

Stewardship & Finances – Zoom 3/25/2020

As a follow-up to the Stewardship & Finance Zoom meeting on March 25, this document includes some of the key Take-Aways as well some sources referenced during meeting.

Links to various websites, articles, and webinars listed may be helpful as you try to navigate these uncharted waters. The amount of information out there is overwhelming (and ever-changing). This is not an exhaustive list, but it is an attempt to consolidate a number of helpful resources.

Some of these resources are internal UMC resources, others are third-party vendors. The Conference does not endorse or recommend any of the vendors listed here over any other vendors. Many are offering free or discounted technology (e-giving, live-streaming, etc.). We encourage you to do some research to determine what might work best for your situation.

Key Tips & Take Aways

- Continue to seek creative ways to maintain community and do ministry, while adhering to CDC and governmental social distancing and gathering restrictions.
 - *Parking lot services (possibly not advisable in counties under stay-at-home order), secure boxes for offering drop-off, drive-thru blessings, etc.*
- There are a variety of eGiving options available. They are not “one-size-fits-all,” so find the solution(s) that best fit the needs of your church and its members.
 - *On-line Bill Pay by individual members is a form of eGiving that can be done quickly and requires no set-up on the church side.*
 - *Recognize there will be lead-time involved (church set-up and adoption by members), so pair your eGiving strategy with more traditional stewardship efforts (direct phone calls, letters, emails, etc.) in the interim.*
- Communication will be paramount throughout this time.
 - *Tell the story of what the church is doing to respond*
 - *Don't be afraid to ask! United Methodists rally in times of crisis*
- Not all churches and individuals will be affected in the same way.
 - *Encourage members to increase or accelerate giving; suggest contributing funds “saved” by not commuting to work, paying for parking, lunches, etc.*
 - *Financially strong churches can maintain giving and/or increase to lift up churches that are struggling*

Articles

[Staying The Course: Offering Yourself in Times of Uncertainty](#): An example of a message to share with your congregation. Shared with permission from Edinboro UMC.

[Using Technology to Prepare Your Church for COVID-19](#): With church technology, you're equipped to communicate and connect with your congregation quickly wherever they are, on devices they take with them everywhere they go (even if it's just from their kitchen to their couch).

[10 Ideas for Church Financial Leaders Amid the COVID-19 Crisis](#): "The following list of ideas is specifically directed to financial leaders across the church to help with sustaining the church and its ministry (and perhaps growing it in areas) as we live through these Coronavirus days."

[Communication is Key to Online Giving](#): Finding the right tool for online giving is important, but communicating effectively about the tool is key, writes the Rev. Jeremy Steele. He offers advice on online giving.

Free Webinars

[Electronic Recurring Giving: Needed Now More Than Ever!](#): Webinar from UMC Discipleship Ministries providing resources and ideas around e-giving.

[Ministry Brands: Prepare Your Church for COVID-19](#): Presentation from Ministry Brands covering topics such as online giving, mass communication, live-streaming and more. Company is currently offering free technology to help churches during this time.

E-Giving Sites

There are dozens, if not hundreds, of e-giving platforms available, and "shopping" for one that fits your needs can be overwhelming. Below are a few options to consider. The Conference Center uses both PayPal and Vanco. The other names listed below are merely suggestions to research. This is by no means an exhaustive list but it is meant as a starting point for those looking for suggestions.

Payment Processing Companies

- PayPal (www.paypal.com)
- Stripe (www.stripe.com)

**These will have the quickest implementation time. You can likely begin taking payments with these options in less than 24 hours.*

E-Giving Solutions

- Vanco (<https://www.vancopayments.com/egiving>)
- Tithe.ly (<https://get.tithe.ly>)
- Give Lively (www.givelively.org)

** No contract giving solutions with mobile app and text giving options*

More Robust Solutions

- Shelby Systems (<https://www.shelbysystems.com>)
- Blackbaud (<https://www.blackbaud.com>)
- Aplos (<https://www.aplos.com>)

**These solutions will be more expensive, but will also provide more features (integration with accounting and church management solutions for example)*