

ChatGPT transcript

Prompts in italics

I am in charge of stewardship (fundraising) at a progressive church. We ask people to make pledges for annual giving. We rely on scripture to guide and inspire our annual pledge drives, emphasizing that giving is a faith practice, that giving benefits the giver as well as the people benefiting from the gifts. We are thinking about using a popular movie as inspiration for a campaign, one that has a message aligned with our goals. The movie does not need to be in a church or faith context, but characters motivated by values congruent with faith would be a bonus. Can you suggest some movies and how the movie could inspire a theme and important campaign elements?

That's a creative and powerful idea! A movie can provide a story arc and emotional resonance that parallels the spiritual and practical meaning of stewardship. Here are some films (a mix of classics and contemporary options) along with suggested themes and campaign elements you could draw from each:

1. *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946)

Theme: *"Your gifts change lives."*

- **Inspiration:** George Bailey learns that his small, steady acts of generosity ripple outward to transform his whole community.
- **Campaign message:** Every pledge—no matter the size—sustains the whole fabric of our church family and beyond.
- **Elements:** Testimonials from members about how the church has made a difference in their lives; campaign title like *"A Wonderful Life Together."*

2. *Pay It Forward* (2000)

Theme: *"Giving multiplies."*

- **Inspiration:** A child's simple idea—that one generous act can inspire three more—becomes a movement.
- **Campaign message:** Our pledges aren't just about sustaining the church budget—they ripple outward in service, compassion, and justice.
- **Elements:** Create a "Pay It Forward Challenge" where members share stories of generosity they've received and passed along.

3. Coco (2017)

Theme: *“Remember, honor, give forward.”*

- **Inspiration:** The film emphasizes family, memory, and carrying traditions into the future.
 - **Campaign message:** Giving honors those who came before and builds a legacy for those who will come after.
 - **Elements:** Encourage people to dedicate their pledge in honor of someone who inspired their faith.
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4. Hidden Figures (2016)

Theme: *“Together we can achieve more.”*

- **Inspiration:** The film shows how overlooked contributions can change history.
 - **Campaign message:** Every pledge matters—sometimes in unseen but powerful ways—just as every gift and every giver has value.
 - **Elements:** Highlight ministries and behind-the-scenes volunteers whose work is made possible by pledges.
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5. Encanto (2021)

Theme: *“The gift is in you.”*

- **Inspiration:** Each member of the Madrigal family has a unique gift that only has meaning when shared in love.
 - **Campaign message:** God has given each of us gifts; pledging is one way we share them for the good of all.
 - **Elements:** Frame pledges as spiritual gifts—time, talent, treasure—woven together to strengthen the whole community.
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6. The Lord of the Rings (2001–2003)

Theme: *“We carry it together.”*

- **Inspiration:** No one can bear the burden alone; the fellowship thrives because each contributes.

- **Campaign message:** Stewardship is shared—our collective commitment gives us strength for the journey.
 - **Elements:** Use imagery of a fellowship, journey, or shared quest toward hope and renewal.
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7. Soul (2020)

Theme: *“Life’s purpose is in the giving.”*

- **Inspiration:** The movie teaches that the meaning of life is not in achievement alone but in everyday acts of love, presence, and generosity.
 - **Campaign message:** Pledging is an act of aligning our daily lives with our deepest values.
 - **Elements:** Invite members to reflect on what gives their lives meaning, and connect their giving to those purposes.
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✦ **Bonus approach:** Instead of just referencing the movie, you could screen clips in worship, print visuals/quotes from the film in pledge materials, and invite members to see themselves as part of the same story.

Would you like me to **draft one full campaign outline** (e.g., sermon tie-ins, visuals, slogan, pledge card design) using one of these films as a case study, so you can see how it all fits together?

Yes, use Soul as a case study for a full campaign outline. Also provide a draft letter from the pastor announcing the campaign and a draft letter to be mailed out with the pledge card

Perfect—*Soul* is an excellent choice: visually beautiful, emotionally powerful, and deeply aligned with faith themes about meaning, purpose, and giving. Below is a full campaign outline, plus two draft letters you can adapt.

Campaign Outline – “Living Soulfully: Giving with Purpose”

Theme

Inspired by Pixar's *Soul*: *Life's purpose is found in everyday acts of love and generosity.*
Tagline: "*Living Soulfully: Giving with Purpose.*"

Core Message

Our annual pledge drive is not just about raising money. It's about aligning our lives with God's purposes. Like Joe Gardner in *Soul*, we often think meaning is found only in big achievements. But the movie reminds us that life's real meaning is in the everyday gifts we share. In the same way, stewardship is a spiritual practice that helps us live more soulfully—our giving blesses us even as it blesses others.

Campaign Elements

1. Sermon Tie-Ins

- *Week 1*: Scripture: Micah 6:8 ("Do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with your God"). Connect to *Soul*'s message that true purpose lies in how we live daily.
- *Week 2*: Scripture: Luke 12:34 ("Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"). Tie pledging to directing our hearts toward God's dream for the world.
- *Week 3*: Scripture: Acts 2:42–47 (sharing possessions, breaking bread, praising God). Connect to community and generosity as "soulful living."

2. Visuals & Materials

- Use *Soul*'s vibrant colors (blues, purples, golds) in pledge materials.
- Feature a campaign logo: *Living Soulfully* in a circle motif (echoing the glowing soul orbs in the movie).
- Short quotes from the movie in bulletin inserts: "*The spark isn't your purpose, it's your way of being alive.*"

3. Member Engagement

- Invite 3–4 members to share "soul stories" in worship: small moments when giving (time, talent, treasure) brought them joy or meaning.
- Encourage members to write on their pledge cards: "*I give because...*" and display responses on a "Soul Wall" in fellowship hall.

4. Music

- Use jazz or soulful instrumental pieces in worship to echo the film's soundtrack.
 - One Sunday could feature a jazz offertory as a celebration of gifts.
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Draft Letter from Pastor Announcing the Campaign

Dear Friends in Christ,

This fall we begin our annual stewardship season under the theme “**Living Soulfully: Giving with Purpose.**” Inspired by the film *Soul*, we will explore how generosity helps us discover what it means to live fully, faithfully, and joyfully.

In *Soul*, the main character, Joe Gardner, thinks his purpose lies only in one big achievement. But he learns that life’s true meaning is found in small, daily acts of love, connection, and joy. Our life together as a church is much the same. The ministries we cherish—from worship to outreach to fellowship—are built on the daily, faithful generosity of each member.

This year’s campaign is about more than budgets—it’s about aligning our lives with God’s call to live soulfully. When we give, we don’t just support the church—we experience deeper joy and meaning ourselves.

Over the coming weeks, you’ll hear stories from members, reflect on scripture, and be invited to consider how your giving can be a soulful expression of your faith. I ask you to prayerfully prepare to make your pledge for the coming year.

Together, let’s live soulfully and give with purpose.

With gratitude,
[Pastor’s Name]

Draft Letter with Pledge Card Mailing

Dear [Name],

Enclosed you will find your pledge card for the coming year, as part of our “**Living Soulfully: Giving with Purpose**” campaign.

Our church is a community where lives are touched every day—through worship that lifts our spirits, service that reaches those in need, and fellowship that sustains us. None of this happens without your generosity.

Like Joe Gardner discovers in *Soul*, meaning is found not only in grand accomplishments but in small, faithful acts of love and sharing. Your pledge is one of those soulful acts—it sustains our ministry, strengthens our community, and deepens your own spiritual journey.

We ask that you prayerfully consider your pledge for the year ahead. Every gift matters. Every pledge is a vital expression of faith and purpose.

Please return your pledge card by **[date]**, or bring it with you to worship on **Pledge Sunday, [date]**.

Thank you for the many ways you give—of your time, your talents, and your resources. Together, let’s live soulfully and give with purpose.

With deep gratitude,
[Stewardship Chair’s Name]
On behalf of the Stewardship Team

Would you like me to also create a **sample pledge card design** (with wording and layout suggestions) that fits the *Soul* theme? That way, your whole packet has a unified look and message.

Can you create multiple versions of this letter tailored by generation: Traditionalists, Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z?

Absolutely. Below are **five tailored versions of the pledge-mailing letter**, each tuned to the life experience, values, and language that tend to resonate with that generation—while keeping the theology and *Soul* campaign theme consistent across the congregation.

You can mix and match tone as needed, but this gives you clear starting points.

1. Traditionalists (born ~1928–1945)

Tone: Grateful, legacy-focused, church-centered, steady

Letter Draft

Dear [Name],

For generations, faithful people like you have sustained the life and ministry of this church. Because of your devotion, worship has been offered, children have been nurtured in faith, and neighbors have been cared for in times of need.

This year, our stewardship campaign—“**Living Soulfully: Giving with Purpose**”—invites us to reflect on how meaning is found in a life of faithfulness and generosity. Scripture reminds us that “those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish” (Psalm 92). Your giving has helped this congregation flourish.

Your pledge for the coming year is an expression of gratitude for God’s blessings and a gift to future generations who will find welcome, hope, and belonging here. We are deeply thankful for your continued commitment and for the legacy you are helping to preserve.

Please prayerfully consider your pledge and return the enclosed card by [date]. Know that your faithfulness makes a lasting difference.

With sincere appreciation,
[Name]

2. Baby Boomers (born ~1946–1964)

Tone: Purpose, responsibility, impact, shared leadership

Letter Draft

Dear [Name],

Our church exists because people have stepped forward, taken responsibility, and invested in something larger than themselves. Your generosity has helped shape a community that worships deeply, serves faithfully, and responds to the needs of the world.

Our stewardship theme this year—“**Living Soulfully: Giving with Purpose**”—asks us to reflect on how our values show up in our daily choices. In the film *Soul*, meaning is discovered not in achievement alone, but in living intentionally and generously. That insight mirrors our faith: how we give reflects who we are and what we believe matters most.

Your pledge is a way to ensure that this church continues to make a real difference—locally and beyond our walls. We invite you to prayerfully consider your commitment for the coming year and to return your pledge card by [date].

Thank you for the leadership, care, and dedication you bring to this community.

With gratitude,
[Name]

3. Generation X (born ~1965–1980)

Tone: Practical, transparent, meaningful, community-focused

Letter Draft

Dear [Name],

Life is busy. Time and resources are always stretched. That's why we're especially grateful for your thoughtful support of our church's mission.

This year's stewardship theme—“**Living Soulfully: Giving with Purpose**”—is about aligning what we value with how we live. In *Soul*, the central insight is simple but powerful: meaning isn't found only in big moments, but in the everyday choices that shape our lives and our communities.

Your pledge directly supports ministries that matter—worship, pastoral care, justice work, education, and outreach. It keeps this church strong, stable, and ready to respond when needs arise.

We ask you to prayerfully consider your pledge for the year ahead and return your card by [date]. Every gift counts, and every pledge helps sustain a community that makes a difference.

Thank you for being part of this shared work.

Sincerely,
[Name]

4. Millennials (born ~1981–1996)

Tone: Values-driven, authentic, communal, impact-oriented

Letter Draft

Dear [Name],

Many people today are asking big questions: *What really matters? How do I live with integrity? How can my choices make a difference?* Our stewardship campaign this year speaks directly to those questions.

“**Living Soulfully: Giving with Purpose**” is inspired by *Soul*, a story that reminds us that meaning isn't about status or success—it's about connection, generosity, and showing up for one another. That's also at the heart of our faith.

Your pledge supports a church that seeks justice, builds community, welcomes questions, and acts on its values. Giving isn't just about funding programs—it's about participating in something hopeful and life-giving.

We invite you to reflect on what you value most and to make a pledge that feels authentic and sustainable for you. Together, our shared generosity allows this church to live its mission with courage and compassion.

With appreciation,
[Name]

5. Generation Z (born ~1997–2012)

Tone: Relational, honest, purpose-forward, inclusive

(This version may be especially effective for younger adults receiving mail at home or alongside digital messaging.)

Letter Draft

Dear [Name],

At its core, this church is about belonging, purpose, and making a difference in the world—and that doesn't happen by accident.

Our stewardship theme this year—“**Living Soulfully: Giving with Purpose**”—invites us to think about how our everyday choices shape who we are becoming. In *Soul*, meaning isn't found in chasing one big goal, but in living with intention, care, and generosity.

Your pledge helps create a community that shows up—for worship, for justice, for neighbors in need, and for one another. Giving is one way to put values into action and be part of something bigger than yourself.

We hope you'll take a moment to reflect on what matters to you and consider making a pledge that feels right for this season of your life. Every contribution helps move this shared work forward.

Thank you for being part of this community.

Gratefully,
[Name]

Optional Next Step

If you'd like, I can:

- **Align these letters with one shared opening paragraph** so they feel clearly part of a single campaign, or
- **Create a one-page internal guide** explaining *why* each version differs—helpful for stewardship committees and pastors.

Just tell me how far you'd like to take it.

ChatGPT can make mistakes. Check important info.