

Seniors Embracing Electronic Giving



Trinity Episcopal Church was founded in 1849 and sits in the heart of historic downtown Asheville, North Carolina. The parish currently has approximately a thousand members who enjoy services in their 100 year-old church. Trinity's commitment to outreach ministries in the community is historical and ongoing, beginning with building a place of worship for emancipated slaves after the Civil War, and an active role in founding Mission Hospital and Asheville's first public library. Today, the church continues that outreach through shelter, clothing, and food support for the homeless.

Trinity Episcopal church defies stereotypes that seniors will not embrace electronic giving. Church Financial Assistant Dillon Manly says electronic giving comprises approximately 25% of the total donation plate in a parish where the average member is over 60.

"Our senior members appreciate and understand how much regular donations help amortize giving throughout the year and not just during peak giving times like Christmas. A lot of members love the e-Giving option."

Success Strategy. The church has offered online giving since 2011 and Manly says what really helped it take off was support from the rector and integrating the e-Giving option into the regular pledge drive.

"We are fortunate to have a highly communicative rector who could articulate the benefits of electronic giving. We also found that personalizing an electronic giving draft form provided to us from Vanco and putting it in pledge request letter helped to speed adoption. All members have to do is sign the form and input their information if they do not want to sign up online."

The Search for an e-Giving Solution. Manly says she had previously researched electronic giving but found it cost prohibitive. "While at a Christian education conference I asked other members who they used and Vanco was the recommended choice. I passed the recommendation on to the vestry and the rector and we decided to move forward."

Electronic Giving in Action. The e-Giving option at the church is being used for more than pledge requests. "Our members use the electronic giving option for everything -from breakfasts to purchasing altar flowers to purchasing tickets

for big events where the only place to sign up is online. I think the ease of being able to do things online has helped increase our cash flow. It's how people are used to paying bills. Our younger members were onboard first because they generally don't carry a checkbook with them. But our senior members have embraced it too now."

Launching and Managing e-Giving. "I worked at a bank for 30 years so it was not hard for us to launch and manage electronic giving. Our software system interfaces with Vanco and all I have to do is import it. Working with Vanco has been a great experience and one of the best things is that they answer the phone. They are always friendly and show me what to do, or do it for me if I need help with something."

"Our younger members were onboard first because they generally don't carry a checkbook with them. But our senior members have embraced it too now."

Credit Cards vs. Checking Account. Some members prefer to use their credit card in order to get reward points which is understandable. We provide an option for members to give an additional percentage to offset the fees for processing credit cards. Fees for ACH transfers (checking/savings account) are very minimal so that is our preferred donation method.

Final Thoughts. Providing an online giving option helps members meet their pledges which is great for them and great for us. Having a reliable stream of giving to count on helps us to set the budget for the year and meet goals.

About Vanco Payment Solutions

Vanco Payment Solutions is focused on addressing the unique needs of clients that count on predictable, recurring revenue. Faith-based and other relationship-oriented organizations—and the software providers and professional associations that serve them—rely on Vanco's specialized approach to adding electronic payment options and enhancing current capabilities.

The company's experienced team helps more than 30,000 clients across the U.S. conveniently, securely and efficiently accept a broad range of electronic payments, and more effectively manage their operations.

