

# Beyond *the* Offering

Energizing Congregational Giving



Alexander-Haas  
TRANSFORMING INSTITUTIONS THAT TRANSFORM LIVES



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[www.fundraisingcounsel.com](http://www.fundraisingcounsel.com)



## It's Stewardship Season

from the Carolina office of  
*Jerry W. Henry* | Managing Partner for Faith-Based & Human Services

No doubt, you are making your way through the annual stewardship or annual giving season for your faith community. For some, this is a period lasting one month; for others, it lasts for three months; and, for some, it is even a single day, "Stewardship Sunday."

Although for many churches, the stewardship season can seem exhausting - and you're tempted to take a break just as soon as it's over - remember that the holiday season is a time to celebrate generosity, to say "thank you," to summarize all that your community of faith has done in 2019, and to position your congregation for year-round giving.

Consider a few important statistics for the weeks ahead:

- 30% of annual giving occurs in December.
- 10% of annual giving occurs during the last 3 days of the calendar year.
- 49% of all church giving transactions are made with a card.

-from [Nonprofits Source](#)

Based on the season of the year and these statistics, here are some key points to consider as you approach the final weeks of 2019:

**Celebrate the season by saying "thank you!"** No matter where you are in the stewardship or giving season according to your faith tradition, this season of the year and the approaching holidays are about giving thanks and about celebrating giving. Make sure you say "thank you" to your members by helping them recognize all that their generosity throughout the year does in specific terms of mission and ministry. These thank yous must occur in multi-channel efforts - handwritten thank you notes, emails, from the pulpit, through the various social media channels, and, importantly, personally in face-to-face contact. Remember that gratitude is the open door to generosity.

**Send at least two emails asking for a special year-end gift over the period of the last three days of the year to each of your members.** These should be specially-crafted, personalized year-end emails with embedded giving links to every household in your congregation. Remember that many other organizations will be sending year-end and holiday emails and you will be competing with each of them for the attention of your congregation member. So, at least two emails are necessary between December 28 and December 31 in order to remain at the top of your recipients' inboxes.

**Make year-round stewardship a priority.** Our communities of faith must recognize that just as other nonprofits make fundraising a year-round activity, our churches must do likewise. As hard as it is for many

faith-leaders to hear this, other nonprofit organizations are doing a more effective job at asking and receiving charitable gifts. Conducting an assessment of your "culture of stewardship" in addition to reviewing your historic pledging and giving statistics can help you determine the best approach for your congregation.

2020 is a year of "focus" - let your focus be on year-round stewardship!

## Passing by the Plate

### Tithing Via Text

*Christianity Today, 9/18*

While congregations have offered digital giving options for well over a decade, places of worship often rely on marketplace tools like PayPal and online bill pay (which still involves banks sending checks each month) for their members to tithe. But there are new high-tech options that cater to churches in particular.

Companies like Pushpay, Tithe.ly, easyTithe, and SecureGive let members tap their way to a tithe through smartphone apps, text messages, websites, or kiosks at services.

Many congregations are now eyeing new technology as mobile payments become mainstream and paper checks fade from regular use. Plus, these tools can track giving trends, send off annual receipts, and integrate with programs for managing volunteers and communication.

Though most churchgoers still give the old-fashioned way, by cash or check in the offering plate, 15 percent now pay through their church's website, app, or text, according to a 2018 LifeWay Research survey.

Last year, Pushpay processed a record \$4.2 billion in giving, up 40 percent from the year before. Its clientele includes a majority of the 100 largest US congregations, including some bringing in \$140 million a year and staffing more than 500 people.

Digital givers tend to donate more and more often. Pushpay found users give \$17 digitally for every \$10 in the plate, and recurring donors were five times more likely to keep giving a year later.

"If you're afraid to talk about money, you'll be afraid to talk about the technology to make giving easier," said Dean Sweetman, cofounder and CEO of Tithe.ly, whose platform is used by 12,000 congregations around the world. "Here's the truth: Churches that talk about money grow, and churches that don't, generally don't."

[Read the article here.](#)



"...With the steady hand and generous spirit of Alexander Haas counsel, our campaign was a true success. I thank God that Alexander Haas accepted the call to assist organizations such as ours raise funds for ministry."



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Listen and *Learn*....

The How & Why of Data & *Digital Giving*

## with Quinetha Frasier

While we are on the subject of giving....via text...and while our podcast series, *Futures in Fundraising*, is on hiatus, lets look back to when **Quinetha Frasier** joined our podcast. Ms. Frasier chatted with us about how **MyPledger** is making the switch to digital giving easier, for both nonprofits and donors, and why tracking the success of your gifts through data is essential.



[Listen up this is good stuff....](#)

[Listen to all our podcasts here....](#)

## Transforming Institutions

For more than 30 years, Alexander Haas has been a fixture in the nonprofit community. We are honored to have worked with both large and small faith-based organizations, helping sew the seeds of compassion, hope and charity.

[See a list of our faith-based client partners...](#)

## Our Transformational Services

Raising the funds to meet the mission and ministry needs of churches is becoming increasingly challenging. At Alexander Haas, we understand the challenges that congregations face in raising the funds to support their mission. More importantly, we understand how to overcome those challenges. We offer a variety of stewardship services for the unique needs of faith-based organizations.

[What can we help you with?](#)

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