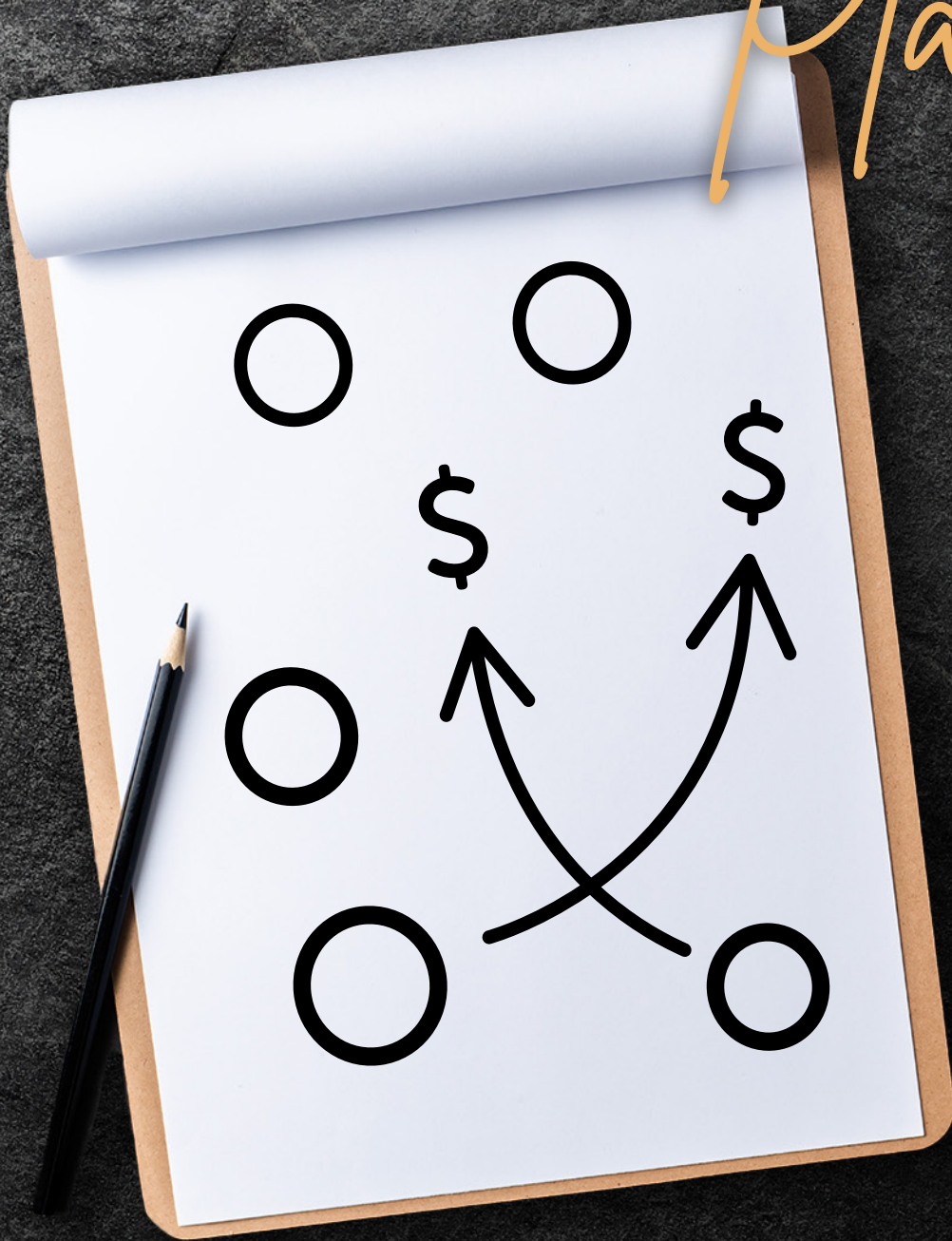


The Generosity

Playbook



Unlock Your Potential
With An Integrated
Funding Strategy

horizons
STEWARDSHIP



An Integrated Approach to Ministry Funding: A Better Strategy for an Uncertain Future

Churches and faith-based nonprofits are facing a future of new challenges and uncertainties. New challenges include shifting worship and donor-giving preferences, rapidly rising expenses due to inflation, higher interest rates, and a tight labor market. All of this is complicated by unprecedented economic uncertainties brought about by living in a world economy in which what happens across the globe very quickly ripples into our daily lives.

Wise leaders are looking for the best ways to ensure long-term financial stability. Among the many possible options, *an integrated approach to ministry funding is consistently the most effective and efficient.*

INTEGRATED FUNDING

It's Not One Thing, It's Everything Working Together.





Why Old Approaches, like a One Fund Strategy, are Increasingly Falling Short

An integrated approach to ministry funding acknowledges that a one size fits all strategy, like dumping all funding streams into one single undesignated bucket, limits your ability to use evidence-based best practices such as segmented communication and individualized donor engagement.

Churches and nonprofits receiving the highest levels of funding have learned to embrace telling their impact stories using segmented, donor-centric strategies designed to meet donors where they are on their spiritual journey and giving practices and to *inform, inspire, and invite* them to take a specific action to more closely align with God's leading. When you choose a one-size-fits-all approach, you are limited in your ability to isolate individual aspects of your discipleship and ministry funding strategies in order to know what's working and what's not.

An *integrated funding strategy* brings annual, capital, special, and planned giving under a single set of proven disciplines aligned with your unique mission, vision, discipleship pathway, and theology of generosity. By integrating and aligning each of these critical elements of ministry funding, you are better able to measure the effectiveness of each action you take.

Each generation is increasingly less interested in supporting the institution of the church and more interested in seeing a direct connection between their giving and the impact of the gift. Our nonprofit friends are excelling at training our best donors to become "impact givers" because of how well they connect giving to their organization to the impact it will have. Many church leaders are under the misunderstanding that church giving is falling because overall giving is falling. Giving in America has remained amazingly constant over the last 60 years, but the church's share has fallen by 50% over the last 40 years and the pace of the decline is picking up.

The primary reason church giving is falling is not because Americans are giving less, but because our best donors are shifting their giving to what they perceive as the highest return or impact on their investment.

The cost of ineffective giving and spiritual formation/discipleship strategies is growing every day. It is time to act.



An integrated funding strategy brings annual, capital, special, and planned giving under a single set of proven disciplines aligned with your unique mission, vision, discipleship pathway, and theology of generosity.





Increased Donor Engagement

An Integrated Funding Strategy also allows churches and faith-based organizations to reach a wider range of donors than might be available with traditional methods alone. This is especially important where people are engaging with the church in multiple ways.

Households that are active in small groups provide

**COMMUNITY,
CARE,
SPIRITUAL GROWTH,**

or who serve in a

**HANDS-ON
MINISTRY,**



Give
3-4 TIMES

more than those that only attend worship 1-2 times per month.

By examining giving practices through the eyes and actions of your donors, you are able to learn what is most effective and adjust your investment of time, money, and energy to engage your non-givers, growing givers, and generous givers in the ways that they find most inspiring and helpful. We all have limited time, money, and energy, so I encourage you to think of integrated funding as good stewardship of the resources you have been entrusted with. [Understanding what most effectively motivates your donors](#) allows you to provide them with meaningful opportunities for deeper engagement resulting in spiritual growth and increased generosity.

Households that are active in small groups provide community, care, and spiritual growth, or who serve in a hands-on ministry give, three to four times as much of their income as those who only attend worship one to two times per month.

An integrated funding strategy includes measuring the cause and effect in the acquisition of new givers, as well as the retention and growing generosity of existing givers. The better you understand the effectiveness of your donor engagement strategies, the more opportunities you'll have to grow giving – precisely because you will be more effectively *growing disciples and changing the world*. Further, you'll have greater confidence in sustaining this increase over time.

Strategic Agility Increases Success

One of the other many benefits of embracing an integrated funding approach is the ability to quickly identify and adjust strategies, without excessive disruption or delay. Reacting to changes quickly and being agile enough to shift direction when needed can be the difference between failure and success. The ability to successfully adapt in a timely manner is a keystone skill necessary to succeed in today's ever-changing landscape.



By embracing flexible, adaptable strategies and processes, ministry leaders can reduce uncertainty and [discover their generosity advantage](#). This strategic agility is even more important for churches and ministries currently facing challenging financial situations. Sadly, it is often this group who is most reluctant to change the very practices that are failing them.



An integrated approach to ministry funding is the best strategy for meeting an uncertain future. By understanding how each aspect of funding contributes to your ministry impact, leaders can better adapt and respond to changing circumstances. Doing so gives you a greater chance of not just surviving but thriving during difficult times.

Achieve Next Level Generosity

By embracing an integrated approach to ministry funding, churches and ministries can take their [culture of generosity to the next level](#). This approach focuses on creating meaningful relationships with donors beyond traditional fundraising tactics. It also encourages mutual support and a commitment to long-term sustainability. Through creative strategies, recurring giving programs, financial leader development, and effective donor communication, churches and ministries can inspire greater community engagement and cultivate mutually beneficial relationships for everyone involved.



8 Ways Ministry Leaders Benefit From an Integrated Funding Strategy

Utilizing an Integrated Funding Strategy is essential for church and faith-based nonprofit leaders who want to grow disciples and fund ministry. By combining and optimizing the various sources of funding, an Integrated Funding Strategy can provide a sustainable strategic approach that helps leaders maximize efficiency and impact.

An integrated approach to ministry funding may be the way to go if you're a ministry leader looking to get the most out of your ministry funding development efforts. Before making any decisions, it's important to research and understand how you can influence the culture of generosity in your ministry context.

This section will explore eight ways an Integrated Funding Strategy will benefit you. Keep reading to find out more!





ONE
Increased Efficiency.



With an Integrated Funding Strategy, ministry leaders can reduce the time and energy spent on financial administration by streamlining the process. By isolating different funding streams and understanding how they fit together, leaders can quickly and accurately access information related to funding their ministry plan. This will help you make more informed decisions faster, resulting in greater efficiency.

TWO
More Accurate Tracking.



Developing processes for accurately measuring the effectiveness of your investments of time, talent and financial resources is a keystone discipline embedded in an effective Integrated Funding Strategy.

THREE
Streamlined Communications.



Easily half of all generosity development strategies depend on effectively segmenting and properly messaging communications around different giving practices, generational attitudes, ways people engage with your discipleship pathway, as well as by the how they choose to receive information. Often, one-size-fits-all communication does more harm than good.

FOUR
Improved Resource Allocation.



An Integrated Funding Strategy can provide more opportunities to identify and utilize available resources. By aligning all your practices into an integrated strategy that flow from your Mission, Vision, Discipleship Pathway, and Theology of Generosity, the outcome is a *more spiritually focused, impact driven, relational, and measurable calls to action*. Leaders are equipped with the information needed to best allocate resources to programs that are having the most positive impact on the mission and vision.



FIVE

Greater Confidence in Funding Plans.



An Integrated Funding Strategy helps ensure that ministry leaders have confidence in their funding plans. Creating a single strategy where your approach to all of your funding sources and generosity development strategies are integrated and aligned with your mission, vision and discipleship pathway, you create a more sustainable future. This will give you peace of mind and help you confidently move forward with your ministry initiatives.

SIX

Better Financial Transparency.



By employing an Integrated Funding Strategy, ministry leaders have more visibility into their finances and where resources are being allocated, as well as the return on those investments in achieving your mission and vision. This will not only enable more accurate budgeting it also allows for more financial transparency. When donors feel the organization is being transparent, trust is built. Trust is a major driver in determining where donors invest their gifts to time, talent and financial resources.

SEVEN

Enhanced Collaboration.



An Integrated Funding Strategy facilitates better communication between ministry stakeholders, leading to greater collaboration, innovation, and improved ministry outcomes.

EIGHT

Increased Accountability.



With an Integrated Funding Strategy, ministry leaders have more visibility and control over the factors that impact giving. By understanding the inter-related nature of sources of funding and the strategies and practices that drive them, leaders are better positioned to make informed choices that grow the missional impact donors are seeking to support.



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By understanding how different sources of funding work together, you can optimize your discipleship and funding strategies and move forward with clarity and confidence.

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We must not only create a case for why it's important for a person to be generous, but also why your ministry is a good investment for their generosity.

Maximize Your Impact

An Integrated Funding Strategy provides ministry leaders with countless benefits and growth opportunities. By understanding how different sources of funding work together, you can optimize your discipleship and funding strategies and move forward with clarity and confidence.

Horizons has a team of experienced ministry strategists, trained coaches, and certified fundraisers ready to help. [Through our coaching, learning, and](#)

[generosity experiences](#), we can ensure you maximize your impact, fully fund your ministry plan, grow disciples, and create a culture of generosity that will change your present and shift your future.



5 FAQs About the Integrated Funding Strategy

The Integrated Funding Strategy is an innovative way to fund ministry. It aligns funding sources and best practices in developing cultures of generosity with your mission, vision, discipleship pathway and theology of generosity to equip ministry leaders grow disciples, model Jesus, serve your community and fund your ministry more efficiently and effectively.

This approach is becoming increasingly popular among churches and faith-based nonprofits, as it allows leaders to make better-informed decisions that result in more sustainable ministry funding.

Below are five common questions we receive about the Integrated Funding Strategy:

ONE

Q: What is the Integrated Funding Strategy?

A: The Integrated Funding Strategy is a comprehensive resource developed by Horizons Stewardship to help leaders be more effective in their mission of growing disciples and funding ministry impact. It brings annual, capital, special, and planned giving under a single set of proven disciplines to provide you a stable predictable and transparent way to fund ministry.

TWO

Q: How does the Integrated Funding Strategy work?

A: The Integrated Funding Strategy aligns approaches around funding strategies, best practices in developing generosity with your mission, vision, discipleship pathway and theology of generosity to equip ministry leaders to grow disciples and fund ministry more efficiently and effectively.



THREE

Q: What are the advantages of integrating different types of funding?

A: Donors give in multiple ways and for a variety of motivations, which is why integrating annual, special, capital and planned giving along with a focused strategy to steward all assets (including property) well, yields not only the most ministry funding, but also creates the greatest opportunity for spiritual growth.

FOUR

Q: How can I use the Integrated Funding Strategy to help my church or faith-based nonprofit?

A: The two most common approaches to implementing an integrated funding plan are to begin with a [Next Level Generosity Discovery Assessment](#) to examine all practices in the organization that impact ministry funding. The findings and recommendations form the foundation for a year-round integrated funding plan to address annual, special, capital and planned giving as well as how to leverage church assets for benevolence and/or income. The second method is to begin with [developing a single funding source](#), such as annual giving or a capital campaign. Because all Horizons engagements are built around the Integrated Funding Model, no matter where you start, you are beginning your journey toward alignment and efficiency. If you are looking for a “Do it Yourself Method” keep reading.

FIVE

Q: What should I expect from an Integrated Funding Strategy?

A: The goal of an Integrated Funding Strategy is to enable your church or faith-based nonprofit to expand your ministry’s spiritual and missional impact and strengthen your long-term sustainability.



A Better Way to Fund Ministry

With the Integrated Funding Strategy, your church can gain a powerful and sustainable foundation that will have lasting results for your community. When done properly, it serves as an effective long-term solution to your ministry funding needs.

It's important to remember that while the Integrated Funding Strategy is a powerful tool, it requires planning and dedication to succeed. Understanding the different strategies at play and how they interact to maximize your ministry's impact is essential.

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An integrated and comprehensive strategy can serve as an effective long-term solution and empower those who participate in reaching their full potential.

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Implementing an Integrated Funding Strategy in Your Church or Faith-Based Nonprofit

The world of ministry is constantly changing and evolving, especially when it comes to funding. With the emergence of digital technologies and ever-evolving trends, staying up to date with the latest strategies is essential to ensure you are able to meet your ministry goals. An Integrated Funding Strategy is a great framework to address these challenges.

There are several ways to get started implementing an Integrated Funding Strategy for your church or faith-based nonprofit.

How To Get Started with an Integrated Funding Strategy



Clarify Your Why and Your Wins

Clarify your Why and Your Wins

Your starting place is to ensure your leadership in support of your current *mission* (what God is calling you to do) and vision (a detailed picture of your preferred future). Be sure your mission is clear and easy to remember. A single sentence is usually enough. Your vision needs to be compelling and measurable – so you can track progress. If not included in your vision, churches also need a *discipleship pathway* to outline the major engagement areas such as (worship, spiritual formation, serving and giving) to clarify expectations persons exploring membership. Each area of engagement requires a theological basis that explains its purpose, practices, and expectations. For giving, this is often called a *Theology of Generosity*.



**Develop an Accurate
Picture of Your
Current Reality**

Develop an Accurate Picture of Your Current Reality

Using surveys, focus groups and interviews, test your member's and stakeholder's understanding of your mission and vision including how well you are accomplishing them. Be sure your methods allow you to identify and segment the responses of different groups such as ministry leaders, financial leaders, age, engagement in your discipleship pathways. Ask how informed they feel about topics you believe are important and their preferred communication channel. You can go deeper in your discovery with questions like what percent of your donor income they give to charity and to you or asking your ministry and financial leaders how appreciated they feel. In addition to the surveys, you will need to measure participation in worship (in-person, online and on-demand), spiritual formation, serving and giving. Assess your financial health by charting giving trends, movement along your giving pathway from new donors to financial leaders, the percentage of your giving that automatically recurring, concentrations in giving and the number of days of financial reserves you have on hand. Finally, calculate the square footage and assess the quality of your ministry space and the percentage of utilization of each area.



**Create Your
Integrated Funding
Strategy**

Create Your Integrated Funding Strategy

With the clarity and alignment around your mission, vision, discipleship pathway including your theology of generosity and a clear picture of your current reality, you are ready to create a year-round Integrated Funding Strategy. If you don't have a ministry spending plan with measurable outcomes, develop it first. There are dozens of strategies that fall in one of the five core funding disciplines (keep it spiritual, tell your stories of impact, etc.). A key to success is to identify four to twelve new strategies to implement in the coming year and calendar their implementation dates. In addition, identify who will be responsible for each strategy, the resources, and approvals they will need, and your process to measure success on an ongoing basis. There are many helpful resources located in Horizons free online resource library, Giving365.com.



**Develop Systems
to Measure Your
Effectiveness**

Develop Systems to Measure Effectiveness

This may require some modest investments in software to efficiently track results and to create dashboards and other visualizations so that leaders are equipped make well-informed decisions to maximize ministry impact.



Getting Started

By taking a strategic approach towards implementing the Integrated Funding Strategy for your church or faith-based nonprofit, you can create a more secure financial base for your organization that allows for continued growth and sustains its mission over time—no matter what the future throws your way!

Horizons has a team of experienced ministry strategists, trained coaches, and certified fundraisers ready to help. Through our [coaching, learning, and generosity experiences](#), we can ensure you maximize your impact, fully fund your ministry plan, grow disciples, and create a culture of generosity that will change your present and shift your future.

About the Author



Joe leads the Horizons Stewardship team of 34 Ministry Strategists, ICF trained coaches, and support staff in their mission of helping churches and faith-based nonprofits grow disciples and fund ministry. The Horizons team has guided raising more than 9 billion in capital funding and uncountable annual and planned giving. Joe is a former bank CEO who frequently speaks on subjects impacting generosity. His weekly blog is followed by over 45,000 church leaders.

About Horizons Stewardship

Horizons Stewardship helps church and faith-based nonprofit leaders grow disciples and fund ministry through a collaborative framework that is tailored to the unique culture of the church, aligned with leadership's vision, and implemented through coaching, planning, technology, and analytics to ensure the church lives into its full ministry potential and impact.

After more than three decades of working with thousands of churches to raise billions of dollars for ministry projects, Horizons has refined a deeply integrated, spiritually-focused approach that consistently results in more ministry funding and more effective disciple-making strategies.

Horizon's ministry team of International Coaching Federation (ICF) trained coaches are ready to help you discover a proven, effective process that will empower you to move forward with clarity and confidence. On average, churches that partner with Horizons experience a double-digit increase in giving within the first twelve months.