



# Funding Our Mission as Followers of Christ

## Best Practices & Tools

The Rev. Cn. Karen Davis-Lawson (Long Island)  
The Rev. Cn. Dina van Klaveren (Maryland)

Board Members, The Episcopal Network for Stewardship



**Think of an organization to which you have donated recently, ideally outside of your congregation.**

**What motivated you to give?**

*Introduction*



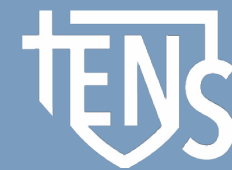
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**Share your first name, and**

**“I was inspired  
to be generous  
by/when/because...”**



*Introduction*



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## From Brené Brown:

*“Is there another story I could be telling myself?”*

*From her book Rising Strong, which outlines a way to challenge our assumptions, get curious about emotions, and rewrite narratives for more successful life outcomes*

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# Funding Our Mission as Followers of Christ



*Introduction*



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# What We Believe about Mission

Q. What is the mission of the Church?

A. The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.



*Our Mission*



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# What We Believe about Mission

Q. What is the mission of the Church?

**A. The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.**

Q. How does the Church pursue its mission?

**A. The Church pursues its mission as it prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love.**

Q. Through whom does the Church carry out its mission?

**A. The church carries out its mission through the ministry of all its members.**

Q. What is the duty of all Christians?

**A. The duty of all Christians is to follow Christ; to come together week by week for corporate worship; and to work, pray, and give for the spread of the kingdom of God.**



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# What We Do as Baptized Christians

## *With God's help, we will:*

Continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers.

Persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord.

Proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ.

Seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself.

Strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.



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# Communicating the Mission

To incarnate

- to bring into reality in a fresh, relatable, understandable, compelling, and inspiring way -

the good work we share as the Body of Christ.



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# What is a Narrative Budget?

-a descriptive, story-focused financial plan that **translates** traditional line-item expenses into **specific ministry goals, missions, or program initiatives**.

-highlights "**where**" money is spent to achieve outcomes rather than only listing costs, often organizing expenditures into 4–6 key mission areas to inspire donors and **illustrate impact**.

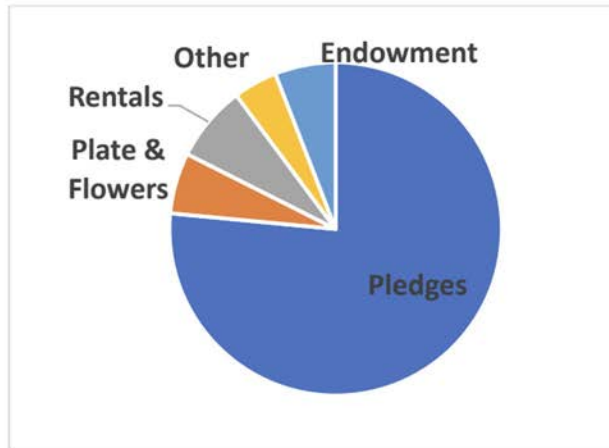


### Telling the story of our faith and action: A Narrative Budget

Holy Innocents is a community of Episcopalians celebrating our tradition and diversity as we live out our faith in the world, raise up new generations of caring people, and gather for support, worship, activism, education, and fun. *A narrative budget spreads fixed costs, like utilities, facilities, and salaries across program areas so that we see the impact of our money.*

### How we fund our budget

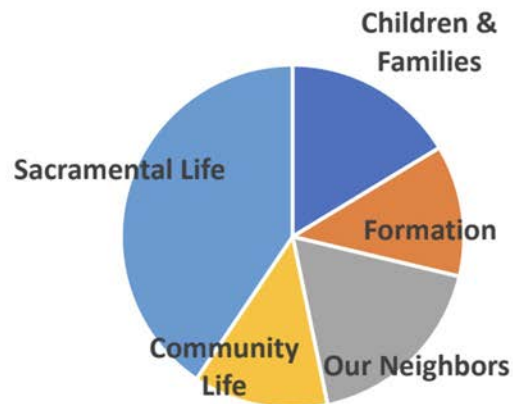
Like many communities of faith, **we rely on pledges and gifts from our members** for the bulk of our budget. Pledges account for 77% of our annual income, with plate offerings and other special offerings comprising another 6%. **We are entirely self-funded.** We do not receive financial support from the diocese for our operations.



|  | <u>2022 Projected Income</u> |     |
|--|------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Pledges</b>                           | \$217,425                    | 77% |
| <b>Plate, Flowers, &amp; Other Gifts</b> | \$16,000                     | 6%  |
| <b>Facility Rental</b>                   | \$20,000                     | 7%  |
| <b>Other Income</b>                      | \$11,575                     | 4%  |
| <b>From Endowment</b>                    | <u>\$16,000</u>              | 6%  |
| <b>Total Income</b>                      | <b>\$280,925</b>             |     |

### How we allocate our budget

**Our budget reflects the values we shape and share with the world around us.** Each of us in our varied ways employing our many blessings and gifts, build a better world through our love of God, self, and neighbor. We align our budget with the work of our life together.



| <b>2022 Budget (Proposed)</b>  |                         |            |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| <b>Children &amp; Families</b> | <b>\$45,203</b>         | <b>16%</b> |
| <b>Formation</b>               | <b>\$34,211</b>         | <b>12%</b> |
| <b>Our Neighbors</b>           | <b>\$51,868</b>         | <b>20%</b> |
| <b>Community Life</b>          | <b>\$34,202</b>         | <b>12%</b> |
| <b>Sacramental Life</b>        | <b><u>\$111,938</u></b> | <b>40%</b> |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>          | <b>\$277,423</b>        |            |

### Children & Families | 16% of our budget

Ask most anyone in our congregation about what makes our community special, and they're certain to talk about our commitment to children and family ministry. Our children and family service is vibrant. high-energy. fully-inclusive. and



## 2 Narrative Budgets

### Handouts:

*Incarnation, New York City*

*St. Paul's, Brookline*



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# Developing a Narrative Budget

Requires tracking by staff and ministry leaders:

*of time/hours*

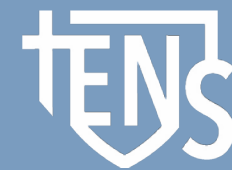
*of space/square footage*

*of engagement/users*



# What are you currently doing that communicates mission well?

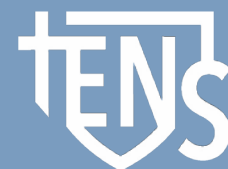
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**What fresh idea might you incorporate in your communication strategy?**

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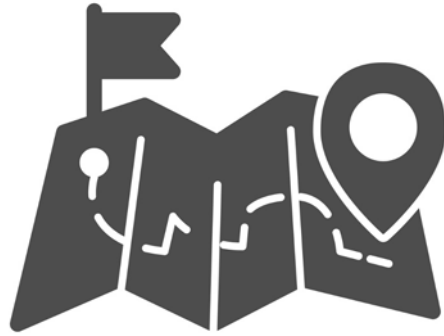


## From A to B on the map

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## **What are the steps required to move from A to B in your stewardship communication?**

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*Take a moment to consider and jot  
down ideas...*

***What next step are you  
excited to take?***



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*At your table:*

***What did you hear from another group member that you think is hopeful and interesting?***



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# Online Giving & Recurring Gifts

*Every congregation should have the ability to collect donations and pledges online and via mobile platforms.*

- ▶ It is no longer usual for individuals to carry cash. More and more people use their credit and debit cards for transactions.
- ▶ Receipts are automatic, as are thank-you acknowledgements
- ▶ Most donation software gives you at least basic information to reach out to visitors – at bare minimum, an email address or phone number tied to a real name
- ▶ QR Codes in the bulletin or pew rack
  - ▶ Laminated cards can be put into the plate and blessed with other gifts at the Offertory



*Stewardship Best Practices*



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# Maximize Donations by Maximizing Opportunity

- ▶ Donor-Centric Fundraising
- ▶ Publicize and implement multiple ways of making gifts for annual campaigns
  - ▶ Gifts directly from retirement accounts (Qualified Charitable Distributions)
    - ▶ Many donors use their Required Minimum Distribution to make their annual gifts
  - ▶ Donor Advised Funds
    - ▶ Donors make a grant from their DAF for the church
  - ▶ Bank Checks / ACH transfers
  - ▶ Online Platforms
  - ▶ Mobile Giving
  - ▶ Workplace / Matching Gifts
  - ▶ Stock and Securities

*Stewardship Best Practices*



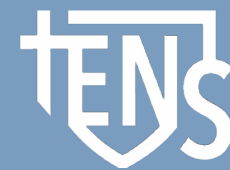
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# Asking for Money for Mission

## *How to make the ask*

- ▶ Renewal: Susan, this year we are raising more money than ever to fund our youth program, outreach to elders, and to help our community. Mary and I made our gift to the campaign, will you join us in supporting the campaign this year?
- ▶ Increase: Jonathan, my husband and I increased our giving this year because we want to see our congregation grow. Can you make a stretch gift to the campaign this year?
- ▶ Tough Year: Dick and Bill, your giving to our church has been so faithful all these years, and I know this has been a tough year for you. Still, I am asking you to make a gift to our pledge campaign, no matter the amount. Will you?
- ▶ Newcomer: Cindy, you and your family are new to our congregation, are there any questions I can answer about why we raise money through pledges or how you can join us?

*Stewardship Best Practices*



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# Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry is a model of design thinking or development that focuses on what is possible, what is good, what is exciting. It purposely does not ask negative questions or frame problems. It is a solutions-based, inclusive way to engage in respectful conversation. In your small-group discussions using the weekly inserts, consider asking the following appreciative inquiry questions:



*Confronting Challenges in Stewardship*



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# Appreciative Inquiry

1. Ask the questions posed in the TENS weekly reflections – they are open-ended and “wondering”
2. What ministry of our congregation is most hopeful or most exciting to you? Why?
3. If money were no object, what service to our neighborhood / neighbors would you hope to begin? Why?
4. What are examples that you can name of nonprofits, organizations, or other churches that are doing remarkable work in our community? Why are they inspiring to you?
5. Which of your gifts are you most willing to share with our church? (some examples: music, accounting, website, answering the phone, yardwork, translation, invitation, having fun, leading groups, cooking food) Why?



*Confronting Challenges in Stewardship*



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# TENS Theme for 2026

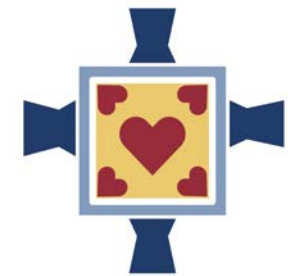
When God arranges a banquet, there is always room for more. If we can't get another chair around the table, we build a bigger one. That's how God's abundance works. This year's theme comes from the spiritual *Plenty Good Room*, which reminds us that in God's House, all we have to do is find a seat and sit down.

This statement of abundance is a testimony to who provide healing, shelter, nourishment, and love to each other and our neighbors. There is always enough to go around.

---

*Then he sent some more servants and said, "Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner ... and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet." **Matthew 22:4, NRSV***

*TENS Theme 2025*



*Plenty*  
**Good Room**



*Invitados*  
**a la mesa**



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# Pledge Campaign Tools

## Formation Tools



**Plenty Good Room**  
An Advent Reflection

Questions for Reflection:  
How do you recognize generosity in your life?

I, Davy Garfield is the Executive Director of TENS and believes in God's all-inclusive invitation to find love when we are gathered together. He lives, works, and ministries in San Francisco, California.

**TENS** THE EPISCOPAL NETWORK FOR STEWARDSHIP

Included:

- ▶ Weekly and Seasonal Reflections – formation tools
- ▶ Pledge / Promise Cards
- ▶ Liturgical Resources and Offertory Practices
- ▶ Sample Letters and Thank-you letters
- ▶ Timeline
- ▶ Logos and Artwork
- ▶ \*new this year: Bible Study and Family Resources
- ▶ \*New this year: Testimonial Scripts and training

*All materials are in English and Spanish, and offered in pdf and MS Word*

*Using the TENS Materials*



**Plenty Good Room**

**Invitados a la mesa**



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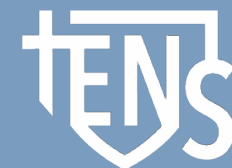
# Stories Tell the Story

*There is no better way to communicate impact than for members to tell their stories of support*

## **Include things like:**

- ▶ What made them come on their first Sunday and keep coming back?
- ▶ What program or ministry they love best
- ▶ What their children have learned in Sunday School
- ▶ A time when the community was *there for them*

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# Other Pledge Campaign Tools

## Pre-Campaign



- ▶ Send Letter from the Clergy outlining the theme



- ▶ Send Letter from the Wardens focusing on your budget and mission.
- ▶ Make sure your donation platform website is ready to go

*Using the TENS Materials*



*Plenty*  
**Good Room**



*Invitados*  
**a la mesa**



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# Other Pledge Campaign Tools

## The Campaign



- ▶ Send Letter from the Campaign Chair with Pledge Materials. Have a Kick-off event (virtual or in-person). Offer testimonials
- ▶ Pledge Cards
  - ▶ Use the model pledge / promise cards to ask for commitments from your members. **Don't forget to include information on time & talent, on legacy giving / estate gifts, gifts of securities, and online giving intentions**
- ▶ Case for Support / Brochure
- ▶ Budget
- ▶ Narrative Budget

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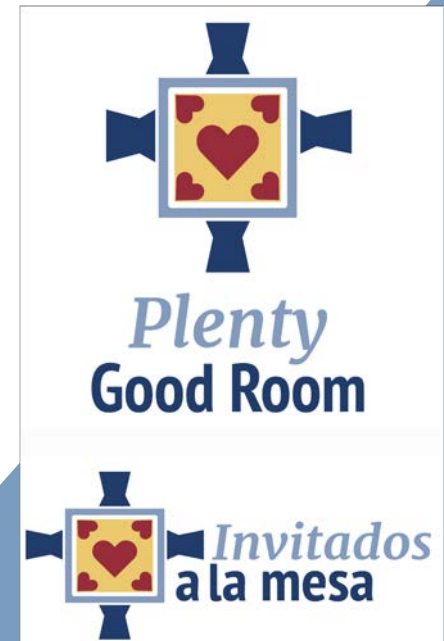
# Other Pledge Campaign Tools

## The Campaign



- ▶ Distribute Weekly Inserts in the bulletin or online
- ▶ Prayers of the People are specially written to bring in the *Plenty Good Room* theme
- ▶ Blessings at the offertory, ingathering and post-communion prayer
- ▶ Small groups or rector's forum discussions of the weekly inserts
- ▶ How are you going to finish your campaign?

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# Other Pledge Campaign Tools

## Post-Campaign



- ▶ Send out Thank-You notes signed by the clergy and/or committee for every pledge or gift of time, talent, & treasure received

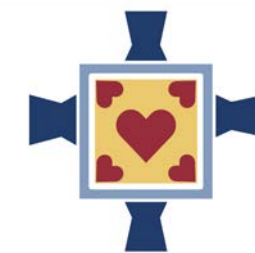
- ▶ Make sure to announce the amount pledged / collected, and a plan to clean-up gifts that haven't yet come in

- ▶ Evaluate your campaign. Watch the TENS Webinar on this topic:  
<https://www.tens.org/webinars-events/tens-webinars/evaluating-your-pledge-campaign/>

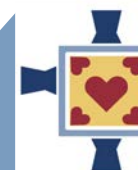
- ▶ Thank your committee and acknowledge their hard work



*Using the TENS Materials*



*Plenty*  
**Good Room**



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*At your table:*

***Sketch out a campaign  
timeline for 2026.***

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Thank you!

For more information, tools, webinars, and resources, visit [www.tens.org](http://www.tens.org)

**Our password for 2026: Matthew22:4**

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