

The Stewardship Journal

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**From My Desk
to Your Inbox**



**Using Your Campus Platform
Lanes to Increase Generosity**



**How to Make Your Campus
More Giving Friendly**



**The Future of Giving
is Hybrid**

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From My Desk to Your Inbox

Welcome to Stewardship Journal. We're making this resource available each week with the hopes it will be a practical tool you can use to help your members grow in the grace of giving and they grow in their relationship with Christ.

The Journal was started in 2021 by the Missouri Baptist Convention to provide their pastors with information and advice on all things related to stewardship and generosity. The Journal aims to help church leaders create a culture of generosity built upon biblical stewardship principles.

Here is a preview of this edition:

- Mark Brooks, The Stewardship Coach, leads off with a post entitled **How to Use Your Campus and Platform Lanes to Increase Generosity**. According to Mark, "The American Church made a huge mistake when it accepted the idea that physical church attendance was not essential for Christian growth."
- In the Bonus Section you'll discover tips and real-life examples on **How to Make Your Campus More Giving Friendly**.
- The final post is entitled **The Future of Giving is Hybrid** where you will find practical, helpful information about how your church can successfully navigate the future of giving.

If you like what you see, you can catch up on all the 2024 Journal's at the Stewardship Journal website at: <https://stewardshipjournal.com/>.

For many across our SBC family of churches, the Stewardship Journal has become the go-to guide for information, practical advice, and tips for building a culture of generosity on Biblical principles. My prayer is that you will find this to be true as you apply these principles and practices in your church.

Keep Looking Up,



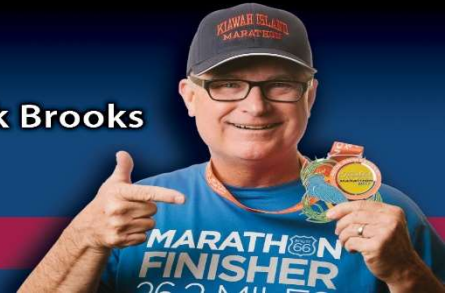
Dr. Steve How

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Mark Brooks



Using Your Campus and Platform Lanes to Increase Generosity



Do you have a campus strategy for stewardship? Do you use your platform effectively for stewardship? As I continue my series on the various lanes of stewardship needed to build and sustain a culture of generosity, I want to show you how these two lanes can work to achieve that goal. I will show you how in this edition of the Coach, entitled *Using Your Campus and Platform Lanes to Increase Generosity*.

First, let me establish that while I agree we must now be more hybrid in terms of worship attendance, I believe we must work to move people away from virtual to real-life reality. You can never replace in-person worship if you want to make disciples. Last year, I wrote about this in a post entitled *The Physical Church IS Essential*. I wrote, “From Hollywood to Madison Avenue marketing, we are being programmed to accept virtual as reality. It isn’t. The pandemic and the lockdowns that followed showed many how life could be lived without ever walking out the door.”

I then stated the premise driving my counsel when I wrote, “**The American Church made a huge mistake when it accepted the idea that physical church attendance was not essential for Christian growth.** The push for virtual is like 21st-century warmed-over Gnosticism. The virtual connection doesn’t fulfill the scriptural mandate: “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing.” We must never allow the government to dictate church attendance. Physically gathering as a church is essential.” As we enter 2024, I am more convinced of this than ever.

Education and learning declined across all metrics for students whose schools eschewed in-person attendance for virtual learning. Keeping students from physically attending school has set our nation back educationally for years to come. Why would the Church think we would see any other results by going to a predominantly virtual attendance?

How will that impact giving? That is the question I am always asking. In a study, the Lake Institute on Faith & Giving part of the IU Lilly Family School of Philanthropy found that “**in-person attendees give more than their virtual counterparts.** Virtual attendees are more likely to be passive spectators than active and engaged participants in the church’s life and coffers. Financially, the best option would be a church that promoted an online worship option but had a large majority of attendees participating in person.”¹

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Physical church attendance is essential for making disciples and for moving those disciples to embrace a life of stewardship resulting in generosity. This is why you must think about how to use your campus and your platform to enhance stewardship and generosity. Here are my thumbnail descriptions for these strategies.

The Campus Lane – The strategy revolves around setting the stage for generosity to happen. Banners, posters, and even offering envelopes all play an important role. For instance, though their use is now on the wane, I have always recommended they have a kiosk visible on campus. Even those walking by without giving are reminded *of* giving. I want subtle reminders throughout the campus about giving and multiple outlets on campus by which people *can* give. See more in the Bonus Section.

The Platform Lane – I'm focused on what happens each weekend on your platform. While the platform I am focused on is physical, its reach, digitally, is vast. That digital projection works best live or recorded live from the platform of your worship space. Thus, you need a Platform Lane. Let me give you three practical ideas for using your Platform Lane to increase stewardship.

1. **Elevator pitch every offering!** How? First, plan out every offering time. In two minutes or less, make a case for the offering. The best way to do that is to link giving to vision. We recommend you vary what you do for each offering. Sometimes, you might read one of my offering talks. Another time, you might use video or have a live testimony about giving. The point is to keep the offering time fresh. And remember, never EVER apologize for taking up the offering!
2. **Show and tell it!** – By using screenshot announcements, plus video testimonies and appealing, giving appeals, you will increase giving awareness.
3. **Preach it!** Let me, again, encourage you to plan your next stewardship series.

Even though no one knows what the future church will look like, for now, you can be sure you will need a Campus and a Platform Lane strategy. Let's start building that out.



Mark Brooks – The Stewardship Coach
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OnlineGiving.org, the leading online giving processor in America, sponsors my writing. OG is owned and operated by committed Christians active in their local church. Find out more about their services at <https://www.onlinegiving.org/>. You can also read the blog post I write for them at <https://www.onlinegiving.org/blog>.

1. <https://lakeinstitute.org/resource-library/oct-issue1-2023/>

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Bonus Section

How to Make Your Campus More Giving Friendly

How can you make your campus more giving-friendly? Let me share the following tips with you that I think can help you create an atmosphere on your campus that enhances giving.

Before I get started, let me ask you this simple question. **When I come onto your campus, am I reminded of the importance of giving?** That is what I want you to think about as you read this. Later, do a test for yourself. Walk around your campus and see for yourself how it might look to those who attend your campus.

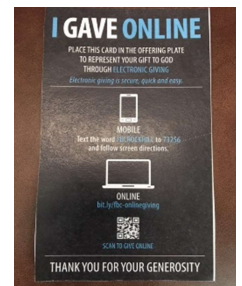
We know how important appearances are. You ensure your campus is clutter-free and as clean and presentable as possible. Appearance matters. The same is true for building a culture of generosity. Generosity should APPEAR throughout your campus. **Here are some practical on-campus things you can do...**



Rack 'em up! You know, the thing you put envelopes in. This is one of your easiest tools to use to increase giving. In every rack, I would have...

Postage Paid Self-Addressed Envelopes - A powerful tool for collecting money. Providing these types of envelopes allows donors to take one and mail you back a financial gift. Envelopes like this also give you more options to collect gifts through direct appeals and other means.

Electronic Giving Information – Many churches utilize small cards like the one here. Those that gave online can put it in the offering plate. It also contains a QR code, how to give via text and the church's giving link. The easier you make it for people to give, the more apt they are to give!



Use QR codes! Right before the pandemic, I read an article claiming that QR codes were obsolete. That was then. Now, many businesses and churches post QR codes to the back of chairs, pews, etc., allowing members to easily use their smart devices to give.

Here is another idea...



Raise it up! Use posters and banners to highlight giving. The picture at the left is of a capital campaign. Simply seeing that banner keeps members focused. The banners at the top simply encourage generosity. This is a great way to keep generosity in the minds of your members.

Think of positive ways you can make your campus more giving-friendly!

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The Future of Giving is Hybrid

By Mark Brooks

The following post can be found at: <https://www.onlinegiving.org/blog>.

The Hybrid Church is here to stay, and we now know that the future of giving is hybrid. In the future, we can “expect that post-pandemic giving and fundraising will likely remain hybrid, as the adaptation of digital and hybrid giving models will augment crucial human interactions.” That was the conclusion of a study published by the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana University.

The post was entitled *Digital for Good: A Global Study on Emerging Ways of Giving*. It reports on the 2022 Global Philanthropy Environment Index (GPEI) findings. That report showed that “the Covid-19 pandemic transformed philanthropic activities to nonprofit organizations and social business introduced new and innovative ways of fundraising, often based on digital solutions.”

In a section called Technological Innovation and Digitalization, the post states, “In the last five years, philanthropy has become more digital, instant, and democratized than ever before. Technological innovations and new donation initiatives have the potential to change the mindset and behavior of everyday donors and strengthen philanthropy across the globe.”¹

The Lake Institute on Faith & Giving, part of the IU Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, recently reported that “the more a church **emphasized online and electronic giving**, the greater their per capita giving rose. Congregations in our study without online giving had a per capita annual giving of \$1,809; those with “a little use” saw giving rise to \$2,052, “some use” jumped to \$2,388, and “a lot of use” resulted in per capita giving of \$2,428 – almost a 30% increase over those not using it. Not only has online giving increased since the pandemic, but it is being given greater emphasis now. Only 31% of churches reported using online giving in 2015, and just 8% did so a lot, whereas in 2023, 67% do so, and nearly half (48%) use this method a lot.”²

The Lake Institute found that how a church offers worship can also impact giving. The article states, “The small percentage of churches (1.5%) that only provide worship online have a median size of 10 persons per capita giving of \$691. A church that chooses to offer only in-person worship (25%) averages a median attendance of 35 and per capita giving of \$2,048. However, 73% of churches offer a hybrid model of worship with both in-person and virtual participation. These hybrid congregations have an average size of 90 people in worship and per capita giving of \$2,350. Therefore, in terms of strengthening the congregation with attendance and giving, hybridity seems to be the strategic choice.”

At the same time, they report that traditional methods of giving have not and will not go away, at least for the foreseeable future. The Lake Institute study says, “Likewise, the per capita giving rates across this hybrid church spectrum show considerable variation. The greater the in-person over virtual ratio, the larger the per capita giving amount. **In other words, in-person attendees give more than their virtual counterparts.** Virtual attendees are more likely to be passive spectators than active and engaged participants in the church’s life and coffers. Financially, the best option would be a church that promoted an online worship option but had a large majority of attendees participating in person.”

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The Lake study concludes, “The more willing a church is to change and adapt, the greater likelihood it will envision a positive future.” At OnlineGiving.org, we have embraced that the future of giving is hybrid. We offer multiple ways by which your members can give to your church. We even offer our clients a fast and seamless way to process checks. See more in this post:

<https://www.onlinegiving.org/support/announcing-our-new-check-scanning-capability>

While online giving has increased dramatically in the last three years, these reports show the importance of allowing attendees to give via their favorite commerce method. Keeping up with all the various options could be confusing. We help avoid confusion by keeping you current with the newest technology available. Here is what one of our clients had to say about us:

“OnlineGiving.org is continually improving. It is not this thing that is static. I see new things every time I visit the site and look over the dashboard. I see improvements, new features, better reporting, etc. All the main things we want we are getting with OnlineGiving.org. When you have that, why then go through the process of switching to another platform?” Michah Flashman, Vox Church, New Haven CT

At OnlineGiving.org, we know how quickly things can change, so our platform is never static and always adds new features. To learn how our platform and features can help increase your hybrid giving, contact us at [\(615\) 206-4000](tel:6152064000) or support@onlinegiving.org. The future of giving is hybrid, and the future is *now!*

1. <https://blog.philanthropy.iupui.edu/2022/05/12/digital-for-good-a-global-study-on-emerging-ways-of-giving/>
2. <https://lakeinstitute.org/resource-library/oct-issue1-2023/>