



# YOUR COMMUNITY'S MONEY STORY

## CURRICULUM GUIDE

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# *YOUR COMMUNITY'S MONEY STORY*

## **CURRICULUM GUIDE**

### *INTRODUCTION*

Every faith community and organization has a money story. Perhaps your story is shaped by influential leaders and charitable saints who have left legacies of inspiring generosity. Perhaps your story holds trauma of mismanaged funds or unmet expectations. Perhaps your story has been revised due to budget cuts and economic recessions. Perhaps your story includes hopes and dreams you are eager to live out faithfully. What money story accurately reflects the values and practices of your community? What money story can help you develop more faithful practices of stewardship? How might God's money story intersect with your own?

Use this curriculum guide to discern and record your community's money story. The reality is that every community is composed of many stories and varied points of view. In fact, we can experience the same events in vastly different ways. However, throughout this exercise, the goal is to try to articulate the composite and unique narrative of your particular community. This is meant to help you gain clarity around how your community lives out (*or is neglecting to live out*) your beliefs and values. We encourage you to complete this exercise as preparation for your stewardship season, as writing your community's money story can help define your approach and shape your actions.

Ultimately, we hope this exercise helps you assess your shared narratives and common power so that you can make a greater contribution to the world.



## HOW TO USE THIS CURRICULUM GUIDE

This guide is for a small group to complete on behalf of their larger community. You might complete this curriculum with a Sunday school class, your church staff/governance board, or your stewardship committee. We highly recommend you first complete Parts One through Four of the “Your Money Story” Workbook for individuals to practice writing their personal money stories. That exercise will inform how you approach writing the money story of your larger congregation/community.<sup>1</sup> This curriculum will work best with a small group of 4-8 participants over the course of multiple sessions or a longer retreat.

Here’s one way you might break up the sessions:

### SESSION 1 | 1.5-2 hrs

**PART ONE** THE ELEMENTS OF YOUR COMMUNITY’S MONEY STORY | 20-30 min

**PART TWO** DISCUSSING & DISCERNING TRENDS IN YOUR COMMUNITY’S MONEY STORY | 25-30 min

**PART THREE** WRITING YOUR THEME STATEMENT | 30-35 min

**PART FOUR** GOD’S MONEY STORY | 15 min

Completed at home by one or two copywriters:

**PART FIVE** REFINE YOUR COMMUNITY’S MONEY STORY (TAKE HOME EXERCISE)

### SESSION 2 | 1 hr

**PART SIX** ASSESSING YOUR STORY AND TAKING ACTION | 60 min

## SUPPLIES

- Post-it Notes (a stack for each participant)
- Pens or pencils
- Large easel pad of paper (or a dry erase board)
- Markers
- One copy of “Your Community’s Money Story” worksheet for each participant

## PREPARATION

Gather in a space with either a large wall or a large dry erase board so that you can present the elements of your community’s money story visually. If you are using a large easel pad of paper, set aside seven sheets. On each sheet write each of the following story elements in large print at the top and tape these sheets to the wall around your room:

**Sheet 1:** “Setting”

**Sheet 2:** “Characters”

**Sheet 3:** “Plot”

**Sheet 4:** “Conflict”

**Sheet 5:** “Tone”

**Sheet 6:** “Theme”

**Sheet 7:** “God’s Money Story”

If you are using a dry erase board, write these seven story element titles at the top of the board, designating lots of open space below each section. Throughout the curriculum, participants will place Post-it Notes under each story element so that you can visually see your community’s story take shape.

<sup>1</sup> If participants completed the “Your Money Story” Workbook, encourage them to bring those documents with them to this session, as they may refer back to the Workbook during these sessions.