



## The Stewardship Coach Volume 7 / Issue 23



**Was that written before COVID-19 or after?** Do you find yourself asking this when you look at any book or article on anything related to the Church? I do. Why? Because a lot of what was written way back in the dark ages of 2019 is now irrelevant. For that matter, things we adhered to in February went out the door in March. Some of that will never come back!

**How many things are you re-evaluating now since COVID-19?** Last week, I had two conversations with my team where we were discussing giving data. My comment was that all our analysis will need to be

viewed as pre and post COVID-19. Those conversations led me to rethink the question, what should you be tracking now in terms of giving?

I wrote on this last year after a pastor asked me this question. Yet that was last year. Here is part of what I wrote last year in Volume 6 Issue 27:

**What should you be tracking?** I advise breaking your tracking into weekly tracking and long-term tracking. Let's start with...

**Weekly tracking** – The following is what I advise to track weekly...

- Of course, track first, the amount that came in this week. Was that offering ahead or behind your current needs? Was it a typical amount for that weekend? 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays are historically the best offering weekends. If the amount seems higher or lower, then probe as to why? Were there large gifts? Was attendance off, thus causing a decline in giving?
- As a result of this past Sunday's offering, the one you look at weekly, where does this put you in terms of budget and expenses from a yearly perspective?
- Were there any first-time donors?
- Were there any significant gifts that skewed the data?
- Then, track how much came through traditional means, i.e., the offering and how much came from online.

**Long-term tracking** – Here is what I advise in terms of tracking giving long-term...

- How does giving to date compare with the same week period from last year?
  - Track giving by quarters – I like to see how the various quarters stack up with other quarters but especially the current quarter you are in.
  - I also like to see a comparison of how much is given online now as opposed to the same period last year. You want to see if that is growing or stagnant.
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**That was then, this is now and here is what I would add to my advice last year.** In addition to the above, here are a few other metrics I think are worth your time and attention. These are in no particular order:

- **Digital giving as compared to traditional means.** While online giving has increased significantly, I am finding many of my clients, even larger churches, are still seeing checks being mailed in or dropped off at the church. We need to expect analog giving to continue for some time, thus you need to continue to offer that option.
- **Break down of how digital giving is coming in.** I would want to know what percentage of my digital giving is recurring giving. How much of your giving comes via text as opposed to email? Knowing how people are giving allows you to better structure your message to fit the means by which people give.
- **New recurring sign-up numbers and the number dropping out of recurring giving.** I tripped over this last week in a conversation with one of the founders of Gyve. We were looking through their dashboard of how churches could pull analytical data on giving. As we began to look at churches' recurring giving, we started to notice several churches were seeing a significant number of giving units that had dropped out of recurring giving. Are you seeing the same thing?
- **Increases versus decreases.** At the same time, we also saw many that had decreased the amount of their recurring gift significantly. My educated guess is that both here and in the point above the economy is the culprit. You have to deal with information like this carefully, but my read is that this is an opportunity to reach out to families that might be hurting.
- **Lapsed donors.** While similar to the above, a lapsed donor is someone that has stopped all giving. Again, this is a delicate issue, but you need to know how many of your donors have not given lately and if a pastoral reach out might be helpful.

Those are the key markers that I would be tracking. My personal opinion is that you do not need to engage the services of firms like MortarStone or Gloop. Most online companies now give you a dashboard of analytical information on your giving both digital and traditional. This allows you to track the things I have laid out above and more. Check with your online company. If they don't provide that, consider my partners at Gyve <https://gyve.com/>.

To read more about giving analytics check out my recent post at Gyve's site <https://gyve.com/2020/05/27/the-importance-of-giving-analytics/>.

**I am relaunching The Stewardship Coach Platform!** Check out my Bonus Section where I list the various tiers of membership and the price for each. I have a plan for any size church, including yours!

Let's get started helping you assure your financial security.



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**Monday Mornings With Mark The Stewardship Coach will be live at 11 AM June 1<sup>st</sup>.** To register, go to <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/rt/7081778876232214541>.

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# Missions and Ministry Moment

## (aka offering talk)

**#3 of The 16 Offerings of Summer!** Let's make every one count. Here is mine.

### Vacation Planning

**Is anybody going on vacation this summer?** That might be another COVID-19 casualty. For one thing, we seemingly just came out of a forced three to four-month vacation. Still, after being isolated, we are ready for some summer vacation, even if it is just camping out in the backyard!

Have you ever gone camping or to the beach only to discover you left something crucial out of your suitcase or car? How will you ensure that you have everything with you? You make a list! Then you just have to remember where you put the list.

This summer, I want to encourage you to put one more thing on your list before you go on vacation, your offering. This summer's offerings are crucial for us as we will be holding many of our major missions and ministry initiatives during this time. For instance, this summer, we will be ...

- List things like VBS
- Share about Student Ministry
- Talk about any other mission endeavors your church will be involved with

All this is on top of our regular weekly schedule. We have a busy summer of outreach and ministry. Your generosity funds each one of these!

Historically, when attendance is low, so are our offerings. As a result, summer has been one of our most challenging giving times of the year. However, one positive thing we learned as a result of COVID-19 is that we can worship anywhere. That includes worshipping through giving.

We provide you with multiple ways by which you can give even if you are at the beach! The best way is by setting up your giving to be automatic. Then, you never have to worry about bringing the checkbook or cash for the offering. *And*, by setting up your giving to be recurring, you can check one last thing off your checklist.

You can go to our website and look for the Give button. Follow the instructions to set up your giving.

**The neat thing about doing that isn't that you have one less thing to do. It is that you have just invested in the lives of our children, students, and volunteer missionaries!**

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# Bonus Section

**I am relaunching The Stewardship Coach Platform!** I never really went away. Since 2017, I have been attempting to re-clarify my position and place in the stewardship industry. These past two and a half years have been some of the most trying in my life. Yet, I am thankful for what has happened to me as I feel what I now am offering the church world is exactly what is needed.

Almost a decade ago, I started what I called my Retainer Service. A church would essentially hire me as their Minister of Generosity for a monthly fee. I have maintained a handful of larger churches that have me on a continual monthly retainer. I have two slots open this coming year for churches that want and need that kind of service.

For over five years, I have been working to move everything online. I have been doing virtual coaching for years. My feeling is that you should be able to get the help you need for a price you can afford. I can help any church and have put together plans to meet the needs of every church leader. Here is a breakdown of what I am offering and the price.

1. **The Stewardship Coach Newsletter – \$9.99 a month or \$99 a year!** You get key articles on how to increase giving, weekly offering talks, and much, much more!
2. **The Stewardship Coach Platform – \$365 a year!** You get The Stewardship Coach Newsletter, all seasonal giving manuals, once a year financial analysis of your giving plus personal email access to me!
3. **Top 100 Generosity Church Member – \$99 a month** All of the above, PLUS, weekly group teaching time, two financial analysis yearly, access to my full vault of generosity material, once a month personalized coaching and 24/7 email and telephone access to me! My goal is to disciple churches that want to be one of the top 100 generosity churches in America! Additionally, this is a great plan for churches 12 to 24 months out from a capital campaign. I can help get a church ready, so they don't waste time getting ready for a capital campaign.
4. **Capital Campaign Online – \$99 a month with a 3-year agreement.** You get all the help you need to successfully do your own capital campaigns. This is tailored for small to medium churches or churches that have done multiply campaigns. The fit for this depends upon the size of the church, the size of the project and the amount over your yearly budget you need to raise.
5. **Minister of Generosity Retainer – Starts at \$250 a month** depending upon the size of a church's budget. These clients get everything including capital campaign help.

The above is listed at my blog <https://acts17generosity.com/2020/05/26/why-you-need-a-minister-of-generosity-and-why-i-am-your-best-candidate/>

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