

## Survey Reveals New Trends in Church Giving, Budgeting



A "new normal" is emerging in the church world when it comes to giving, budgets, and generosity initiatives, according to ongoing research surveys conducted by Church Central blogger Brian Kluth of MAXIMUMgenerosity.org and Christianity Today International's Church Finance Today.

Here are some of the major developments revealed by the second annual "State of the Plate" research survey.

### **Some churches increased budgets while others decreased budgets**

While a growing number of church budgets are being trimmed, others increased theirs heading into 2010:

- In the survey, 32% said they made budget cuts of 1 percent to 20%. A year ago, only 14% said the same.
- The top three cuts came in the areas of travel and conferences, ministry programs, and expansion/renovation projects.
- 24% of churches kept their budgets the same as last year.
- Surprisingly, 45% of churches increased their budgets for the coming year, compared to 23% who said the same a year ago. Churches that increased their budgets did so primarily in the areas of benevolence giving, ministry programs, and missions giving.

### **More churches plan to preach and teach on finances and generosity in a variety of ways**

The Bible provides more than 2,000 verses on finances and generosity and a growing number of churches say they are planning or considering sharing God's Word on these subjects in the following ways:

- Preaching, 75%
- Financial classes/courses/groups, 66%
- Sharing a Bible verse during the offering, 63%
- Pamphlets, 52%
- Making financial counselors available, 49%
- Running an annual stewardship drive, 48%
- Videos in the worship service, 46%
- Giving families a generosity devotional, 45%
- Estate planning materials/seminars, 44%
- Stewardship training for leaders, 40%