



Stewardship as Story:

How to Transform Giving Through the Love of Story

The Rev. Ellie Johns-Kelley
Ministry Relations Officer – Allegheny & Chesapeake Region



Presbyterian
FOUNDATION



The Rev. Ellie Johns-Kelley

Ministry Relations Officer

Allegheny and Chesapeake
Region

A Theology of Stewardship

- What is your earliest memory of stewardship?
- Who taught you about stewardship?
- What does the word stewardship evoke in you?
...how about generosity?

Claim the Power of Storytelling

“All human beings have an innate need to hear and tell stories and to have a story to live by.”

– The Rev. Harvey Cox, Ph.D., Theologian

“Humans are not ideally set up to understand logic; they are ideally set up to understand stories.”

– Roger Schank, Cognitive Psychologist

“If you wish to influence an individual or a group to embrace a particular value in their daily lives, tell them a compelling story.”

– Annette Simmons

Framing and reframing generosity through story

- We are already doing ministry, we just need to reframe our conversations about money to be about the MINISTRY impact and not about the expenditure
- We need to celebrate our MINISTRIES
- We need to connect money to MINISTRY

Mission and Vision

- Mission is the statement of purpose of the Church
- Vision- How the future will look if the mission is achieved.
The Church road map
- Must have before Generosity exists
- Must be owned by the congregation
- Let the mission build the budget and inspire support

<https://churchfla.com/videos/mission-and-vision-comes-before-money/>

The Fundraising Landscape

23% (\$146.54B) of all charitable dollars (\$592.50B) went to Religion in 2024 down from 24% in 2023 and 50% in 1995

The next two largest sectors were Human Services at 14% (\$91.5B) and Education at 14% (\$88.32B)

Increased competition for the charitable dollar with over 1.5M charities in the USA



Donor Motivation

Top Three Things impacting a donor's decision to support your organization

1. Making an impact
2. Financial stability
3. Believe in leadership

What is Stewardship

- Gratitude
- Spiritual Practice
- About Making Choices
- Caring for ALL that God has given us
- Time, Talent, Treasure and Influence
- Disciple making

Stewardship is Not

- A once-a-year event
- About money
- Meeting a budget
- About us

Pastors

- Talk about their own stewardship
- Preach about generosity regularly
- Be a story-teller
- Invite/ask
- Say Thank You

Call on your Storytellers

- Elders
- People in the Pews
- Pastor(s)
- Mission Partners
- Share personal stories as to a time in your life when God showed up through the giving and generosity of others
- Focus on one mission and ministry in your congregation. Tell the story of that mission via the story of a changed life.

Cultivation: HOW do we tell our story?

- Preaching
- Minute for mission
- During/before offering
- Social Media
- Newsletter/E-Newsletter
- Brochures
- Town Hall Meetings
- Vision Sunday and 6 month checkup
- Dessert & Dialogue
- Sunday School
- Testimonials
- Video Testimonials
- Narrative Budget

Dashboard

ALL FEATURED NEW RECENTLY WATCHED



Church Streaming: Identify your Audience



Church Streaming: How, Part 2: Video



Church Streaming: How, Part 1: Your Camera

Tools for Telling Our Stories

- **Narrative Budgets**
www.StewardshipNavigator.com
- **Church Financial Leadership Academy**
www.churchfla.com

Sample Narrative Budget

Funding our Ministry

Your generosity



Our new Director of Children, Y
Having so many children and yo
norm - it is truly a blessing! Minc
the faith development of these
led us to Vania Stevenson. He
infectious energy and enthusiasm



Welcoming Chapa, Christian a
In partnership with other faith cc
friends in the USA, after they ha
April 17 marked the beginning of
instrumental in helping them est
generous financial support, you h
providing furniture, meals and
Welcome Circle have led the be
come as family to one another
appointments ESL lessons.



A growing presence in the cor
We've engaged with our commu
Office and Communications /
enhance our outreach, making
publications and a strengthen
once again became the highligh
robots, princesses, and ninjas
gathered for our Live Nativity, b
while pet lovers flocked to our
We took the good news about C
the Spring and recently 90 CPC

Total projected expenses for ministry at CPC in 2025 are \$510,766. CPC income comes from various people and places including non-pledged offerings from visitors and friends, preschool tuition, building use fees and endowment dividends.

However, pledged commitments from our church family are the primary and only predictable way in which we are able to fund all that God has called us to do. Our pledged giving goal for this year is **\$320,00**, which represents a **5% increase over 2024**. We are asking for more because CPC is a growing church. Good things are happening here and we hope that you will feel called to contribute not only your time and talent but also your treasure in support of this work.

To help you determine a level of giving which feels financially significant to you, please refer to the chart below as a guide

Annual Income	2% Annual Pledge	2% Weekly Pledge	5% Annual Pledge	5% Weekly Pledge	10% Annual Pledge	10% Weekly Pledge
\$20,000	\$400	\$8	\$1,000	\$20	\$2,000	\$39
\$30,000	\$600	\$12	\$1,500	\$29	\$3,000	\$58
\$50,000	\$1,000	\$19	\$2,500	\$48	\$5,000	\$96
\$70,000	\$1,400	\$27	\$3,500	\$67	\$7,000	\$135
\$100,000	\$2,000	\$38	\$5,000	\$96	\$10,000	\$192
\$150,000	\$3,000	\$58	\$7,500	\$144	\$15,000	\$228

When you support our church financially, dollars become ministry and through ministry we know that God changes lives

If you've pledged before, we invite you to consider increasing your commitment for 2025. If you have not pledged before we encourage you to make your first time pledge to CPC this year. If everyone were to make a commitment we could not only reach our goal, but exceed it and eliminate the projected deficit.

How to Give

To make a pledge:

- Make your pledge [online here](#).
- **Print a pledge card** and mail it to the church office (91 Center Street, Clinton, NJ 08809) or place it in the offering plate on Sunday mornings.

On Sunday, October 27, we will dedicate all of our commitments for the coming year as part of our worship service, giving thanks to God for all the good gifts we have been given.

CPC welcomes gifts of stock or donations of your Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) If you would like to consider donating in one of these ways please reach out to any member of our Operations Team for more information.

80% of God's Kingdom

rn by over 42 feet as we have welcomed 21 new the family. How amazing is that! We have also had and 4 older children and we have promised to walk Jesus. Average worship attendance this summer a period last year. We are blessed by a growing ages who help us make a joyful noise.

I love and care into the beautiful building we're Thanks to our capital campaign, we successfully ssrooms and bathrooms, and the newly installed nveys a warm welcome to both friends and visitors. s have been dedicated to essential maintenance iges of a historic building. With Zach Morano joining we've been able to tackle several long-delayed pacity to host events for both members and guests.

PC Preschool

ised preschool continues to provide a high quality, ig for 3 & 4 year olds in the community and our jh good things to say about their experience here. ctor Adrienne Hodulik, our talented staff provide the to grow and flourish. Even with the introduction of) area, our half-day program remains a valuable ising their unique needs and providing an excellent

of season.

We've seen a continued rise in costs related to insurance and property maintenance, like many of you may have experienced in your own homes. We have budgeted additional funds to address these needs in the coming year. While these expenses can be challenging to manage, investing in a safe and well-maintained environment for the worship, work, and ministry of our members and staff is invaluable.



W

Budget

Line Item

- Accounting Tool
- DO NOT show how money is being invested
- DO NOT show how volunteer time and talents are impacting the church
- Should be used by the session

Narrative

- Visioning Tool
- Shows the programs of the church having a positive impact
- Inspires and helps us see our gifts are really making a difference
- Help us to reframe finances to be about ministry

Steps to Creating Your First Narrative Budget

1. Define your “Ministry Areas”
2. Allocate staff time to each area
3. Allocate all other resources proportionally to each area
4. Consider adding volunteer time to each area
5. Tell compelling stories of the successes over the past year in each area

To use a template for your narrative budget go to:

www.stewardshipnavigator.com

Once you've told the story...invite

- Encourage folks to dedicate themselves at a personally meaningful level –time, talent and resource
- Stewardship is a three-legged stool
 - Legs of the stool may vary in length; not all necessarily equal
- It is not an 'either or' but an 'and'



Thank You as a Means of Telling Your Story

- Quarterly letters with summary of gifts
- Pastor-written thank-you notes- Personalized letter- one to ten notes a week
- Session-written thank-you notes
- Generosity Team writes thank-you notes
- Phone calls
- Annual celebration
- Legacy Society event

Keys to Success

- Be Prayerful
- Celebrate your Church
- Be visionary
- Communicate
- Involve many – recruit the storytellers
- Tell lots of stories – one size doesn't fit all
- Fund ministry, not raise funds
- Be inviting not threatening

Resources – Part 1: Books

How to Tell a Story: The Essential Guide to Storytelling from the Moth
- Meg Bowles, Catherine Burns, Jennifer Hixson, Sarah Austin
Jenness, Kate Tellers, Chenjerai Kumanyika, & Padma Lakshmi

Not Your Parents Offering Plate – Clif Christopher

The Perfect Story: How to Tell Stories that Inform, Influence and Inspire -Karen Ebner

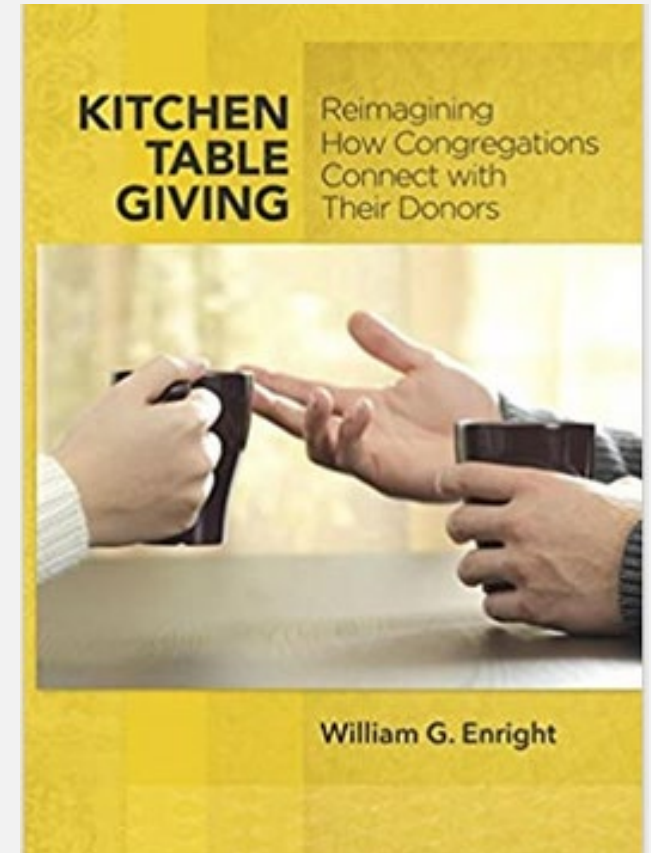
Embracing Stewardship- Charles R. Lane and Grace Duddy Pomroy

Holy Currencies – 6 Blessings for Sustainable Missional Ministries –
Eric H.F. Law

Bounty – Scott McKenzie and Kristine Miller

A Spirituality of Fundraising – Henri J. M. Nouwen

God's Gift of Generosity – Karl Travis



Resources – Part 2

Stewardship Navigator www.stewardshipnavigator.com

Church Financial Leadership Academy: www.churchfla.com – access code PCUSA

Presbyterian
FOUNDATION



200 E. 12th Street

Jeffersonville, IN 47130

800-858-6127

presbyterianfoundation.org