



Celebrate: Telling Stories



Generosity
by LifeWay

Nothing captures our hearts and imaginations like a good story. The gathering and telling of stories is both art and practice. This exercise will help you with both.

1. Stories play an important role in discipleship. They provide an example to follow as well as compelling a person towards an opportunity. On another occasion, they can connect a living example to a fact that has been shared. A good story helps people remember as their mind attaches an image to what they have heard. Stories interpret principles and stick with you over time.

Give some thought to the most important stories your church can tell. Every church needs to know its most critical stories to onboarding new staff, orienting new members, reminding people of strategic ministries, and bringing the vision into focus.

Here are some example stories that need to be communicated repeatedly every year:

- a. Church Creation Story** - Key moments in the church's history that have created its unique mission and culture.
- b. Long-Term and Short-Term Vision** - Provide direction and inspiration to the current action initiatives in the church.
- c. Small Groups** - Relationships are critical to personal growth, deepening relationships, and strengthening assimilation.
- d. Volunteer Engagement** - Releasing the power of an individual's giftedness and life purpose are foundational elements of ministry.
- e. Life Change** - The purpose of everything a church does is the ultimate fulfillment of a transformed life.
- f. Impact** - Ministries require resources and dollars, but the real story is not a spreadsheet or check list, but the impact upon a community, city, state, or country.
- g. Other _____** (What stories may be critical for your people to hear? These may be related to an undeniable passion in your church or a critical moment in time that has a powerful definition on your culture.)

2. There are many different ways and opportunities to tell stories throughout the church year. Here is a list of both. What would you add given your unique setting?

Opportunities:

- a. Staff Meetings
- b. Leadership Meetings
- c. Email communication
- d. Newsletter

- e. Website
- f. Bulletin
- g. Reports
- h. Worship Service element
- i. Other_____

Ways A Story Is Told:

- a. Sharing the story verbally on behalf of another person
- b. Live testimony
- c. Reading the story written by another
- d. Capture the story on a video
- e. Social Media post
- f. E-mail or read an e-mail (with permission)
- g. Personal interview
- h. Article in a newsletter
- i. Other_____

3. Make a list of stories that you believe are critical for your people to hear multiple times this year or next. Then list the different ways this story can be told and the different opportunities the church calendar presents. Create a plan to execute on these stories adding them to your Generosity Playbook.

List of stories and places for them to be shared:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

4. Given the different types of stories and opportunities for these stories to be told, who needs to be trained in the practice of storytelling? What responsibilities, habits, or practices do we need to prioritize as a leadership team to insure that storytelling becomes a greater priority? Think of the process of gathering, refining, producing, and delivering stories in your setting.