



Fact or Fiction: Four Myths about Giving

by Ian Evison

Myth #1: Some people give time and some people give money.

Truth: In general, our financial contributions follow our investments of time. People who give more time also give more money. [Click here to check the facts.](#)

Myth #2: Money given to congregations is money not given to secular organizations or, conversely, money given to other charities is money denied to congregations.

Truth: People who have learned disciplined stewardship tend to practice those disciplines in many places. Conversely, those who didn't give at the office probably are not giving any where else. [Click here to check the facts.](#) (page 36)

Myth #3: Now that so many other organizations are raising money, people aren't giving to congregations as they once were.

Truth: Overall, congregations and the programs they administer are receiving a greater share of charitable contributions. [Click here to check the facts.](#)

Myth #4: Nice people finish last.

Truth: While it might make intuitive sense to think that those who cheat a little give themselves an edge, the facts of the matter appear to be more complex. A recent study has shown that ethical companies tend also to be more profitable. It appears that those who adopt good practice in some ways tend also to adopt good practices in other ways - which leads to good performance. [Click here to check the facts.](#)

Additional resources on giving:

- In his essay [Money in American Culture](#), Alban consultant Dan Hotchkiss describes how consumerism influences congregational life in America.

- To cultivate generosity in congregational life, consider this chapter [What Kind of People Do We Want to Become](#) from Michael Durall.
 - Mark Vincent and the ELCA offer a seven-session curriculum for those seeking a deeper understanding of money and its influence in life. Those new to ministry will find this especially helpful.
 - [The Whys and Hows of Money Leadership](#)
A curriculum for those who want to work toward deeper understanding.
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Featured Resources

[Creating Congregations of Generous People: Money, Faith, and Lifestyle Series](#) by Michael Durall

Asking parishioners for money is very different from creating congregations of generous people. In this provocative book, stewardship consultant Michael Durall argues convincingly that annual pledge drives inadvertently perpetuate low-level and same-level giving in congregations. Written with the voice of experience, this book will help clergy and lay leaders initiate and sustain effective stewardship programs.

[Growing Up Generous: Engaging Youth in Giving and Serving](#) by Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, Elanah Delyah Naftali, and Laura Musegades

The authors create a mosaic of what is happening and what could happen in American Jewish and Christian congregations to cultivate in young people a deep and lasting commitment to giving and serving. Based on a two-year project by Search Institute, a nonprofit research and education organization that specializes in the healthy development of children and adolescents, the book recognizes and highlights the roles of various congregational leaders (not only youth leaders) in shaping the attitudes of young people.

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