



HOW-TO GUIDE

**YEAR-END
GIVING**

**• Donor and Board Advancement •
Year-End Giving**

2025

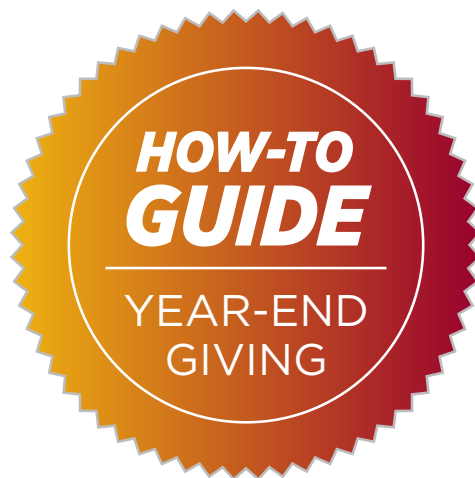


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DEAR TEAMMATES,

No matter where you are, October, November and December make up the season for gratitude and generosity. It's the time we reflect on what God has done in the lives of coaches, athletes and our financial partners who join us in our efforts. It takes teamwork to successfully carry out our mission and we are truly grateful that God blesses our united endeavors.

In addition to gratitude, generosity abounds during the year-end season. It's the time of year when donors seek ways to give to God's work for the blessings they have received. As their hearts turn toward giving, God's blessings abound.

This **2025 How-To Guide for Year-End Giving** provides practical ways to focus on gratitude and generosity. The guide leads you to show appreciation to your financial partners as they help us make disciples who make disciples. **This year, we are introducing how to create vision for specific projects that focus on people, programs and places.**

As you scroll through these pages, you will find field-tested ways to build grateful relationships with donors. I encourage you to invite your financial partners to celebrate with you as you share your stories and statistics of impact.

Let's encourage our financial partners to understand how valuable they are to what God is doing through FCA and rejoice with them as their hearts are turned toward Him through their generosity.



I'm blessed to serve with you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'D' followed by a cursive 'Parks'.

David Parks
EVP, Donor and Board Advancement

PART 1

STRATEGY



HOW DOES YEAR-END FIT INTO YOUR OVERALL STRATEGY FOR DONOR ADVANCEMENT?

 **A year-end strategy provides a plan to help staff leverage one of the greatest annual opportunities to increase revenue and expand vision for our ministry.**

A year-end strategy fits all three Donor Advancement Initiatives: **Connect**, **Communicate** and **Care**. This plan isn't just implemented at year-end but takes place all year long: from thanking donors in January who gave at the previous year-end, to inviting donors and prospects to experience a ministry environment throughout the year, to thanking and following up with donors in November and December.

For a recommended year-end timeline, see page 15 in the Tools section.

What Year-End Is:

-  The culmination of a year's work in cultivating relationships and ministry growth with an intentional focus over four months to celebrate and invite.
-  A time to *Connect* with, *Communicate* to and *Care* for your donors and those you have been cultivating through the year.
-  An opportunity to invite people to celebrate God's incredible work.
-  A calculated and strategic plan to celebrate, invite and thank people well.

What Year-End Is Not:

-  Focused solely on asking for money, but connecting with donors' hearts for Kingdom growth.
-  A last-minute attempt to raise emergency funds.
-  Required – but it's highly recommended.

WHY IS A YEAR-END GIVING STRATEGY ESSENTIAL?

► BIBLICALLY

Deuteronomy 26 recounts the instruction God gave Israel on offerings of gratefulness for His blessings on their nation and families. Today, year-end is the time that hearts are especially turned toward thanksgiving. In this season, generosity abounds with gratitude. “You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.” (2 Corinthians 9:11).

► HISTORICALLY

More giving occurs in the last two months of the calendar year than any other time. In fact, approximately 25% of FCA's annual revenue is received in November and December alone. 13% of non-profit revenue occurs during the last three days of December.

► VISIONARY

This is an ideal time to celebrate God's work in FCA with our donors. To do this, we should cast a compelling vision for the new year ahead and invite people to consider joining us. It is a unique opportunity to thank people well for their ongoing support and generosity throughout the year. This unique opportunity allows the Holy Spirit to guide people as they consider FCA giving through a clear and well-thought-out plan to invest.

► SPIRITUALLY

A spirit of generosity exists within the hearts of people at the end of the year above and beyond other times of the year. Many other charities and nonprofits experience great increases in revenue at this time as well, which indicates there is a spirit of giving happening all around us.

► PRACTICALLY

Year-end is a practical time for giving. Many donors seek tax benefits, so they look for opportunities for contributions to alleviate tax burdens. The end of the year also generates new giving. It's been said that the hardest gift to cultivate is the first one.

WHAT AM I ASKING FOR?

Do you get to this time of year and think: *Most of the people I know, I have already asked or they are already giving to FCA. There is no way I can approach them again!?*

If so, you are right. We cannot go to our constituents again with the same ask we have been making over and over. We need something new!

The timing for year-end is amazing. The final quarter of the year is almost directly on the heels of the FCA planning cycle. A few months before year-end, we have submitted our ministry plan and budgeted for the year ahead, so your ministry goals should be fresh enough to choose the correct appeal focus.

Do you ever get to this time of year and think: *I actually have no idea what I really need and what I should be asking for?*

As far as the ask amount, we recommend that you calculate the increase of this year's budget over the last year's. Use that number as the minimum amount for your year-end goal. Additionally, if you have any other non-operational projects, this is a great time of year to add that in to set your overall year-end goal.

We suggest that you think about **people** needed, **programs** you want to expand or enhance with special projects and **places** where you want to expand so coaches and athletes can gather and grow in their relationships with Jesus Christ.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YEAR-END MESSAGING?

REVIEW AND VISION

Consider the Parable of the Talents as found in Matthew 25. The master expected his servants to steward wisely the talents he apportioned to them and asked them for a report of their stewardship. Year-end gives the opportunity to review with our donors how we have stewarded the resources God has provided through their gifts.

Our communication at this time of year needs **a growth mindset**. If not for our area, **then for the future**. Think about one vision/one appeal. Every donor – past, present or future – needs to be aware of three simple things. This is our 3-step Year-End Report messaging:

1. What happened last year or in prior years?
2. What is your vision for next year?
3. What will it take to accomplish this vision?

TIP: Begin with a template about your vision that can be turned into a pdf for digital distribution or printed mailing. See *Part 2: Tools* for a sample.

OPPORTUNITY

Make one clear ask. If donors are confused about what you need, they will hesitate to give. Make it clear. A good way to narrow down your needs is to ask yourself: *What ministry initiative would not happen if this money did not get raised?*

STORIES OF LIFE CHANGE/MINISTRY IMPACT

Collect your transformational stories of ministry and determine the best way to tell them to your audience. This can be through video, written stories or images with text. **Facts capture the mind; stories capture the heart.**

TIP: Celebration (finished) stories show how God is working in the ministry now (review of the year). Opportunity (unfinished) stories give donors the opportunity to meet the urgent need (vision for the future).

MULTIPLE DELIVERY METHODS

Know and use your audience's preferred way to communicate with them. All your content must be deliverable in a variety of ways because every donor is different. You can communicate the same message on different platforms and methods such as:

- Video.
- Websites.
- Phone calls.
- Social Media.
- Emails.
- Text Messages.
- Direct mail:
 - › Sent from you as staff.
 - › Some sent from a board member to select donors. Handwritten notes are great for Legacy level major donors. (Example: "Would love your support on this project.")

WHO DO I ASK?

The easiest way to answer this at year-end is to consider who is currently giving and who has given in the past to your ministry area. Year-end is also a great opportunity for engaging new prospects you have been cultivating and have yet to invite to give to FCA.

CURRENT/LAPSED DONORS:

Think about every donor in the past five years. We suggest this is a good timeframe to look back on when considering your list. Someone who has given to your area within the last five years may consider a year-end gift. Be sure to send information to anyone who has given during this time as well as your new prospects!

NEW PROSPECTS:

Here are two questions to help you generate new prospects for your list:

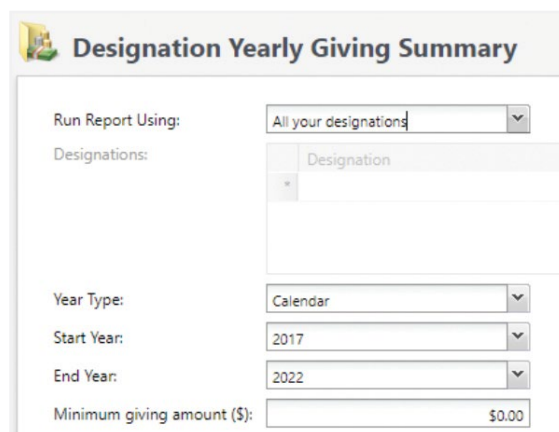
1. *Whom have I been developing a relationship with over the past year?*
2. *Who has been impacted or seen the impact of FCA in some way?*

Whether you are communicating with a lapsed donor or your closest donor relationship, they all want to know **what** you need and **why**. Even an AMP or RFP donor appreciates the special need at year-end. **Don't make their decision for them by not asking or shy away from putting your needs in front of your closest ministry partners!**

WHAT REPORT DO I RUN FOR CURRENT/LAPSED DONORS?

We recommend running the [Designation Yearly Giving Summary report](#) through FCAOne. Select 'All your designations,' and run for the last five years. **Be mindful that reports can be inclusive of all giving types to an ORG and therefore must be thoroughly vetted to ensure accuracy of delivery to the correct constituents.**

Remember hard credit donors and their related soft credit donors will both be included in these results. Set aside some time to review the list and make decisions based on your known relationships between organizations and their associated individuals such as businesses and business owners or family foundations and family members.



WHAT TYPES OF DONATIONS SHOULD I ASK FOR?

ANNUAL GIFTS

The primary focus of what you ask for at year-end is an annual gift. Even AMP donors may like to give an extra year-end gift. Make your funding project compelling and simple to attract your donors' attention.

Increasing your AMP revenue is a great priority for the beginning of the next calendar year but is not recommended as an appeal strategy for year-end.

STOCK GIFTS

FCA accepts many forms of non-cash gifts, such as real estate, vehicles, valuables, etc. However, we recommend the focus of your appeal in the non-cash space to be on stocks.

Your donors can maximize their Kingdom impact by donating appreciated securities. FCA sells these stock gifts right away that are then credited to the ministry. Giving stock also provides your donor with the opportunity to pay less tax, give more and improve their personal cash flow.

Donors who desire to make stock gifts should take these steps:

- Download or complete the online form "How to Give Stock to FCA" at <https://www.fca.org/donate/stockgift>.
- The form may be submitted to their broker and to Clay Meyer in Receipting (email to cmeyer@fca.org or fax to 816.923.2136).
- After the stock is sold, FCA sends a letter to your donor acknowledging the receipt of the stock gift.

REMINDER: A good way to approach your donors is with the spirit of this verse, "Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit..." Philippians 4:17, NKJV.

HOW AND WHY DO I INVOLVE OTHERS?

As a reminder, this is how we work together. We do it better when we do it together. This is the circle that will make your year-end campaign work well:



HOW DO I THANK OUR DONORS WELL AT YEAR-END?

“If, then, there is any encouragement in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, make my joy complete by thinking the same way, having the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. Everyone should look not to his own interests, but rather to the interests of others.” – Philippians 2:1-4

Teamwork is one of FCA's Values: We will express our unity in Christ in all our relationships. We value what our partners bring in their service to the ministry.

FCA staff do a great job of thanking donors throughout the year. November and December provide an excellent opportunity to thank your donors again as people focus on thankfulness and gift-giving during these months.

Have a plan for presenting year-end gifts of gratitude. These should be personal to the donor (high cost doesn't mean high value to some donors) and uniquely you. Budget for these gifts. Make them special by personally delivering them. When presenting a gift, remember to include a note of thanks (see *Part 2: Tools* for thank you notes).

Remember, the presentation matters. Enlist an artistic staff member or volunteer for help. Handwritten notes are **always welcome and appreciated**. We highly recommend the timing of your communication and gifts be distributed around Thanksgiving, so they stand out in the midst of the high gift-giving month of December.

GIFT-GIVING STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER

Staff who desire giving appreciation gifts based on closeness to the ministry may want to consider the time, effort, and involvement, as well as amount given, in the selection of gifts. Levels of giving can be generated to delineate and organize the types of gifts distributed as well.

Another suggestion is to give the same gift across the board to all constituents that reminds them that they are a valued part of FCA.

Gift suggestion ideas can be found in the *Part 2: Tools* section.

WHAT DO FOLLOW-UP AND FOLLOW-THROUGH LOOK LIKE?

Nearing Christmas does not mean the year-end momentum is decreasing. Did you know 13% of all non-profit giving occurs in the last three days of the year? Don't stop too soon!

Remember, January is just around the corner – a time for celebrating what the Lord did in 2024. It's also a time to make sure committed gifts from last year were received and to ask people to consider their giving plans for the next year.

DECEMBER 2025

Follow up with those you contacted earlier in the year-end process.

Prioritize your lists as to the best way to contact your donors for follow-up:

- In-person.
- Phone calls.
- Texts.
- Emails.

See people in person as much as possible to review your year-end goals with them. This is a most effective step.

Leverage your text messaging to remind people of attention to your stated needs.

Remind donors of your 3-Step Year-End Report (Page 16) and **pursue an answer.**

JANUARY 2026

There is still work to do in January!

Connect with those who missed the giving opportunity at year-end. Ask them to consider giving to FCA as part of their plans for this year.

Work on increasing your number of AMP donors by inviting year-end donors to consider AMP for the coming year.

Help current AMP donors understand the growing needs as you reassess your budget progress for the fiscal year.

And don't forget to celebrate what God did through your year-end efforts!

PART 2

TOOLS



SUGGESTED TIMELINE

A year-end campaign does not **begin** at year end.

We encourage you to see that September – December activities is part of your annual donor strategy of finding new donors and building current relationships. The final four months of the year is for focusing on increased giving.

YEAR-END SEASON

SEPTEMBER

Prepare your communication

- Establish your vision -What is God asking us to do in the future?
- What is your need – What initiative won't happen if its budget isn't raised?
- What are the stories of life change that need to be told?
- Get others involved.

OCTOBER

Share your impact and ask

- Make the ask. Distribute the story of your vision, need and life change to those who should receive it in the ways they like to receive communication.
- Make your plan and do the prep work for year-end gifts.

NOVEMBER

Thank your donors

- Execute your plan for year-end gifts so they are received before or around Thanksgiving.
- Make sure to include handwritten notes.

DECEMBER

Follow up and finish strong

- Prioritize your delivery list for follow-up.
- Pursue an answer to the ask you presented in the fall.
- Continue into the final week of the year.

ASSETS

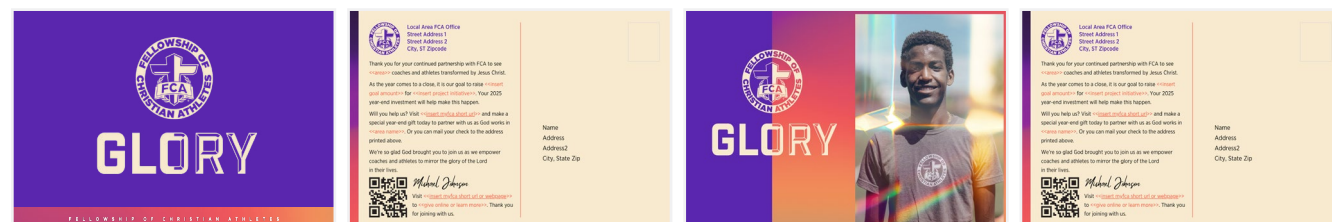
YEAR-END REPORTS • Available in Canva.

AVAILABLE
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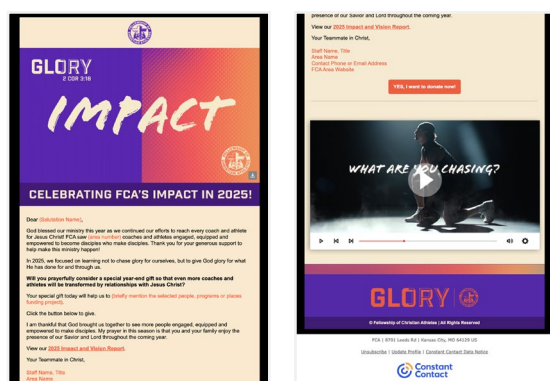


Impact reports should be distributed no later than October. Vision (ask) reports should be distributed in early November. Remember, these reports should not be inserted inside gifts.

POSTCARDS • with QR code for more information. Available in Canva.



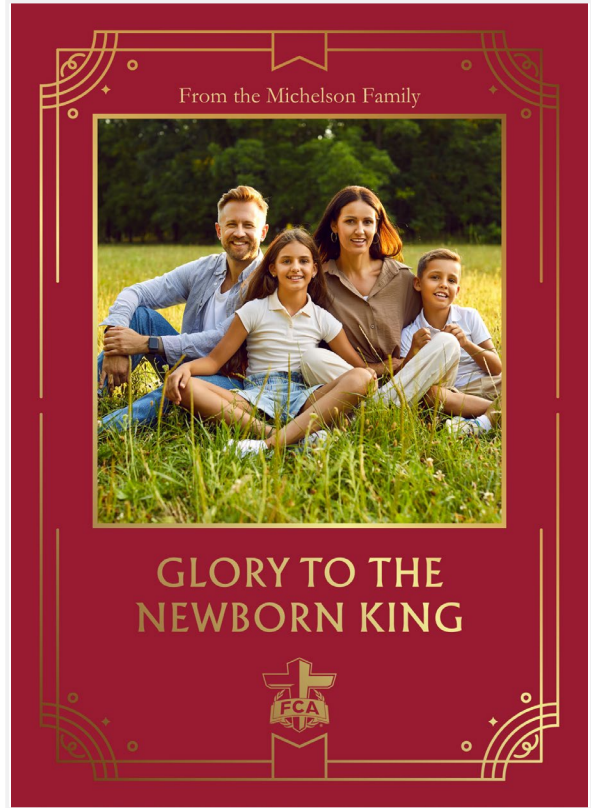
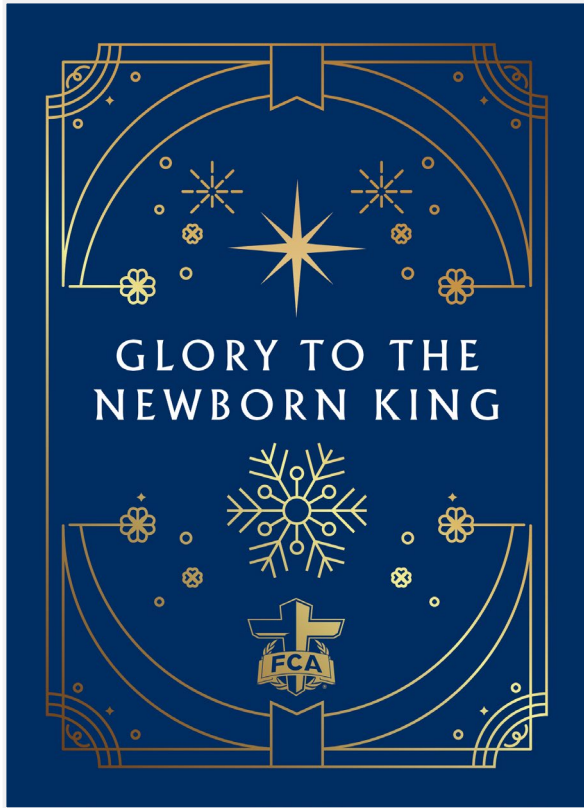
EMAIL TEMPLATE • Available in Constant Contact.



AVAILABLE
IN
Constant
Contact

ASSETS

YEAR-END CARDS • Available in Canva.



DONOR GIFT SUGGESTIONS

The gifts with greatest impact are ones selected specifically for your individual donors. This requires knowing their interests, ways of doing things, their families, etc. This is easiest for those donors who are closest to the ministry.

But, sometimes, you haven't had time to really get to know all your donors before year-end rolls around. Here's a list of gifts that you could consider or use as a basis for coming up with your own ideas:

▶ PRACTICAL GIFTS WITH THE FCA LOGO

- Water bottle or tumbler.
- Portable phone charger .
- Golf.
 - » Golf balls.
 - » Golf bag towel .
 - » Club cleaning brush.
- Reusable tote.
- Notebook or journal.
- Windshield scraper.
- Umbrella.
- Kitchen utensils.
- Desk calendar with daily Bible verse.

▶ SEASONAL GIFT WITH THE FCA LOGO

- Christmas tree ornament.
- Christmas wreath.
- Blanket or throw.
- Nativity set.

▶ LOCAL FAVORITES

- Food.
 - » Coffee.
 - » Tea.
 - » Popcorn.
 - » Chocolate.
 - » Bundt cake.
 - » Other local dessert.
- Candle.
- Soap.

▶ OTHER IDEAS

- Advent devotional.
- Book.
- Cooler.
- Cornhole.
- Massage gun.
- Scripture art.
- Camp t-shirt.
- Devotional book with a card, ornament or food item.
- Phone call from local athlete or coach who has been impacted by FCA.
- FCA Gear signed by local college athletes and coaches.
- High-end backpack or laptop bag.

Check out the [gifts of FCAGear](#) for additional donor gift options!



Donor and Board Advancement

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