



2023 Annual Generosity Report

VOLUME I

Foreword

In 2010, God laid upon our hearts the desire to use our entrepreneurial talents to advance the Kingdom. At first, we didn't know what that looked like, but we were obedient to His calling. As founders and owners of MortarStone, we have watched it grow to become the thought leader for church giving insights and trends that are affecting the ministries both today as well as surfacing risks that could affect religious giving tomorrow.

The following report is the first of many, and **represents actual giving transactions versus survey results**. Having worked with thousands of churches, reviewing millions of giver records and billions of dollars given, we have identified 331 churches with six years of complete data in an effort to share national trends for this report.

Our vision is to provide an annual report as well as seasonal updates, so that you will have the most current analysis and trends available to guide your ministry. We acknowledge that there are many survey based reports that have been helpful to churches. We believe that providing actual data will bring more color and definition to the discussion.

Our philosophy is reporting should be supported by actionable strategies. We want to resource you with insights and strategy to take full advantage of current trends and be best positioned to weather any storms on the horizon.

Many of you are familiar with the current wealth transfer. This is an opportunity to disciple those who have stewarded well to not only transfer their valuables, but also their values knowing that the younger generation struggling with inflation are missing opportunities to create wealth like their predecessors. As our nation's debt continues to climb, we can only surmise that taxes will increase and cost of living, healthcare, and home ownership will continue to grow out of reach for many. These headwinds will most certainly affect church giving in the future.

We are called to live by faith, not fear. As it has been famously said, "We believe that the local Church is the hope of the world." Our prayer is that together we will become like the men of Issachar, who understood the signs of the times and knew the best course of action to take. (1 Chronicles 12:32)

Therefore, it is with gratitude we commend the 2023 Annual Generosity Report. May the insights provided produce the inspiration your leadership needs to take tangible action.

In Service to Him,



David Thoroughman and Craig Rogers
Founders - MortarStone, LLC.



Introduction

MortarStone data analytics software was developed and launched in 2012 with the vision of creating and providing the most comprehensive information regarding the recency, frequency, tenure and volume of giving in churches in the United States and Canada. Our clients are composed of **665** churches who represent **14,511,404** households composed of **19,702,619** individuals who made **74,373,289** gifts (2018 - 2023) to these churches in the amount of **\$21,315,889,937.01**.

Data Set

The report includes 331 churches comprising **11,712,442** households and **15,439,476** people who made **51,144,685** gifts totalling **\$14,784,575,976.87** from January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2023. *It is important to note that the information presented is empirical data vs. survey data from either churches or individual givers.*

Methodology

For the purpose of this report, median numbers were used vs. averages to provide consistency across the initial report and to eliminate anomalies. The report provides 6 full years of data from 2018 to 2023. Note that 2017 data was used to create the baseline for First Time Givers and Missing Givers for 2018.

Privacy Statement

MortarStone, LLC, takes seriously the responsibility for the protection and confidentiality of the individuals and the churches. The aggregate data presented in no way compromises the confidentiality of our clients and their givers. Confidential information is never shared beyond or between our clients.



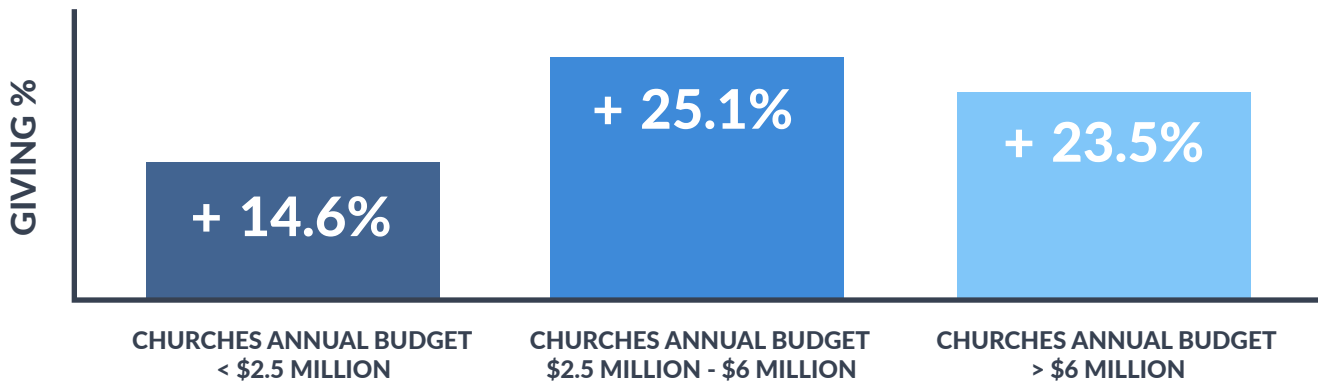
Overall Giving



Overall Giving Numbers Are UP!

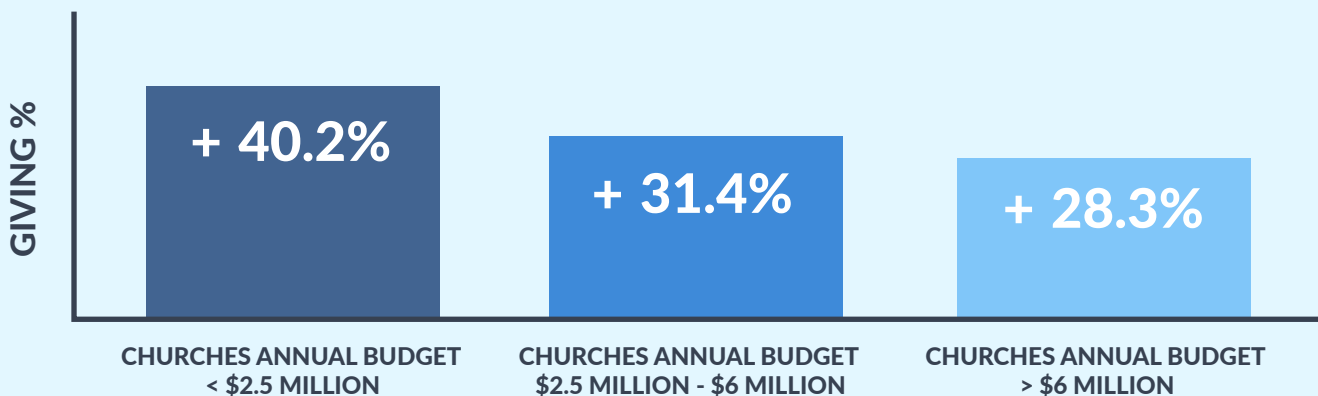
Overall Giving

The total amount of money given per church.



Median Household Giving

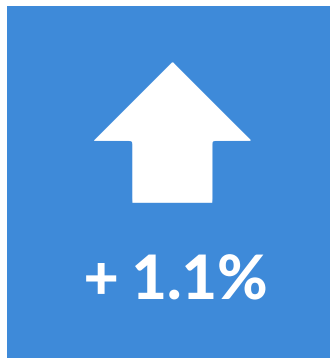
The median of the average amount given by a giving household, per church.



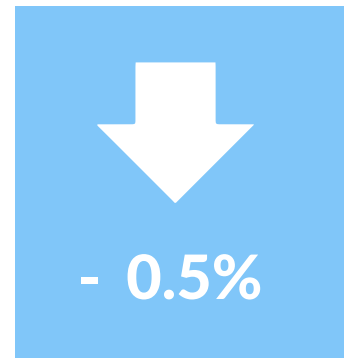
Overall Giving Adjusted for Inflation



CHURCHES ANNUAL BUDGET
< \$2.5 MILLION



CHURCHES ANNUAL BUDGET
\$2.5 MILLION - \$6 MILLION



CHURCHES ANNUAL BUDGET
> \$6 MILLION



Over **2018 - 2023**, the
rate of inflation was **24%**.

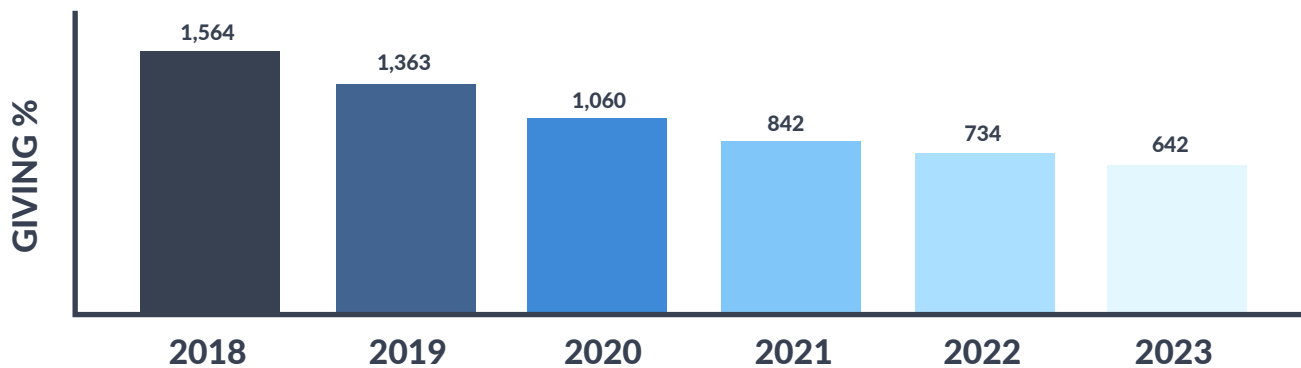
https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm



Participation by Generations

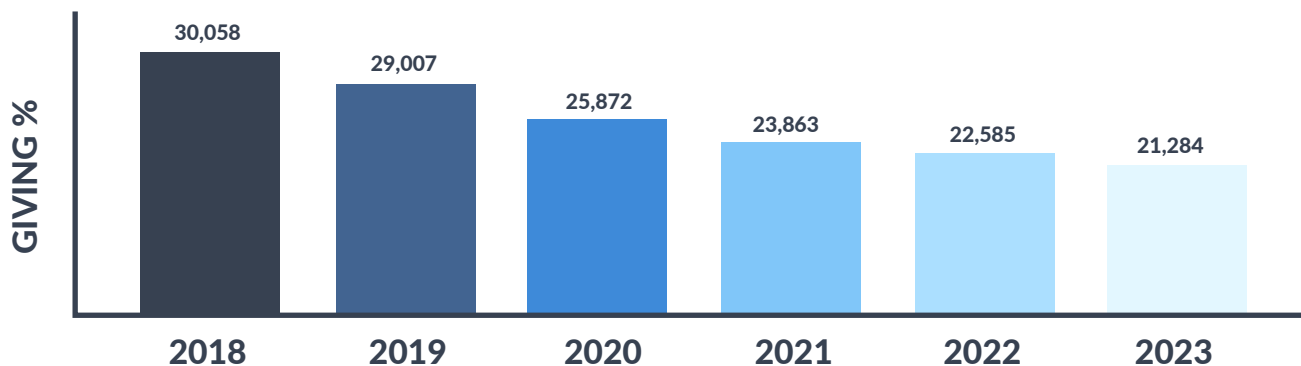
PERCENTAGE OF CHANGE BY GENERATIONS

Greatest Generation (1901-1927)



OVERALL -59.0% CHANGE

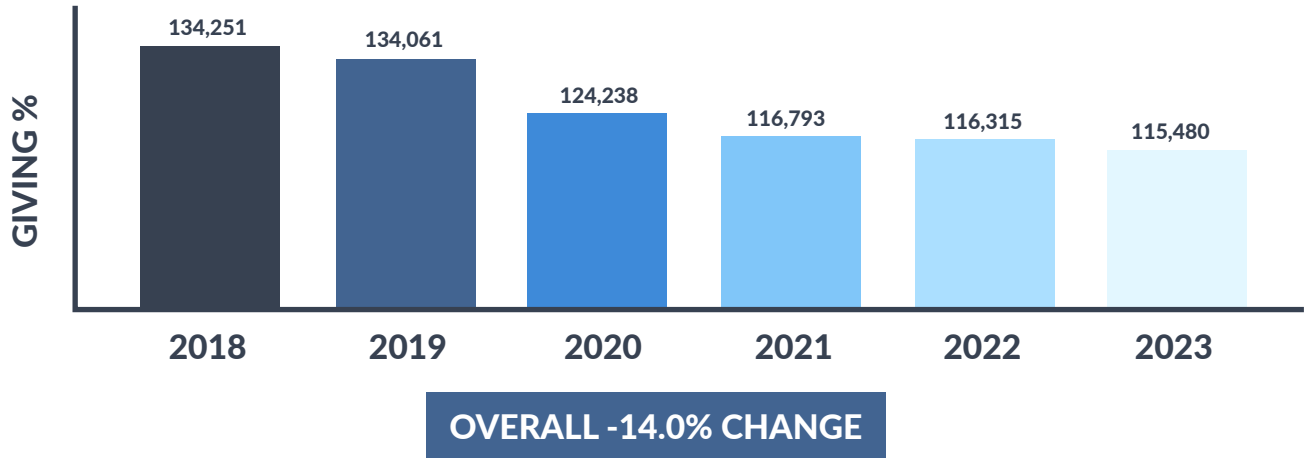
Silent Generation (1928-1945)



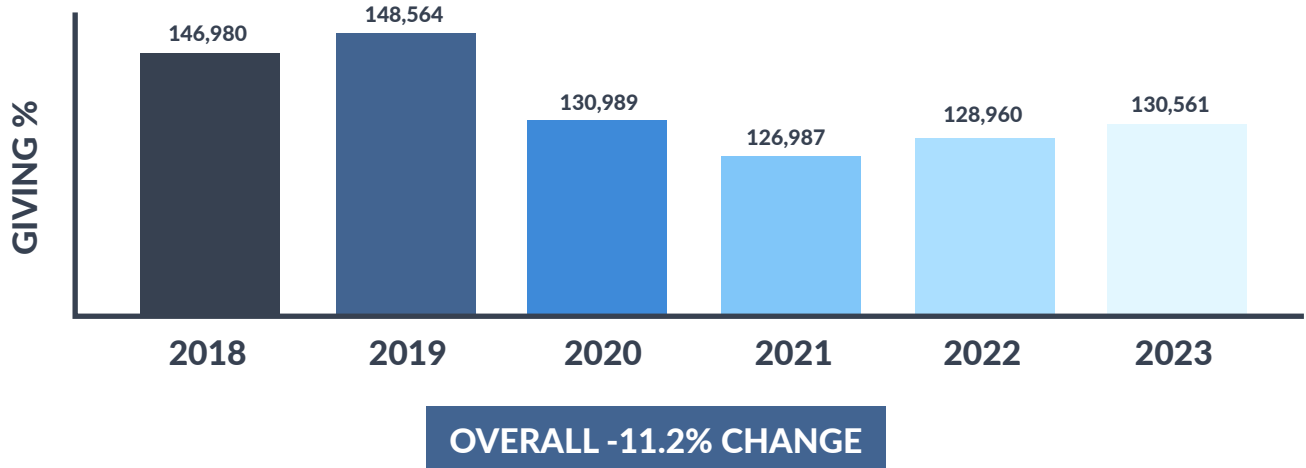
OVERALL -29.2% CHANGE



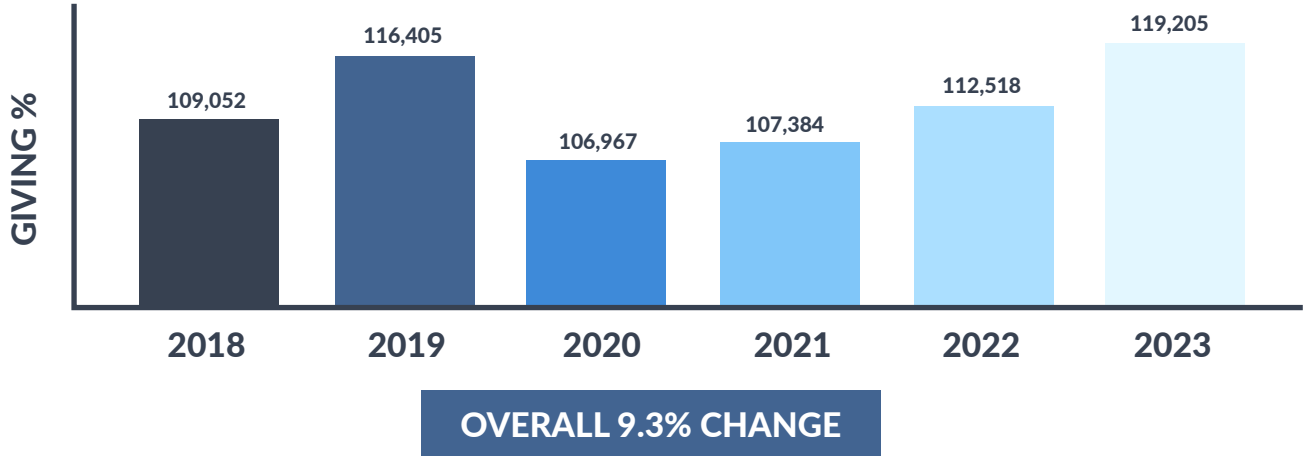
Baby Boomers (1946-1964)



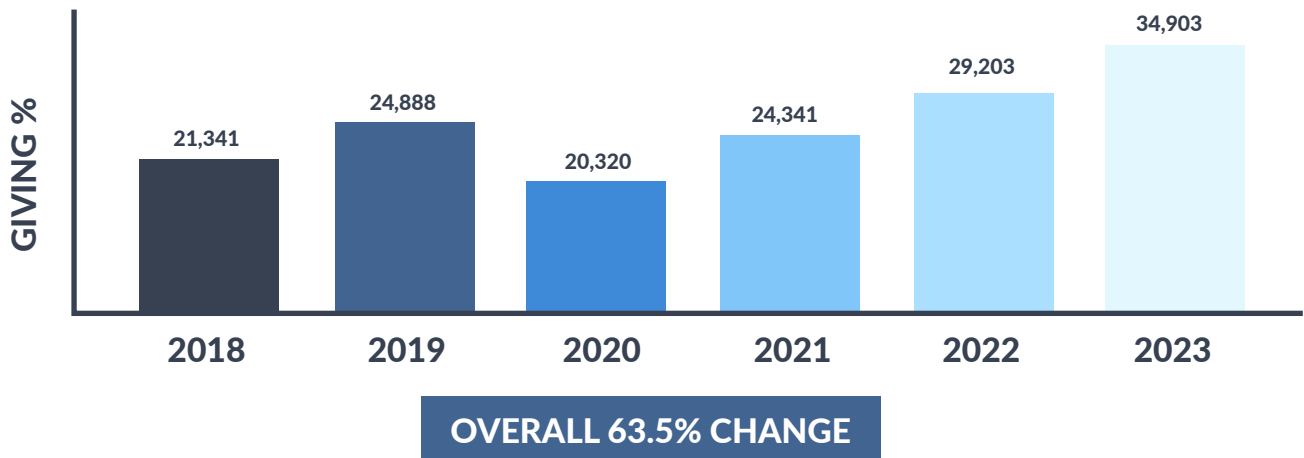
Generation X (1965-1980)



Millennials (1981-1996)

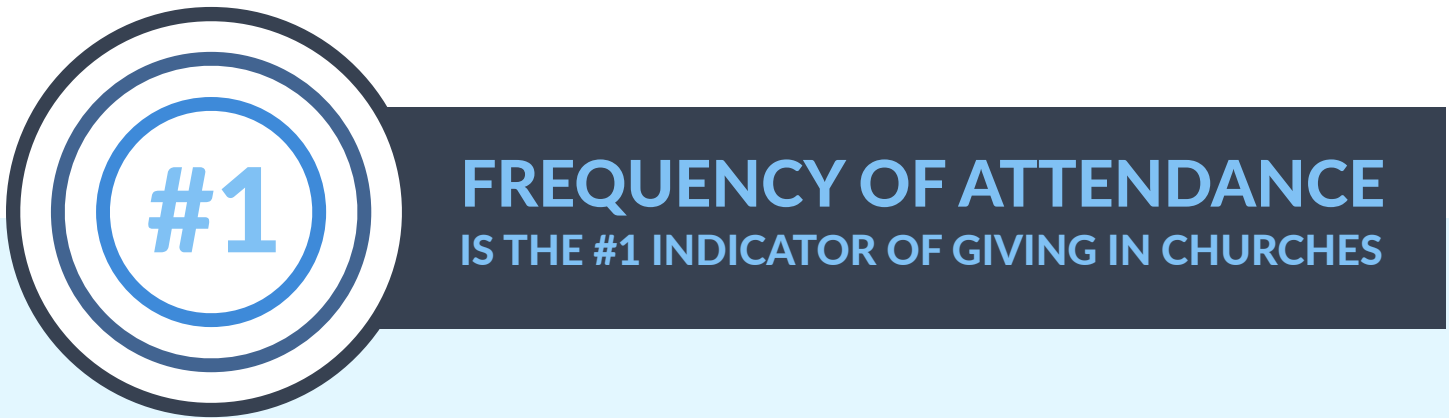


Generation Z (1997-2012)



2023 Household Participation by Generations

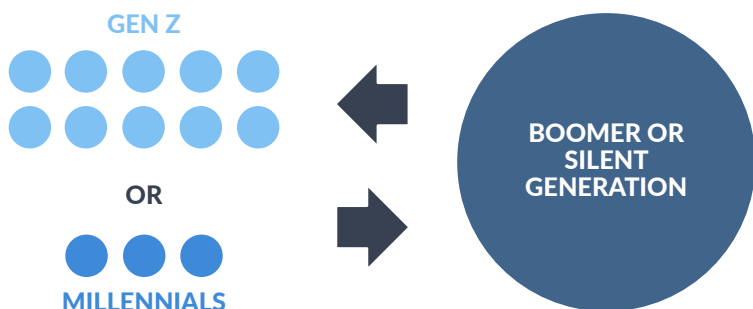
	MEDIAN NUMBER OF GIFTS	MEDIAN AMOUNT GIVEN	% CHANGE OVER 2018-2023
Greatest Generation (1901 - 1927)	5	\$1,200	-1.8%
Silent Generation (1928 - 1945)	11	\$2,425	24.1%
Baby Boomers (1946 - 1964)	12	\$2,400	41.2%
Generation X (1965 - 1980)	10	\$1,345	41.6%
Millennials (1981 - 1996)	7	\$780	28.9%
Generation Z (1997 - 2012)	3	\$235	98.8%



#1

FREQUENCY OF ATTENDANCE IS THE #1 INDICATOR OF GIVING IN CHURCHES

The research of Dr. Russell James shows the propensity for someone to give increases year over year until age 76, then begins to drop. This is driven by frequency of attendance.



It will take approximately **10 Gen Z or 3 Millennials** to replace **1 Baby Boomer or member of the Silent Generation!**

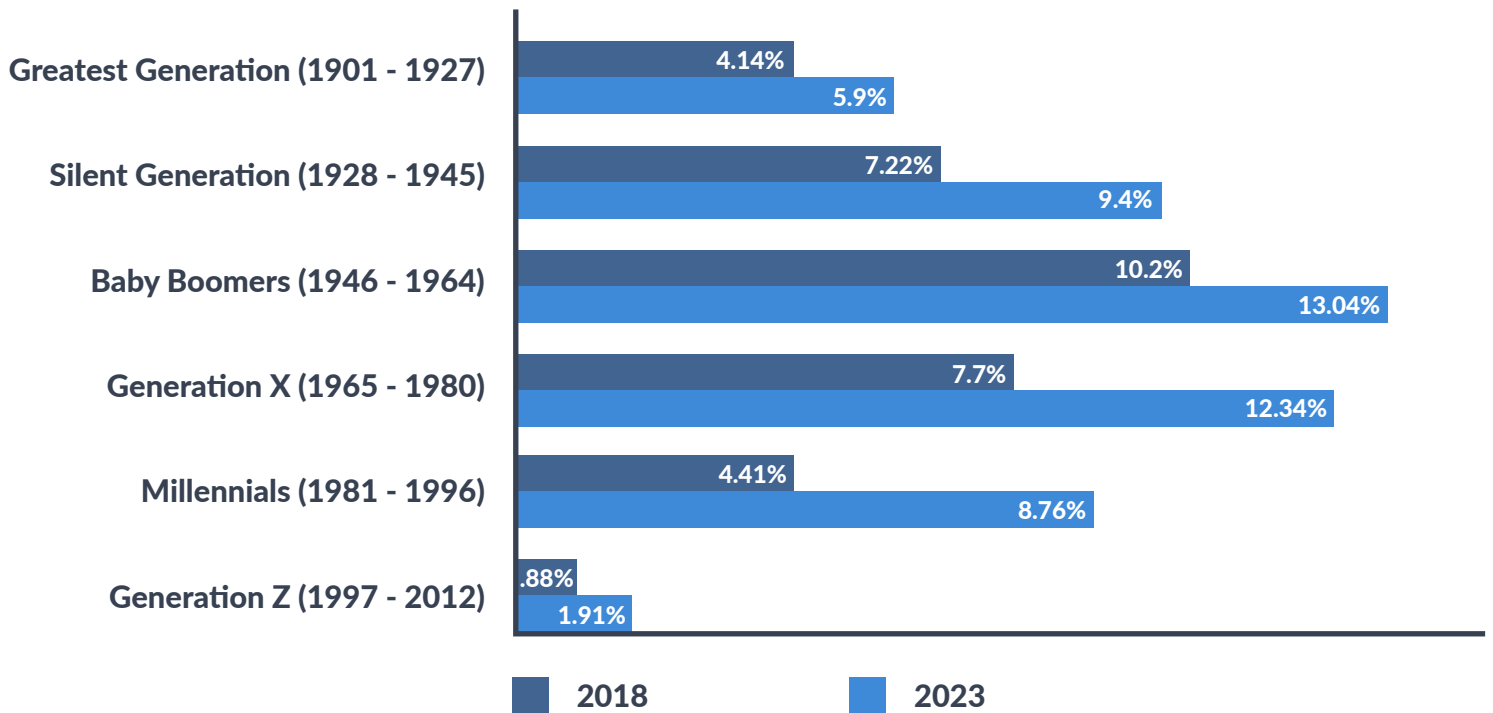


Percentage of Givers Who Tithe*

For givers with valid street addresses, we can use US Census Block data to determine their median income, and thereby calculate their percent of giving.

Across the past six years in each demographic age marker, there is no noticeable movement in the number of tithers based on the median income of their home address via US Census Block Data. While the percentage of tithers increased, for Generation X and older, the data reflects that the percent increase comes from a drop in overall givers more than an increase in tithers.

Percentage of Givers Who Tithe by Generations

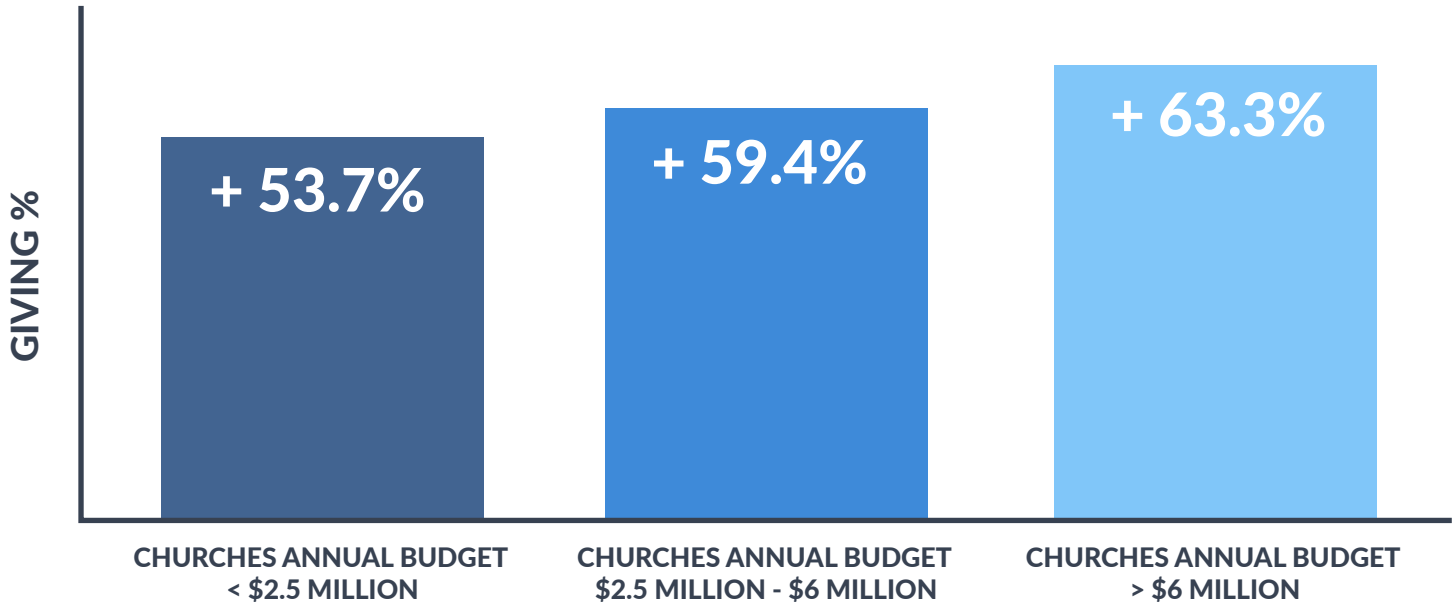


**Percentages calculated among recorded givers and excludes those who did not make a gift.*



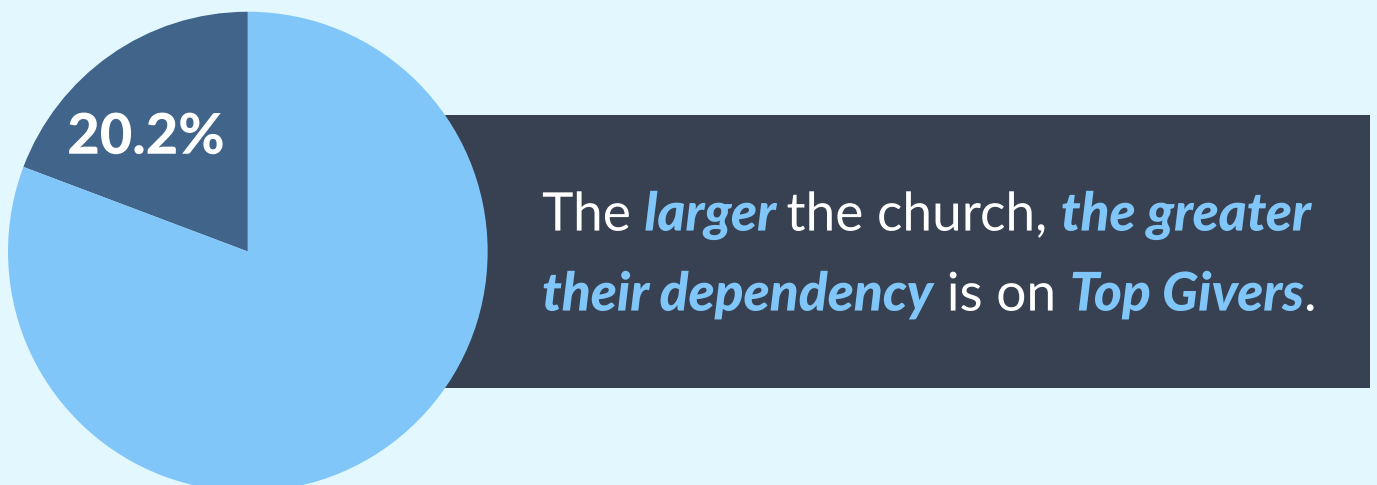
Top Giver Dependency

In 2023, the **TOP 10%** of Givers Provided...

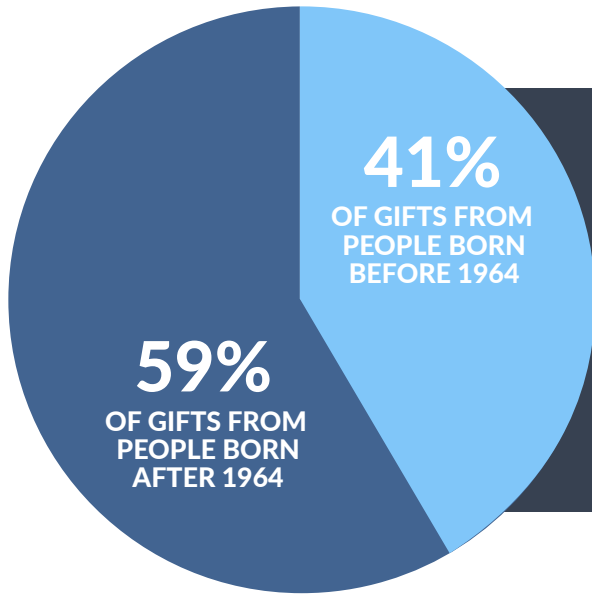


In 2023, the **TOP 1%** provided **20.2%** of all gifts.

(MEDIAN NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS = 12)



Dependency Upon People Born Before 1964 (60+)



In 2023, of known ages*, **41%** of all gifts came from Boomers, the Silent Generation, and the Greatest Generation.

**Birthdates were only available for 54.9% of the giving households in 2023.*

Will younger generations be able to achieve the same ability to create wealth and give as Baby Boomers and older generations?

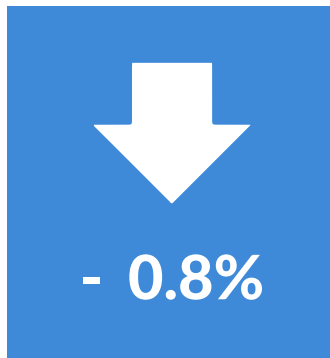


New Giver Acquisition and Retention

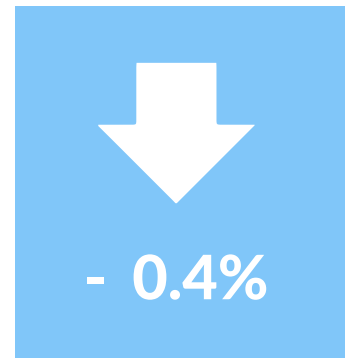
Percentage of Change in Number of First Time Givers (2018 vs. 2023)



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< \$2.5 MILLION



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\$2.5 MILLION - \$6 MILLION



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Estimated risk for New Givers is based on common time between first and subsequent gifts. The thresholds for each level are based on data from all MortarStone churches for calendar year 2022.

36.4%

of first time givers
never make a
second gift

31.8%

will make a
second gift within
21 days

5%

of households will
give a second gift
after **175 days**

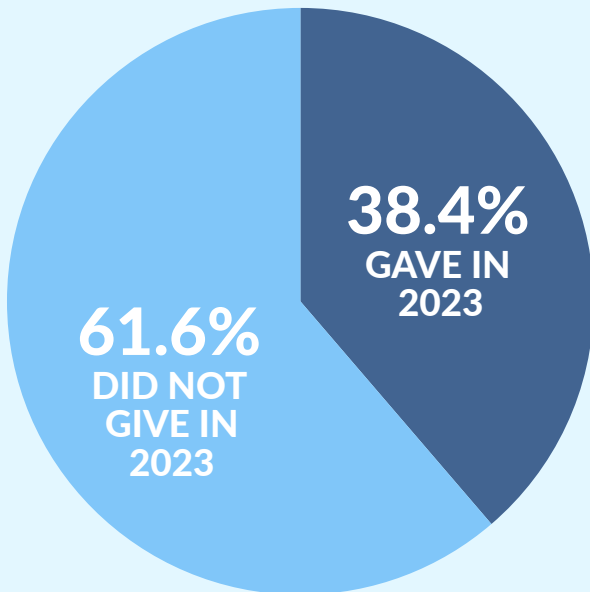


The greatest energy ROI on new giver acquisition is within the *first month*.



Half of first time givers will make *6 gifts* within 91 days.

Giving Households Pre-COVID



Giver Retention (Churn)

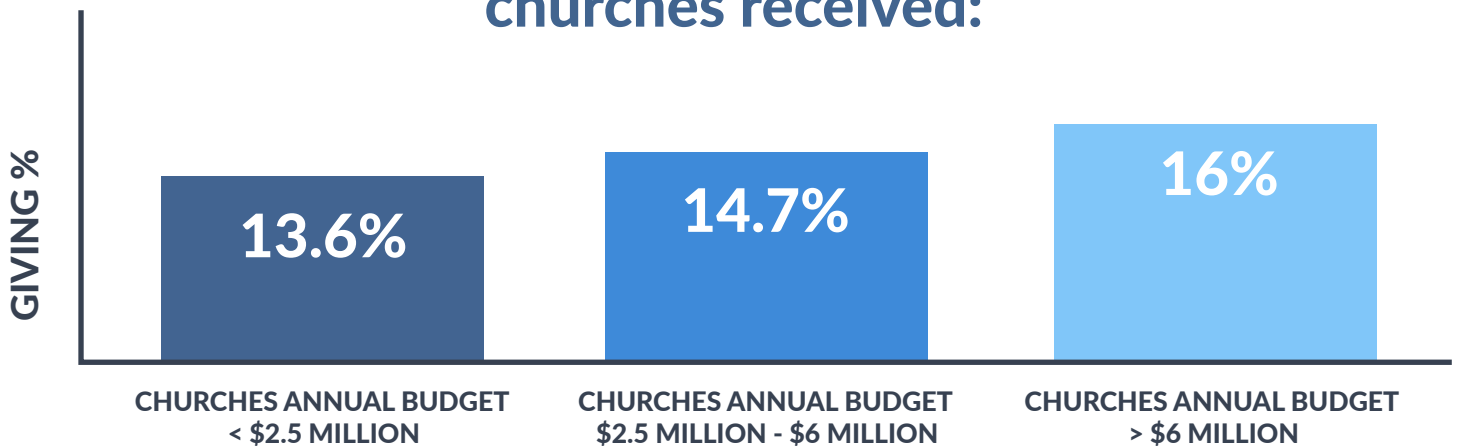
Of the **732,897** giving households pre-COVID (before 2019), only **281,363** or **38.4%** gave in 2023. Across all church groupings **46.1%** of givers from 2019 didn't give to their same church in 2020.

Churches have become more transient since the pandemic; tenured givers are not being replaced at a 1:1 rate.



Giving Distribution Per Month

Over the past six years, in December, churches received:



JAN - NOV
GIVING
7.5%

From **2018 - 2023** there hasn't been any noticeable change in giving by month. From **January to November**, monthly giving is flat at **7.5% per month**. Nothing in the data supports a "summer slump" in giving. In fact, January is the lowest month each year.

Secular non-profits receive **30%** of their funding in December.



What's Next?

As we take a breath and step back from the findings, we would be remiss if we didn't include some next steps for the journey ahead.

1. We must disciple older generations to think differently about giving. As people mature beyond retirement, they transition into fixed-income, which often remains relatively flat. However, their non-cash assets continue to compound and increase at higher rates as the years pass. Many of those illiquid assets remain un-deployed until their death when they are then transferred to their heirs and the causes they care about. By discipling the older generations, we can help them align their values and valuables to create a legacy up to the end of their lives and through the end of their lives.

2. We must disciple the younger generations about tithing. Research shows that those born after 1980 prefer to give to causes that make an immediate and direct impact. In the last century, the Church served as the social network of the community and was often located in the city center. As time progressed and public schools enriched their extra-curricular offerings, they began to emerge as the social network. Today, through the advent of social media and technology, individuality has supplanted both churches and schools. It is important that we teach the biblical principles and applications of what it means to be part of the Body of Christ. It is not possible to be a fully formed follower of Christ without a community of faith.

3. We must build, in the words of Dr. Russell James, the “missing ministry” of the church. 1 Timothy 6:17-19 provides the outline for how church leaders should disciple those who have stewarded well and have abundance.

4. Finally, churches must consider building a storehouse to ensure future sustainability (Malachi 3:10). In Genesis, Pharaoh had a dream that was interpreted by Joseph. The interpretation was that seven years of abundance would precede seven years of famine. Joseph was then appointed to use the seven years of abundance to create a storehouse in order to mitigate the seven years of famine. Are the “skinny cows” coming?

We're here to help! If you are a current MortarStone subscriber, we are offering a free, 30 minute conversation with one of our strategists to discuss the report through the lens of your own data. If you're not a MortarStone subscriber, we are happy to provide a demo of the software so that you can lead by insight and not intuition. For more information, or to sign up for our basic free/limited version, visit MortarStone.com.



Gratitudes

Over the past year, MortarStone has leaned into our calling to provide Thought Leadership in the Church Generosity space. Thought Leadership implies that we serve the overall conversation by speaking into what we know and do best; data analytics and giver engagement.

The report you have just reviewed would not be in your possession without the following contributions:

DeWayne McNally, our COO, who believed in the project and spoke into every aspect. He kept us on deadline, and coordinated the entire effort.

Deb Kallina, who has served as a developer at MortarStone since 2016, defined and analyzed the data set, considering factors to ensure a fair and accurate representation, and ran the queries to answer the questions we believed to be most relevant. Not only did she collect the information, she worked to present it in an understandable way. In addition, her interpretive analysis was invaluable.

Eric Hayes, our Chief Technology Officer, provided technical support and insights surrounding the data.

Dr. Russell James, who happily joined the project early in its formation, was instrumental in providing encouragement and guiding our methodology.

Lawson Clary of 5 Point Church and **Mike Robertson** of Visalia First Assembly enriched the discussion by providing perspective as church leaders and the application of the data to the local church.

Bryan Rose and **Greg Gibbs** from Auxano, **Drew Landrum** and **Sam Baker** from Secure Give, and **Hollie Murrin** from Vision2 offered valuable feedback by previewing the data and its presentation.

Chris Goulard from Saddleback Church and Board Chair of Christian Stewardship Network, and **Leo Sabo**, President of Christian Stewardship Network both provided valuable feedback to the preview and championed the project through the broad platform of CSN.

Lauren Lopez and the team at Juxt Marketing for their relentless pursuit of excellence in helping us tell the story and for producing the final product.

Finally, none of this would have been possible without our clients at MortarStone, who utilize the software and our professional services. Our clients and their givers are the answer to the question, "Why?" and inspire us to continue to identify the answers to "What?" and "How?"

Soli Deo Gloria!

Tim Deatrick, D.Min., CAP
Director of Giver Engagement





"MortarStone is a data powerhouse! Because of their relationships with hundreds of churches that account for over \$21 billion in gifts over the past six years, they have their finger on the pulse of church giving. The trends they identify in this report should shape the way we disciple people in the area of giving and generosity. This is a "must read" for church leadership teams."

Chris Goulard

Pastor of Strategic Advancement, Saddleback Church
Board Chair, Christian Stewardship Network

***Want to get insights for
your church's giving?***

Learn more at [MortarStone.com!](https://MortarStone.com)

