

## 6 Perspectives on Who Should See Church Giving Records

It's a difficult question.

Indeed it is such a difficult question that I will not attempt to give a concrete answer. I will let you know what I've done in the past, but that's it.

It's really a difficult question. Who should be able to see what each person gives to the church? Let's look at six perspectives.

1. **The lead pastor and one layperson.** This perspective argues that financial stewardship is a spiritual discipline, and the pastor should have access to individual giving to be able to see how the members are doing in this regard. The layperson, of course, is the person who actually keeps the records.
2. **One layperson who guides the pastor.** The layperson again is the member keeping financial records. He or she is the only one who has access to giving records. But that person is able to share information with the pastor or other leaders as needed. For example, the financial secretary can inform the pastor or elders about potential future elders according to their giving patterns. I took this approach as a pastor. I did not have access to individual giving patterns, but our financial secretary would let me and other leaders know if a person should be eligible for a leadership role according to their stewardship in the church.
3. **One layperson only.** In this example, only the financial secretary (or equivalent) has access to individual giving records. He or she does not provide any input that would reflect this information.
4. **A key group in the church.** In some churches, this group is the elders. In some other churches, it is the nominating committee.
5. **A staff person other than the pastor and a layperson.** The pastor is specifically precluded from individual giving visibility. Instead, another staff person, such as an associate or executive pastor, has access to the records along with the financial secretary.
6. **No church members.** No church member can see the records. Instead, a non-member is recruited or hired to keep the records, but that person does not share the information with any church members.

There are certainly different options and different variations of these options of church giving records. I can see some rationale in each of them. These are really difficult questions.

**What is your church's practice? What do you think of these six options? What do you think is the ideal option?**

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