

ChatGPT transcript

Prompts in italics

a progressive christian church wants to launch a stewardship campaign focused on proportional giving. What are some key themes and ideas to incorporate?

What are some ideas for making this approach invitational, to avoid people feeling obligated or even guilted into giving?

Launching a proportional giving stewardship campaign in a **progressive Christian church** provides an opportunity to invite people into deeper spiritual, communal, and financial engagement in ways that align with values of inclusion, integrity, and justice. Below are **key themes** and **ideas for an invitational approach** that avoids guilt or obligation:

Key Themes for a Proportional Giving Campaign

1. Discipleship and Spiritual Growth

- Frame giving as a **spiritual practice**, not a financial transaction.
- Emphasize that generosity grows out of gratitude and deepening faith.
- Link proportional giving to **spiritual maturity**—not just what we give, but how we relate to what we have.

“Proportional giving is about intentionally aligning our finances with our faith.”

2. Justice and Equity

- Affirm that giving proportionally (e.g., a percentage of income) is more equitable than setting flat amounts.
- Reflect progressive values by connecting stewardship to **economic justice** and **fairness**.

“We each give according to our means, so that together we can do what none of us could do alone.”

3. Partnership and Shared Responsibility

- Highlight the communal aspect: “We’re in this together.”
- Describe the congregation as a **cooperative body**, where every part contributes to the whole.

“We all carry part of the weight—some a little, some more—but each contribution matters.”

4. Transparency and Trust

- Be open about the church’s financial needs, goals, and how funds will be used.
- Show that stewardship is grounded in **mutual trust**, not pressure.

5. Impact and Mission

- Focus on how giving fuels **life-changing ministry**, outreach, and justice work.
- Tell real stories: transformed lives, supported families, community change.

“Your giving becomes food, shelter, music, hope, welcome.”

Making It Invitational (Not Guilt-Based)

1. Use the Language of Invitation and Discernment

- Invite members to **prayerfully consider** what percentage of their income reflects a faithful, joyful response.
- Encourage each person or household to discern what sacrificial generosity looks like *for them*.

“We’re not asking for equal gifts, but for equal commitment to the journey of generosity.”

2. Share Testimonies (Not Targets)

- Let members tell stories of how proportional giving changed their relationship with money or deepened their faith.
- Avoid top-down asks—lift up **peer voices** that feel authentic and inspiring.

3. Provide Tools, Not Pressure

- Offer practical resources like sample budgets, “giving step” charts, and stories of growth.
- Include worksheets or guides to help people explore what percentage giving could look like based on their situation.

4. Celebrate All Participation

- Affirm first-time givers, returning givers, and those increasing their percentage.
- Reinforce that **intentionality**, not amount, is what matters most.

“This isn’t about fundraising—it’s about faith-raising.”

5. Acknowledge Economic Realities

- Honor the diversity of financial situations in the congregation without shame.

- Make space for those struggling financially to be seen as full participants in the church.

“In times of plenty and times of hardship, we are still one body.”

Would you like sample materials like a **letter from the pastor**, a **commitment card design**, or ideas for a **worship series** to support this campaign?

provide a draft letter form a pastor, it must be short enough to fit on one page

Certainly. Here’s a **concise, one-page draft letter** from the pastor for a proportional giving stewardship campaign in a progressive Christian church. It uses invitational, grace-filled language, avoiding pressure or guilt:

Dear [Church Name] Family,

As we look ahead with hope and purpose, I invite you to take part in a spiritual practice that shapes both our hearts and our community: **proportional giving**.

Stewardship isn’t just about sustaining a budget. It’s about aligning our lives—our values, our resources, our intentions—with the grace we’ve received. Giving a meaningful percentage of our income is one way we express gratitude, deepen our trust in God, and invest in the life we’re building together.

Every household is different. There’s no set amount. This is not about pressure—it’s about prayer. What percentage of your income feels faithful, freeing, and intentional for you? Whether that’s 2%, 5%, 10%, or another number, your thoughtful commitment makes a real difference.

We give not out of guilt, but out of grace. Your generosity supports worship, outreach, care, justice, and the daily ministry of this beloved church.

In the coming weeks, we’ll be sharing stories, tools, and opportunities to reflect. I hope you’ll join me in discerning your giving for the year ahead—not as a duty, but as a joyful act of faith.

With gratitude and hope,

[Pastor’s Name]

Pastor, [Church Name]

Would you like a matching **pledge card**, a **follow-up email**, or suggested **scripture pairings** for the campaign theme?

provide a commitment card design

Here's a **simple, clear, and invitational design** for a *proportional giving commitment card*. It fits on a half-page (5.5" x 8.5") or full-page if preferred, and uses grace-centered language appropriate for a progressive Christian context.

[Church Name]
2025 Stewardship Commitment Card
Living Faithfully through Proportional Giving

Name(s): _____

Phone/Email (optional): _____

1. My/Our Financial Commitment for 2025:

I/we commit to give:

- \$ _____ **per week / month / year** (circle one)
- **OR** _____ % of my/our income

- This is a new commitment
 - This is an increase over last year
 - I/we are not able to make a financial commitment at this time, but want to stay connected
-

2. I/We would like to give:

- By check
 - Through online giving / auto draft
 - Through gifts of stock or other assets
 - I/we would like help setting up online giving
-

3. (Optional) I/We would like to offer time or talents in:

- Worship (music, reading, setup)
 - Hospitality (greeting, coffee hour)
 - Justice & Outreach
 - Children & Youth
 - Pastoral Care & Connection
 - Other: _____
-

Thank you for your thoughtful and faithful commitment.

Your generosity supports a ministry rooted in compassion, justice, and love.
This card is a spiritual commitment and can be changed at any time.

Would you like this as a **printable PDF layout**, in **digital form (for online submission)**, or with **branding/visuals specific to your church**?

How can we link these proportional giving ideas to this overall theme for the church year "Built to grow: Leaning into Jesus with Deep Roots & Bold Faith."

That's a rich and inspiring theme — **"Built to Grow: Leaning into Jesus with Deep Roots & Bold Faith."** It aligns beautifully with proportional giving when framed as an act of rootedness, spiritual maturity, and courageous discipleship. Below are **key linking ideas**, a **core message**, and ways to integrate the theme into your campaign storytelling, visuals, and worship.

Linking Proportional Giving to the Theme

◆ ***Deep Roots (Spiritual Grounding)***

- **Proportional giving is a rooted practice**—it grows out of sustained trust in God, not emotional appeals or passing obligation.
- Just like a tree sends down roots for long-term strength, **we deepen our financial commitments as a way of anchoring ourselves in faith.**
- Rootedness invites consistency: "I give in proportion to what I receive, season by season, because my faith runs deep."

"Like trees planted by streams of water, we grow by giving regularly, faithfully, and proportionally." (Psalm 1:3)

◆ ***Bold Faith (Courageous Generosity)***

- Proportional giving requires **boldness**—it’s not random, but a clear, prayerful decision to trust God with real resources.
- Inviting people to take a bold step—perhaps increasing their giving by 1%, or giving proportionally for the first time—becomes part of the theme’s challenge to live courageously.
- Celebrate bold faith not by dollar amounts, but by movement: first-time givers, percentage-based giving, or stories of stretching.

“Faith isn’t just what we believe—it’s what we dare to do with what we’ve been given.”

◆ ***Built to Grow (Long-Term Vision)***

- Proportional giving isn’t about meeting short-term needs—it’s a **practice that scales with growth**. As income grows, giving can grow, too.
- It reflects a **long-haul commitment to building the church we want future generations to inherit**.
- Invite people to see their giving not as paying for today, but as **planting seeds for tomorrow**.

“We are building a future of compassion, justice, and welcome—brick by brick, gift by gift.”

Sample Core Message

This year, we are leaning into Jesus with deep roots and bold faith. Proportional giving is one way we embody that vision. Rooted in gratitude, and bold in trust, we commit to give in proportion to what we receive—faithfully, joyfully, and intentionally.

Our church is built to grow—not only in size or programs, but in spiritual depth, in justice work, in compassion, and in impact. Your commitment, shaped by prayer and grounded in your life, is one more root in the strong, growing body of Christ.

Worship and Visual Integration

- **Sermon Ideas:**
 - “Rooted in Grace, Growing in Generosity” – Link giving to the Parable of the Sower, Psalm 1, or Jeremiah 17:7–8.

- “The Widow’s Bold Gift” – Not about the amount, but the courage to give intentionally (Mark 12:41–44).
 - “Building a Future We Can’t Yet See” – Abraham stepping out in faith (Hebrews 11), or Nehemiah rebuilding the walls with shared commitment.
 - **Imagery & Symbols:**
 - Tree with deep roots and wide branches.
 - Bricks/stones with words like *gratitude, faith, justice, welcome*—each representing gifts that “build.”
 - Growth rings on a tree trunk showing how spiritual practices deepen over time.
 - **Testimonies:**
 - Ask members to share stories of when they made a bold financial or faith commitment.
 - Encourage someone to reflect on what “growing into proportional giving” has looked like for them over time.
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Would you like help developing:

- A **sermon series outline** based on this theme?
- **Visual assets** or logos tied to “Built to Grow”?
- A **bulletin insert** or worship liturgy tying generosity to bold faith?

Let me know how deep you want to go.

*Go back to the prompts about linking proportional giving to the overall theme for the church year. We modified the theme to **Live the Life: Leaning into Jesus with Deep roots and bold faith**. Can you update the response, particularly the sample core message, to reflect this?*

Excellent — the new theme, “**Live the Life: Leaning into Jesus with Deep Roots and Bold Faith,**” works even better with proportional giving, because it centers on *embodied discipleship* — living faith in tangible ways. Here’s a refreshed and expanded framework, followed by an updated **core message** that ties it all together.

Linking Proportional Giving to *Live the Life: Leaning into Jesus with Deep Roots & Bold Faith*

Deep Roots — Grounded in Gratitude

- Proportional giving is an expression of spiritual rootedness. It’s not a reaction to a budget need, but a *way of life*—a steady rhythm of gratitude and trust.

- Just as strong roots sustain growth through every season, regular, percentage-based giving grounds us in gratitude and stability.

“They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in season.” — *Psalms 1:3*

Bold Faith — Courageous Generosity

- Proportional giving is bold because it requires *intentional trust*. Instead of giving what’s left over, we give from the first fruits—an act of courage and faith.
- Encourage each member to consider what bold generosity looks like in their own life: perhaps a first-time gift, a move toward a new percentage, or renewed consistency.

“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” — *Matthew 6:21*

Live the Life — Faith in Action

- This theme is about *embodied discipleship*: living what we say we believe. Proportional giving turns belief into practice—it’s faith expressed through stewardship.
- The church’s life—its worship, care, justice, and joy—is built not on a few large gifts, but on *many faithful ones*, lived out week by week.

“Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.” — *1 John 3:18*

Updated Core Message

This year, our theme—**Live the Life: Leaning into Jesus with Deep Roots and Bold Faith**—calls us to move from belief to embodiment.

To “live the life” means grounding ourselves in gratitude and growing in generosity. Proportional giving—committing a chosen percentage of what we receive to God’s work—is one of the ways we root our faith deeply and live it boldly.

Deep roots keep us steady when life shifts. Bold faith helps us reach toward what God can do next. Together, they nurture a life that reflects Jesus’ love in real, visible ways.

As you prayerfully consider your giving for the year ahead, think not of obligation, but of invitation—an opportunity to live your faith, to lean into love, and to help this community grow strong and fruitful.

Live the Life. Lean into Jesus. Grow deep. Give boldly.

Would you like me to draft a **matching one-page letter from the pastor or stewardship chair** using this updated theme and tone (something you could send with a commitment card or include in the bulletin)?

Here are some additional thoughts to weave into a letter:

Great — please go ahead and share your additional thoughts, and I’ll weave them into a cohesive, one-page stewardship letter that fits the **“Live the Life: Leaning into Jesus with Deep Roots and Bold Faith”** theme.

Like a strong, living tree our church draws life from deep roots, those who came before us, is sustained by the love of Christ, and we now feed it with hope for future generations. Stewardship is about being a part of God’s living, growing work through our church. (Leave a space for examples. This is an invitation, not an obligation. It’s an invitation to intentional giving and goal setting, together. Our intentional pledge commitment helps the church set ministry goals for 2026. Think in percentages, not dollars, with every increase representing deepening our trust that God provides and our giving will make a difference. We already do this together. It’s how we’ve gotten this far. What we are asking is to keep growing, spiritually as individually and collectively as the body of Christ, as a congregation.

Perfect — your additions give this letter strong imagery, a living metaphor, and a natural flow from gratitude to invitation. Here’s a polished **one-page stewardship letter** that weaves your words with the updated theme *“Live the Life: Leaning into Jesus with Deep Roots and Bold Faith.”*

Dear [Church Name] Family,

Like a strong, living tree, our church draws life from deep roots—from those who came before us—roots nourished by the love of Christ. Today we are sustained by that same love, and we now feed the tree with hope for future generations.

Stewardship is about being part of God’s living, growing work through our church.
(Here you can insert one or two vivid examples—lives touched, ministries launched, or moments of renewal—showing that growth in action.)

This year’s theme, **“Live the Life: Leaning into Jesus with Deep Roots and Bold Faith,”** invites us to deepen our spiritual roots and stretch toward bold faith. Giving is one way we live the life of faith—grounded in gratitude, reaching outward in generosity.

This is an invitation, not an obligation. It's an invitation to intentional giving and goal-setting, together. Your pledge helps the church set faithful ministry goals for 2026. When we give with intention, we strengthen our shared ministry and open new possibilities for love and service.

We encourage you to **think in percentages, not dollars**. Each step toward proportional giving reflects deepening trust that God provides and that our generosity makes a difference.

We already live this way together—that's how we've come this far. What we are asking now is simply to keep growing: spiritually, individually, and collectively as the body of Christ.

With gratitude and hope,
[Pastor's or Stewardship Chair's Name]
on behalf of the Stewardship Team

Would you like me to produce a **version formatted for printing or bulletin insert** (with spacing, headers, and optional graphic elements like a tree or roots motif)?

I think I asked you for an explanation of proportional giving in an earlier thread. Can you find that for me

I don't have access to your past chats directly, so I can't retrieve a specific earlier thread. However, I can recreate the explanation I gave you (or one very close to it) — here's a solid, church-friendly version of an **explanation of proportional giving**, suitable for use in print, teaching, or campaign materials:

What Is Proportional Giving?

Proportional giving means deciding to give a *percentage* of your income rather than a fixed dollar amount.

It's an intentional, faith-based way of giving that links our generosity to what we have received, recognizing that both our resources and our opportunities are gifts from God.

Rather than asking, "*What can I spare?*" proportional giving asks, "*What portion of what I have been given can I joyfully and faithfully return to God's work?*"

Why It Matters

- **Equity:** Each person gives in proportion to their resources, making generosity fair and sustainable for all.

- **Intentionality:** It transforms giving from a last-minute decision into a spiritual practice grounded in gratitude.
 - **Growth:** As income or circumstances change, giving naturally grows or adjusts—just as our faith grows through different seasons.
 - **Spiritual Depth:** It helps us trust that God’s abundance is greater than our scarcity.
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How to Begin

1. **Choose a starting percentage**—perhaps 2%, 5%, or another level that feels both faithful and possible.
 2. **Review it annually** as part of your spiritual growth—many people aim to grow their percentage each year.
 3. **Celebrate the act, not the amount.** Each step toward proportional giving represents deeper trust and participation in God’s work.
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Scriptural Roots

- *“All shall give as they are able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God.”* — **Deuteronomy 16:17**
 - *“They gave according to their means, and even beyond their means.”* — **2 Corinthians 8:3**
 - *“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”* — **Matthew 6:21**
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Would you like me to tailor this explanation into a **handout or bulletin insert** (perhaps titled *“What Is Proportional Giving?”*), formatted to fit visually with your *“Live the Life”* campaign materials?

yes a handout

Here’s a polished **half-page handout** you can print or insert in bulletins for your *Live the Life* stewardship season. It’s designed to be visually clean, warm, and invitational — suitable for pew racks, welcome tables, or email attachments.

Live the Life: Leaning into Jesus with Deep Roots and Bold Faith

What Is Proportional Giving?

Proportional giving means choosing to give a *percentage* of your income rather than a fixed dollar amount.

It's a way of linking generosity to gratitude — giving as a spiritual practice rather than a financial transaction.

Why Proportional Giving Matters

- **Rooted in Gratitude** – We give in proportion to what we've received, grounding our faith in thanksgiving.
 - **Fair and Faithful** – Everyone can participate according to ability; no gift is “too small” when it's intentional.
 - **Spiritually Growing** – As our circumstances change, our giving can grow — deepening trust that God provides.
 - **Sustaining Community** – Consistent, percentage-based giving helps our church plan boldly and serve faithfully.
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How to Begin

1. **Choose a Starting Percentage** – Maybe 2%, 5%, or another number that feels both faithful and possible.
 2. **Review Each Year** – Take a small step forward annually; growth is part of discipleship.
 3. **Give with Joy** – Celebrate the practice, not the amount. Every step expresses deeper faith and love.
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Scriptural Roots

“All shall give as they are able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God.” —

Deuteronomy 16:17

“They gave according to their means, and even beyond their means.” — *2 Corinthians 8:3*

“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” — *Matthew 6:21*

Together We Grow

Like a strong, living tree, our church draws life from deep roots and grows through faithful branches — you and me.

Proportional giving helps us **live the life** of gratitude, courage, and hope — nurturing ministries today and planting seeds for tomorrow.

Would you like me to create a **print-ready PDF layout** of this handout (with space for your church name/logo and the *Live the Life* tree motif)?

Can you draft a short thank you note to acknowledge pledges

Here's a short, warm, and adaptable **thank-you note** to acknowledge pledge commitments for your *Live the Life* stewardship campaign. It's suitable for an email, letter insert, or printed card.

Subject: Thank You for Your Commitment to Live the Life

Dear [Name],

Thank you for your pledge to support the ministry of [Church Name] for 2026. Your commitment helps our congregation **live the life** of faith — *leaning into Jesus with deep roots and bold faith*.

Because of your generosity, we are able to worship, serve, and care for our community in ways that make Christ's love visible and real. Each pledge, no matter the size, strengthens the roots of this living, growing church and nourishes hope for future generations.

Thank you for your faithfulness and trust in God's abundance. Together, we are living the life we are called to — deeply rooted, boldly growing, and joyfully giving.

With gratitude,
[Pastor's or Stewardship Chair's Name]
[Church Name]

Would you like me to make a **shorter postcard-style version** (3–4 lines for handwritten notes) or a **formatted thank-you letterhead layout** for print?

Can you tailor this to the theme of the campaign, referring back to the pledge letter above and keep it to postcard length

Here's a **postcard-length thank-you note** that ties directly back to your *Live the Life: Leaning into Jesus with Deep Roots and Bold Faith* campaign and the imagery from your pledge letter:

Front (optional graphic):  *Live the Life — Deep Roots. Bold Faith.*

Back (message):

Dear [Name],

Thank you for your 2026 pledge to [Church Name].

Like a strong, living tree, our church draws life from deep roots and grows through your generosity. Your commitment helps us *live the life*—leaning into Jesus with deep roots of gratitude and the bold faith to grow and serve.

We're grateful for your trust, your faith, and your part in nurturing this living, growing community of Christ.

With heartfelt thanks,

[Name]

on behalf of the Stewardship Team

Would you like me to format this for **printing on a 4x6 postcard**, including placement for your logo or the *Live the Life* tree image?

yes

Great. Below is a **print-ready 4 × 6 postcard layout**, with clear guidance for front/back content, margins, and typography that a local printer or online service (Vistaprint, Moo, Staples, etc.) can use without further interpretation.

4 × 6 Postcard Layout

Campaign Theme: *Live the Life: Leaning into Jesus with Deep Roots and Bold Faith*

FRONT (Image Side)

Centered or Upper Third (Large Text):

LIVE THE LIFE

Subheading (smaller):

Leaning into Jesus with

Deep Roots & Bold Faith

Visual Element:

- Tree with visible roots and growing branches
(*roots = those who came before us; branches = future generations*)

Footer (small text, optional):

[Church Name] • Stewardship 2026

BACK (Message Side)

Left Side (Message Area – approx. 3" wide)

Dear [Name],

Thank you for your 2026 pledge to [Church Name].

Like a strong, living tree, our church draws life from deep roots and grows through your generosity. Your commitment helps us *live the life*—leaning into Jesus with deep roots of gratitude and the bold faith to grow and serve.

We are grateful for your trust and for the part you play in nurturing this living, growing community of Christ.

With heartfelt thanks,

[Name]

on behalf of the Stewardship Team

Right Side (Standard Postcard Address Area)

- Light vertical divider line
 - Space for stamp (upper right)
 - Address block below
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Typography Suggestions (optional, but helpful)

- **Headline:** Serif or humanist font (e.g., Garamond, Libre Baskerville, Merriweather)
 - **Body text:** Clean serif or sans-serif (10–11 pt equivalent)
 - **Accent words:** *Live the Life, Deep Roots, Bold Faith* in italic or small caps
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If you'd like, I can next:

- Adjust the wording to **handwritten-note length** (even shorter)
- Provide **exact printer specs** (bleed, safe zones)
- Create a **matching pledge-thank-you email** using the same language and imagery

ChatGPT can make mistakes. Check important info.