta--\$6,500 from 10 households
- First, Bellefontaine--\$5,000
- Emmanuel, Germantown--\$1,500 more than goal

Our current communication

- Asking, Asking, Asking.....and asking some more
- Fail to build up interest and passion and engagement

Two types of stories

- Outcome stories
 - SAS
 - Online mentoring
- Generosity stories
 - Best are from your people
 - “I gave my stimulus check because I didn’t need it...”
 - Thrive—Trinity, Marysville; St. Paul, Reading

Case Development

- How much more money do you need and what will you do with it?
- What impact are you currently having?



Opportunity

Building a Culture of Generosity--Offered this fall--\$450 with me—put in the chat you want more information

“Everything was spelled out for us. There is enough to do, but this program took the burden off of thinking about what comes next. We didn’t miss a step. The outline was huge for us.” This comes from Susan Homza, the stewardship leader for Reformation Lutheran Church in West Long Branch, New Jersey, a congregation that is a mix of long-time members and newer, younger families. Many of the new families have little experience with giving and this program led many in our congregation to understand the need for a commitment. Susan is the council president and signed up for this program because “we often have a hard time getting anyone on the stewardship team.” The two who helped this year both said they will help again next year. At Reformation, pledged giving grew by at least \$20,000 or close to 16.7%. Most members grew by \$500 to \$1,000 for next year.

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