

2016 Financial Acumen Team Report to Church Council

giving

Doris Champ
Len Knudsen
Elaine Weldon

“Give freely without begrudging it, and the Lord your God will bless you in everything you do.” *Deuteronomy 15:10*



June 12, 2016



Discussion Points

- Team Objectives
- Our Financial Acumen
- Amplifying Messages
- Effective Church Websites
- Key Conclusions
- Recommendations



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Team Objectives:

Develop recommendations on how to leverage key financial messages to MUMC membership that:

- Increases acumen / awareness on financial matters
- Links value / benefits of giving to specific outreaches
- Inspires the reassessment of personal giving levels
- Makes it easier to give for today (budgets / debt)
- Encourages giving for tomorrow (Endowments)

Mission Statement:

An MUMC **culture of spiritual giving can be developed** with well presented messages that:



1. **Reinforce** WHY we give
2. **Articulate** WHAT is needed
3. **Demonstrate** BENEFITS of our gifts
4. **Facilitate** HOW to donate / participate

Financial Acumen Assessment

- Are we faithful stewards of our talents & treasures?
- Do we communicate our financial targets / goals?
- Are we comfortable talking about money & giving?
- Do we challenge members to give higher?
- Do we inform members how their gifts are used?
- Do we acknowledge / respond to member gifts?
- Do we share success stories about our gifts at work?

How do we REACH our membership?

- Pulpit Messages
- Sunday Bulletins / Blasts
- Groups / Classes / Events
- Church Council / Committees
- MUMC Website (Work-In-Process)
- Social Media & Apps (lesser extent)

Why the MUMC Website?

- It is cost-effective and easily updated
- It is available on-demand (when receptive)
- It ensures consistent delivery of messages
- It can link to more details / direct contacts
- It is accessible from mobile devices

Characteristics of Effective Websites

- They are **ENGAGING** (creative content / videos)
- They are **INTUITIVE** (easy to navigate / click)
- They are **ACTIONABLE** (links to details / contacts)
- They are **INFORMATIVE** (facts / activities)
- They are **EDUCATIONAL** (resources / tools)
- They are **INSPIRATIONAL** (stories / beliefs / culture)
- They are **DYNAMIC** (frequent updates)

Our Favorite Websites:

- Alpharetta UMC (Alpharetta, GA)
- Austin Stone Community Church (Austin, TX)
- Avon UMC (Avon, IN)
- Celebration Church (Jacksonville, FL)
- First Baptist Church (Jacksonville, FL)
- Hyde Park UMC (Tampa, FL)
- Lakewood Church (Houston, TX)
- Saddleback Church (Lake Forest, CA)
- UMC of Resurrection (Leawood, KS)
- University City UMC (Charlotte, NC)
- Willow Creek Community Church (Barrington, IL)

What Makes These Websites Effective?

1. They Feature Messages on Tithing / Giving
2. They Solicit & Share Stories / Testimonials
3. They Provide Resources (FAQs / Guides / Coaching)
4. They are Financially Accountable to Members
5. They Facilitate Convenient Giving Options
6. They Encourage Using Talents to Serve Others

Key Conclusions

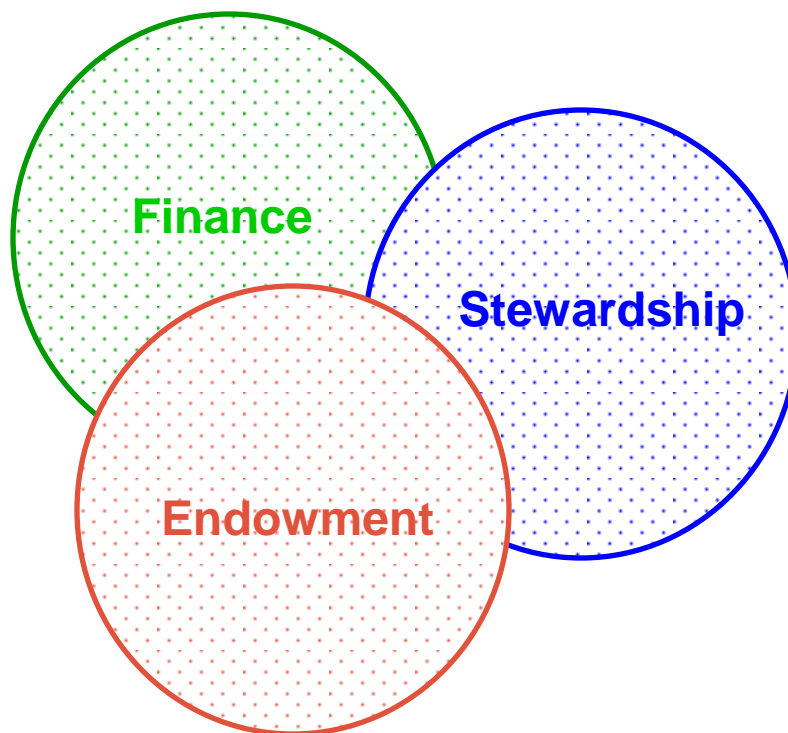
- Stewardship is ongoing message (giving & serving)
- Beliefs & expectations establish the culture
- Websites facilitate effective communications
- Content is KING...but requires strategy & effort
- Message delivery is a recipe, not one ingredient
- MUMC website is improving but still needs work

Recommendations

- **Partnerships** - Amazon Smile, UMC Market, etc...
- Establish **Story Team** to solicit / share testimonials
- Committees should be **more visible** / proactive
- **Content Curator** should be included in future plans
- Consider a new **Financial Counseling Ministry**
- Investigate **Dave Ramsey** training opportunities

Who is Responsible for Financial Matters?

- Prepares budgets
- Distributes funds
- Manages changes
- Tracks performance
- Evaluates requests



- Develops messages
- Secures pledges / gifts
- Grows giving / revenue
- Celebrates successes

- Promotes legacy donations
- Emphasizes estate planning
- Sets guidelines for major gifts
- Establishes long-range objectives