

2023 Kaleidoscope Conference

What's Trending: Stewardship Strategies for Everyone

Kelsey Crouch-Dodson, Director of Stewardship
Westminster Presbyterian Church (MN)

Today's Flow

- Trend:
What's New
- Impact:
Why it Matters
- Strategy:
How to Adapt



First, Some Context

- Where are we?
 - Not just a shift in giving
 - Changing membership and ways of engagement
- How did we get here?
 - Covid*
 - Generational differences
 - Rapidly ever-changing world

*expedited changes

Is Pledging Still the Gold Standard?

- Trend: Increase in outright giving
 - Pledging unique to churches
 - Not always a (spiritual) practice for everyone
 - Economic uncertainty
- Impact: Difficult to budget
 - Increased uncertainty for ministry areas
 - Not as much lead time to adjust for potential budgeting issues
 - Compounded by the “Christmas effect”

All Giving is Important

- Carpe momentum!
 - Leverage gratitude-based giving
 - Ask when people feeling most moved (life events, church-wide celebrations, etc.)
- Meet people where they are
 - Different messaging for different audiences
 - Multi-year pledges might be good fit for major donors
- Focus on what matters: *giving*

Where is My Money Going?

- Trend: Impact of gift matters
 - Specifics matter
 - Know what is supported by giving
- Impact: Need for increased transparency
 - Especially in financial reporting
 - Trust is built, not necessarily assumed

Your Giving Supports it All

- Create a narrative budget
 - Include personnel & admin costs as part of ministry areas
- Share information with everyone
 - Not just board members or those with the “inside scoop”
- Mixed-method story-telling
 - Telling story of one family more impactful and memorable than stats

What is the Larger Impact?

- Trend: Giving with a social mindset
 - Giving guided by values
 - Awareness of social justice causes
 - Global outlook
- Impact: Thinking beyond the church
 - How can we be “the church in the world”?
 - Living out God’s vision
 - Respond to current issues

Beyond the Church's Walls

- Connect work of the church with current issues
 - Already doing work in our communities & beyond, just need to share it
- Support = action & giving
 - Incorporate asks during learning sessions and events
- The church can tithe too!
 - 10% tithe to mission in campaigns

Do you Accept PayPal?

- Trend: Online giving is here to stay
 - Living in the digital age
- Impact: Change is tough, expensive, and time-consuming
 - New technology & system upgrades
 - Processing fees

Giving Takes Many Forms

- Leverage current systems
 - Finance software might have add-on
 - Able to integrate with existing platforms
- Online giving not just for online members
 - Encourage for in-person members too
- Increased accessibility
 - Phones are always nearby
 - Respond in real time

What's the Deal with Campaigns?

- Trend: Campaigns are becoming more regular for churches
 - Increase in frequency and occurrence
- Impact: Stewardship takes a backseat
 - Stewardship giving can level off
 - Not as much attention or excitement around Stewardship
 - Donor fatigue and the “campaign effect”

Campaigns Make a Difference

- Separate funds
 - Campaigns support different parts of the church than stewardship
- Connect the campaign with stewardship
 - Campaign creates the building, stewardship fills the building
- Capitalize on excitement
 - Ride momentum of the campaign
 - “Look what our congregation was able to accomplish!”

In Conclusion...

- Outright Giving: Carpe momentum!
- Impact of Gifts: Spread the word, not just the numbers
- Social Impact: Being the church in the world
- Online Giving: Not just for young folks
- More Campaigns: Playing nice with Stewardship