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# Cross Currents Newsletter

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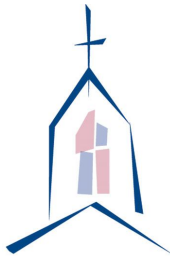
[Thy Kingdom Come](#)

**KIRBY-SMITH ASSOCIATES**  
**Helping Your Christian Ministry to Grow**

*Cross Currents Newsletter*

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## Tips & Tidbits



Churches that conduct their own campaigns tend to produce results that are about fifty percent below that of the professionally-led campaign.

Check out other reasons to hire an outside consulting firm!

[Read more...](#)

## Evangelical Growth

*Although its historical roots are mostly in Northern Europe and North America,*

Volume 5, Issue 2

July 2011

## Greetings from the President of Kirby-Smith Associates

After two years of steep declines, charitable giving increased by nearly 4% in 2010; a sign, some experts say, that the economy is improving--albeit slowly.

Individuals and corporations donated an estimated \$290 billion last year, an increase of \$10 billion from the previous year, according to the Giving USA Foundation.

Giving to churches, the largest share of giving at 35% of total gifts, was \$100 billion, an amount essentially the same as in 2009.

American generosity is on the upswing. Giving to churches will also increase over the next year, but there is a word of caution--generosity follows success. Your church must be seen to have a clear vision and members must understand their part in the vision--a vision that meets the needs of your members and the ministries set forth in your vision.

Many churches need help clarifying their vision and communicating effectively to members. Outside assistance is available from Kirby-Smith Associates. Call us if we can be of assistance.

**C. Eugene Musser**



## What to Do if It's Not a Good Time for a Campaign?

*Joe Purka*  
*Vice President*

Why are some churches conducting successful campaigns while others are hesitant to move ahead because of the current state of the economy? Clearly, there is job growth in some areas of the country and a stagnant job market in others. In some cases, it may be just a matter of perception.



According to the June 2011 survey report by the Pew Research Center for People and the Press, only 8% of respondents felt the economy was "excellent" or "good," while 91% responded that it was only "fair" or "poor." Considering their personal financial situation, 61% responded

*evangelical Protestantism is a global phenomenon today. In 1910, by one estimate, there were about 80 million evangelicals, and more than 90% of them lived in Europe and North America.*

*By 2010, the number of evangelicals had risen to at least 260 million, and most lived outside Europe or North America. Indeed, the "Global South" (sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, Latin America and most of Asia) is home to more evangelicals today than the "Global North" (Europe, North America, Japan, Australia and New Zealand).*

*As the evangelical movement has grown and spread around the globe over the past century, it has become enormously diverse, ranging from Anglicans in Africa, to Baptists in Russia, to independent house churches in China, to Pentecostals in Latin America.*

*-- Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life*

that it was "fair" or "poor;" however, 56% felt that it would improve in the coming year.

Regardless of the situation, what are the options for a church that needs a larger facility, a fellowship hall or classrooms? First and foremost, do not put planning on the back burner. It takes time to develop a comprehensive vision, to survey and incorporate ministry needs into the overall site plan and to obtain the necessary buy-in from your congregation. Providing that picture of the future of your church community will help inspire and bring the community together. Start working on your vision now, so that when the economic situation improves, you will be ready to move ahead.

Second, initiate a Stewardship program. Even in the worst economic times, there is no reason why a church cannot focus on the stewardship message. The widow's response to Elijah (1 Kings 17:7-16) and the widow's mite (Luke 21:1-4) are appropriate messages in good times and in bad.

Kirby-Smith offers several levels of stewardship training through its **Stewardship Through Education Program (STEP®)**. Kirby-Smith Associates provides spiritually-based stewardship campaigns that maximize time, talent, and treasure within your faith community. The dimensions of stewardship extend beyond the understanding that many church members have of stewardship. Far more important than the concept of time, talent, and treasure is a faith-to-lifestyle change--a commitment to making Christ first in one's life.

**STEP® Level 1** is a simple four-step process that involves: motivating communications on your church's vision and goals, lay witness talks to help share the message and encourage peer participation, in-pew solicitation that generates immediate results, and a follow-up process ensuring that the increase in offertory continues and enhances your church's stewardship efforts going forward.

Our **STEP® Level 2** is a program for growing stewardship that includes detailed training, comprehensive materials, and setting a clear vision and specific goals and objectives unique to your church.

The **STEP® Level 3** program provides our clients with the most flexibility and on-site service by our consultation team. This approach can incorporate all aspects of a Level 1 and a Level 2 programs but also provides an opportunity for real-time logging of all commitments of time, talent, and treasure generated as a result of **STEP®**. All stewardship-program related materials are included and your church will be assigned an on-site Kirby-Smith consultant to help guide your process.

Kirby-Smith's **STEP®** program is ready to implement at any time, is simple to initiate, and requires very little time and effort on behalf of church leadership.

And finally, consider a feasibility study to determine whether there currently exists a potential for success. A feasibility study looks at the viability of an idea with an emphasis on identifying potential problems and attempts to answer the questions: Will the idea work and should you proceed with it? A feasibility study developed by Kirby-Smith Associates for your church community will examine and test the viability of your vision statement as well as the potential success of a fundraising campaign. A feasibility study is a small investment in determining whether your church is ready for a campaign and a portion of that

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investment is returned if you contract with Kirby-Smith to provide consulting services to your campaign.

Regardless of the environment you find yourself in, continue to plan for the future; initiate a stewardship program, and consider a feasibility study to see if a campaign is a viable option. The alternative is to do nothing.

## Thy Kingdom Come

(Part 2 of 3)

*Second of a Series on "The Lord's Prayer"*

*Gary Kulik*

*Vice President*



These are the words of the second petition of the Lord's Prayer, and the language is similar in both the Luke and the Matthew versions. When Jesus told his disciples to pray in this way, he was using language central to his earthly mission. The phrase the "kingdom of God," or its close variants, occurs more than 50 times in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Almost always, the words come from Jesus alone and it is not a phrase widely used by others, either Jew or Jewish-Christian in the first century.

The Greek word *basileia*--from which we derive *basilica*--lies behind the long-standing English translation "kingdom." But "kingdom" doesn't quite get it right. A better translation, according to John P. Meier, would be "kingship"--denoting that it is God's rule over a people, not over territory. Most first-century Jews believed that what Jesus meant was that God will come in power and glory to save and rule Israel. In theological terms, "thy kingdom come" is an eschatological prayer (*eskhatos + logia* - discourses on the last things) - a prayer of hope for the final coming of the Lord.

But what did Jesus mean by the "kingdom of God?" There is no easy answer. At times, Jesus clearly suggested that the kingdom was already here (Matt 12:28; Luke 17:20-21); at other times, that it was imminent (Mark 1:15; Matt 8:11-12). At times, he appears to offer a timetable (Mark 9:1; Matt 10:23), but he also tells us in Mark 13:32, no one knows the day or hour, "neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."

The coming of God to rule in power and glory remains a great mystery. More important than deciphering signs or unraveling the mystery is that we, as Christians, learned everything we truly needed to know as a result of the First Coming.

[\(Read Part 1 of the series\)](#)

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