



Strengthening charitable causes to change the world through generosity

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A New Vision for Growing Generosity

Rethinking Stewardship

For years congregations have focused on individuals and their need to give. I'm convinced that we've raised up people who grow in generosity, but don't grow their giving to the congregation. At the heart, we haven't given them a reason to do so.

What if we helped people to see the impact that their generosity to your congregation has in the world? What if we told stories of changed lives? What if stewardship focused on mission?

Fundraising is proclaiming what we believe in such a way that we offer other people the opportunity to participate with us in our vision and mission. Fundraising is precisely the opposite of begging. When we seek to raise funds, we are not saying, "Please can you help us, because lately it's been hard." Rather, we are declaring, "We have a vision that is amazing and exciting. We are inviting you to invest yourself through the resources God has given you ... in this work to which God has called us." A Spirituality of Fundraising, Henri Nouwen, p. 16-17

Stewardship for All Seasons

I highly recommend the SAS program for your congregation. It has made a difference in the giving at ALC and the emphasis on ministry growth. - Russ Senti, Atascocita Lutheran Church, Humble TX

What new or expanding ministry could your congregation accomplish with an additional 10-15% in giving? That question drives the first annual appeal in Stewardship for All Seasons (SAS).

SAS provides a two-year, deep dive into the generosity ministry of congregations. In addition to excellent annual appeals, SAS includes elements foundational to generosity ministry (and congregational health):

- Storytelling
- Strategic Planning
- Volunteer Recruitment
- Endowments and Planned Giving
- Special Appeals
- Year-Round Generosity

In 2021, seven congregations of the Gulf Coast Synod started the SAS journey. A new cohort is just now forming.

Building a Culture of Generosity

Building a Culture of Generosity (BCG) provides an excellent annual appeal process, designed to grow giving by 5%. Through templates, videos, and six cohort gatherings, generosity teams engage in best practices and take important steps forward. With a cost of \$450 (and training to receive \$250 of

it through a Thrivent Action Team grant), this cost-effective process begins building a solid foundation in generosity.

A couple congregations from the Gulf Coast Synod took part in BCG last year. The new cohort for the fall will kick off on August 16.

About GSB Fundraising

For over 45 years, GSB has strengthened charitable causes to change the world through generosity. Rev. Peter Reuss walks with congregations throughout the Gulf Coast Synod as they grow in generosity.

Pete exudes a passion for God's work in the world, trusting the Spirit to guide the church and ministry organizations to live into God's future. Through the death of his mother as an 8-year-old and the death of his wife in 2015, Peter remains convinced that nothing, even death, can stand in God's way. If God has a vision for the church, God will raise up the leaders and the funds to make it happen. All things are possible.

An ELCA Pastor from Rochester, Minnesota, Pete serves God by guiding congregations, synods, and other ministries to discern God's vision and encourage the generosity to make that vision a reality. He has led hundreds of congregations across the country to grow in generosity.

I look forward to meeting you at the Gulf Coast Assembly. Please contact me or Rev. Chris Markert (chrism@gulfcoastsynod.org) if you want more information on working with GSB Fundraising.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pete Reuss', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Pete Reuss