

## Stewardship Tips for Virtual Ministry – Q’s and A’s

### **Q: What is First Fruits Giving and why is it so advantageous to the church?**

A: First Fruits Giving is a simple way to make regular offerings to your parish through your chequing account or credit card. It represents a very deliberate and planned approach to annual giving and ensures that your parish receives the funds it needs to support ongoing ministry even when you might be absent from church.

The Diocese of Toronto encourages parishes to use the Pre-Authorized Remittance program operated through the United Church of Canada. For more information call (416) 231-5931 x3050 or visit [www.united-church.ca/par](http://www.united-church.ca/par)

### **Q: Regarding the UCC PAR program, who pays the transaction fee and how much is it?**

A: The parish pays the transaction fee, but the fee is quite minimal. It is \$0.50 per transaction per month, to a maximum of \$35 per month.

### **Q: What is text-2-give, tap-2-give and e-transfer?**

A: These types of vehicles represent the next generation of giving technology that is primarily focused on the use of smartphones. They reflect a convenience of usage and efficiency that is growing in popularity. First developed to capitalize on the giving preference of Millennials, smartphone usage is now pervasive. More and more, parishes are adopting these forms of giving to complement traditional vehicles like envelopes and PAR.

These vehicles can be effectively paired with live stream technology for their simplicity and convenience. There are two potential drawbacks: start-up and transactional fees can be prohibitive to parishes that do not have a significant donor base and gift sizes tend to be smaller.

### **Q: How might we introduce giving during our livestream?**

A: Livestreaming is a new adventure for the church. In a very short period, parishes across the diocese have adapted to our quarantined reality with worship on Sunday, bible studies, virtual coffee hours and other social encounters. If we don’t introduce an invitation to generosity in our livestream, we are missing out on an opportunity to provide a comprehensive understanding of Christian discipleship to those who are permanently housebound or those are seeking to understand the Anglican tradition. Parishes can adopt tasteful strategies for requesting gifts of treasure during the service, including:

- using a footer at the bottom of the screen indicating ways to give now (this should be done only periodically during the service to avoid being a distraction)
- pausing after the Prayers of the People to invite reflections on what we are grateful for and to direct giving on-line or with their smartphone
- including a musical interlude for a few minutes to allow for giving
- a virtual “passing of the plate” with commentary on why giving is important
- using the order of service and email to prompt giving at a specific time

There are useful links on the diocesan website ([www.toronto.anglica.ca](http://www.toronto.anglica.ca)) that parishes can access to find out more information on how to introduce livestreaming in their own parish.

**Q: What is CanadaHelps?**

A: CanadaHelps is a registered charity dedicated to increasing charitable giving across Canada. They do this by serving both donors and charities. ... they process donations made using their site, disburse the funds to the charities and provide instant or anytime access tax receipts directly to the donors.

Each Canadian charity has a template at CanadaHelps that can be customized to the needs of your church. I encourage you to do so and then set up an on-line giving link from your parish website to CanadaHelps.

Donors can give one-time gifts, monthly or gifts of securities. As you customize your site, you can authorize Canada Helps to make automated Etransfers to you bank account to provide more efficient processing. Canada Helps will issue the tax receipt but you have access to donor information. Visit [www.canadahelps.org](http://www.canadahelps.org) to claim customize your parish page and set up and link to your web page.

**Q: What is plently and tithe.ly?**

A: Both companies provide “second generation” giving suites that offer a variety of giving vehicles with heavy emphasis on the use of one’s smartphone. Plently ([www.plently.com](http://www.plently.com)) focuses primarily on the use of QR codes while tithe.ly ([www.get.tithe.ly](http://www.get.tithe.ly)) emphasizes text giving. Currently the diocese is exploring how we might implement these new technologies in our own giving practice. We will share our insights when we have piloted these vehicles.

**Q: How is FaithWorks managing during these challenging times?**

A: Front-line workers at All Saints Church Community Centre, Flemingdon Park Ministry, Samaritan House in Barrie, One Roof Community Centre in Peterborough and others continue to provide necessary outreach to the most vulnerable in our community. We are continuing our fundraising efforts via messaging through Constant Contact, the FaithLines newsletter and direct mail.

We have an added incentive this year to press on. Thanks to the generosity of a committed member of the church, every new or increased donation will be matched – dollar for dollar – up to \$100,000. We will continue to encourage generosity across the diocese to help support our vital outreach ministries. Please visit our website, [www.faithworks.ca](http://www.faithworks.ca) to make an on-line gift and see how our ministries are having an impact today.