

"A Story to Tell" Webinar Key Points:



1. Why tell stories?

- Jesus was a story-teller. He knew the right story for the right audience told the right way could teach, motivate and inspire (Mathew 13:34)
- Brain research: stories stimulate both sides of the brain: information for the left and structure/flow for the right. With both sides of the brain activated, stories make it easier for us to connect and integrate new information with what we already know, and to relate it to our experiences.

2. Story-telling basics:

- Different generations connect with different kinds of stories (ex. historical vs. current day impact)
- 4 main motivations for stewardship are gratitude for what God has done in our individual lives, faith that God will provide, love and compassion for others, belief in the mission/ministry of the church. Stories should connect with each of these motivations.
- Relatable, ones people can remember and retell, and frequent.
- Use your voice, body and space to enable people to visualize what you're sharing, and to connect with it emotionally
- Less can be more: capture people's attention, give them language that helps them visualize, connect with their emotions, and leave them inspired and empowered to make a change or to act. Can be done in 6 words!

3. Impact stories:

- Financial stewardship means ministry. Tell a simple impact story during the offering (ex. "Last week, our tithes and offerings traveled around the world as they provided money for young Tanzanian Moravians to buy uniforms for school. Where will they go this week?")
- Convey hoped-for outcomes of an ask. Ex. Have a volunteer share their experience with a ministry or activity and how it impacted them instead of just asking people to sign up.

- Multi-channel: don't just tell it during worship. Put in print and online communications, on social media, etc. Whatever methods the church uses.
 - Pictures: stories without words. Way to get young adults involved.
 - Prompts: simple prompts you can provide, such as "Why do you support _____ ministry with your time, talent, and or treasure? What does _____ ministry mean to you? What impact has _____ ministry had on you in the last year?" Start small and see what God does.
4. Bringing Finances to Life:
- Narrative budgets and/or narrative financial statements: tell the story of how money enables ministry. Accounting tool becomes a visioning tool.
 - Language to build a bridge between money and ministry: "Look what God is up to when the lights are on at our church", then tell story. Tell story of how the \$200 spent on office supplies enabled the church to work toward its mission to love your neighbors, etc.
 - *Rich Church, Poor Church* by Clif Christopher: church with a "rich church" mindset has vision that inspires; it tells stories to answer, "Why should I give my money to the church?" Biblical stories to ground people in the theology of our identity as God's stewards, or impact stories...the words of people who have a passion for a ministry, explaining how a mission meets needs, articulating how people grow as a result. The bottom line is a rich church mindset isn't focused on the budget or having to have money to keep the church alive; it's focused on the faith and fulfillment aspect of using finances for God's work.
 - Creative testimonials: About money. Someone who made a pledge for the first time, or who increased a commitment. Invite someone who set up a recurring gift to explain why and what impact that has had on them. Consider telling a story of financial stewardship yourself. Think of the people who left bequests to the church and see if you can tell those stories. Talking about money when you aren't asking for any, and through a well-told story, is very powerful and important as you invite people to grow in their financial stewardship.

5. Next steps:

- What are your stories? Think about ministries and the impact they have and how to tell those stories.
- Who can tell the stories? Identify people who have gifts for story-telling: that's writing, taking photos, interviewing, visualizing, creating
- Plan: when to tell, how to tell (verbal, in print, online etc.), calendar. Look at other churches who tell stories well!
- Let MMFA help.