

MEMO

August 7, 1978

TO: All members of the Finance Committee and Church Council (and Study Groups)  
FROM: Pastor Hengen  
RE: Helpful information on church finances

Dear Friends:

The following list from The Pastor and the People by Lyle E. Schaller, church planner and consultant to local churches was re-discovered by me during the course of my Doctor of Ministry studies. It appears most helpful on the subject of church finances. I recommend these "learnings" for consideration:

1. Most church members understand pictures, so do not use abstractions to communicate with them.
2. People who appear apathetic, inactive, or disinterested have their own reasons (agenda) for this attitude. Begin by listening, not telling.
3. Financial giving level reflects each member's perception of need, the quality of internal church communication, and the degree of the member's involvement in the life, program, and ministry of the congregation far more than it reflects the financial capability, commitment, or loyalty of each member.
4. People will respond to real needs when they become aware of them (example: painting the interior or exterior of the church building).
5. Today, simple loyalty will not work because people want to know how the money they give (or may be able to give) will be used by the church.
6. Interpersonal relationships have a tremendous influence on the quality of communication among people.
7. Two-way communication is superior to one-way communication.
8. The quality and volume of competition in communicating to people has been rising very rapidly in recent years.
9. In communicating with people about church finances, it is best to begin with their needs, not with trying to encourage them to feel an interest in solving your or the church's problems. Discussing how we, the church, are and can be meeting the needs of people tends to open the door to innovation and new possibilities for growth (a marketing axiom in the secular world) and potential increased financial support. (Church program should reflect how we are meeting those needs.)
10. Financial pain is being felt by those responsible for program planning and implementation in the local church, by persons responsible for the administration of the work of the local church, and by those in denominational and interdenominational agencies.
11. The longer a local church delays planning for its financial future, the fewer options are open and the lower the chances of satisfactory outcomes from planning efforts (particularly in an inflationary economy).
12. Any program or effective effort in this area of concern in the church (as a voluntary organization) is limited by the traditions, values, attitudes, and practices of each local church. Precedent and tradition are not only the strongest forces in making

nearly every decision, but also will determine the ceiling on the local budget unless a careful effort is made to replace the old traditions and precedents with new ones (more innovative, creative and effective).

I hope this information will be helpful for all of you as we move together toward the development of the 1979 Budget for United Evangelical Church.

Pastor Hengen