

Tips and Tools for Electronic Giving

July 2021

Your council made the decision to have electronic giving options available to your congregation. It's all set up. Now what?

Messaging is key.

In your communications, let the congregation know that electronic giving is available and that the congregational leadership feels that this is a simple way for disciples to share in Christ's mission through the Church.

Communicate the benefits - By having a 24/7 offering plate, we are encouraging disciples to be generous whenever they would like, not just Sunday morning! This is especially important in these days when people may worship online at any time and visitors to online worship may want to contribute to Christ's ministry through your congregation.

Communication instructions - Provide clear instructions about how to use electronic giving. Where is it available? On your church website? Is there another site where people can log in? Can they do it through an app on their phone? How are transactions made - through bank account or credit card or either? Ensure people know:

- they have an option to make a one-time gift or create an account to set up a recurring gift
- when they set up an account, they can easily access their giving records and make changes to any recurring gifts
- whether they can make gifts to designated funds as well as the general fund
- their information is secure
- whom to contact if they have trouble making an electronic gift

Where will you announce electronic giving options?

Newsletter

If electronic giving is new to the congregation, be sure you make note of it in every newsletter. If you send out electronic newsletters, consider including a hyperlink to your giving page in the newsletter.

If your giving vendor has an app, be sure to let people know they can add that to their smartphone and give from there as well.

Online Worship

If you have online worship that is not streamed live, consider holding time for offering, reminding people to reflect on all that God has given and then giving them a couple minutes to respond with generosity and make an online gift or write a check. In your online worship screen or print bulletins, provide the weblink and/or QR code so that people can quickly get to the giving site. Make the address to your giving page something simple to remember like: www.yourwebsite.org/give.

Additionally, you could include a link to the giving page in the description of your worship on Facebook or You Tube.

Gathered Worship

Include online giving instructions when you gather for worship as well. Include the giving link and/or QR code in your bulletin to remind people it is available.

In the Building

Use bulletin boards or other visible reminders that electronic giving is an option.

Website

On your website, keep the “Giving” link visible and obvious. Most non-profits and charities locate their “give” button in the upper right corner of the screen. People naturally look there. Consider putting yours there too.

When people navigate to the giving page, keep the donation box near the top, not hidden below the fold. It’s good to include instructions but consider putting them below the donation box so that the giving is immediately visible. You could include a brief “If you need help using this page, please see the instructions below.”

Get Creative

Find some new and interesting ways to engage worshippers in electronic giving. Please note, these are just a few ideas; you know your context best and what might be fun and engaging for them.

- Make invitations. Remind people that they can give offering on their computer or smartphone.
- Make an invitation from the congregation council. Get a few leaders to commit to signing up for recurring offerings so you can announce that “the whole council” or “X number of people” have already committed to this.
- Use a video invitation. Find one or two people who are already using electronic giving and are excited about it to share a bit of why they use it and how it fuels their sense of being part of God’s mission in this congregation. They could use “join me” language to invite others to try this way of giving. Use the video during the offering or announcement time.
- Set a goal. Maybe the council would like to see 25% of households use electronic giving in the first three month. Communicate that goal.
- Provide an incentive or challenge. Perhaps you know of a generous giver who would like to make an additional gift for each of the first ten households to sign up for recurring transactions. Or maybe there’s a book you’ve been wanting others to read. Order some copies and offer them to the first five or ten households who make an electronic offering.
- Utilize a tech-saavy disciple to create a “how-to” video, that shows how to make an offering using a smartphone app or the computer.

- If your congregation is new to electronic giving, maybe you could do a “test drive” during worship. Take a few minutes to invite people to pull out their phone, add the app during the announcements at the start of the service, then invite them to make a gift at the offering time.

Give Thanks

Last, have council or stewardship team members write thank you notes to the people who do sign up for recurring transactions or make single electronic contributions. Let people know you are glad they want to support God’s mission through the Church!

Making an offering is an act of worship and commitment to Christ’s ministry through your congregation. Let people know how their offering is making a difference. Share the stories of how your congregation’s ministry is growing disciples and impacting your community. Be consistent and persistent in why you think electronic giving is good for your congregation’s mission and work.

Resources for these and other ideas

[Stewardship in a Pandemic](#) Video

Vanco: [Welcome to E-Giving](#)

Vanco: [20 Customizable Church Messages to Help Launch and Manage E-Giving](#)

[6 Quick Tips for Effectively Communicating About Tithe.ly with your Church](#)

[The Definitive \(and Practical\) Guide to Effective Mobile Giving for Churches - A guide by Tithe.ly](#)

Find other Stewardship Resources at

www.csis-elca.org/stewardship

or contact Pastor Elise Rothfusz

for more information

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