



Gathering FIRST FRUITS

National Summit on the Economics of Ministry

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Introduction | [A User's Guide for Videos](#)

In January 2019, leaders from 110 projects funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. in three initiatives that address the economic challenges facing U.S. Christian churches, pastoral leaders, theological schools and seminarians gathered in Indianapolis, Indiana, to share their work, connect with others and collaborate on next steps.

This collection of videos tells that story. It includes video of plenary sessions, short videos shown at the event and a set of documentary-style videos of interviews with several project leaders.

This User's Guide is intended to help project leaders, coordination program directors and other stakeholders tell their own stories as part of an emerging movement to address the economic challenges of ministry. The examples are meant to stimulate your own thinking about how to use the videos. The questions following a set of recommended videos are only suggestions. Please adapt them to your own setting.

Overview

Websites:

- Visit the Showcase to watch and/or download the videos:
www.firstfruitssummitvideos.org
- Find the User's Guide on the same page, www.firstfruitssummit.org/resources
- Visit the Event Website for general information about the January 2019 Summit:
www.firstfruitssummit.org

Videos:

- Videos 1 - 17: These videos, on the Showcase and the Playlist, are organized chronologically following the January 2019 event schedule. They include two types of videos:
 1. Plenary sessions (unedited live recordings of presentations, panels and sermons)
 2. Transition videos (shown at the event to welcome participants and introduce presentations)
- Videos 18 - 24: These seven videos offer a documentary-style set of interviews with several project leaders covering major themes emerging in this work. The first one, video 18, is a full-length documentary that includes all the videos following it (19-24). The next videos (19-24) are segmented "episodes" of the full-length documentary, including an introductory video (19) and a concluding video (24).

Examples of how to use the videos

Introduce your project to new program participants

Download and show several videos during your first session together. The videos could help you place your particular project within the larger movement of hope that is unfolding, or simply introduce the ideas:

- Start with video 19 (4-minute introduction),
- Followed by either/both:
 1. video 22 (8 minutes about pastors in active ministry), or
 2. video 21 (5 minutes on how theological schools are addressing financial literacy and educational debt).
- Finish with video 24 (2-minute hopeful conclusion).

Ask the following (or similar) questions:

- With which people in the videos do you identify? Have you had similar experiences?
- Did any of this information surprise you?
- What did you find discouraging in the videos? Why?
- Where did you see hope in the videos?

Tell the story of a project and the larger movement to a board of directors (or institutional host board)

Download and show several videos at a board meeting or similar gathering. These videos present the overall goals and the national importance of the work through the words of Lilly Endowment Vice President for Religion, Chris Coble, and the testimonies of pastors and leaders:

- Start with video 19 (4-minute introduction),
- Show a clip from video 3 (Chris Coble, Vice President for Religion, Lilly Endowment), any or all from around minute 1:10 to minute 4:00,
- Followed by either:
 - video 7 (2:30 minutes of short stories and testimonies from project leaders entitled, Why We Care About This Work), or
 - video 11 (2:30 minutes of testimony about working with pastors),
- Finish with video 24 (2-minute hopeful conclusion).

Ask the following (or similar) questions:

- Where does our institution fit into this movement?
- What are the financial challenges facing our constituencies (students, pastors, etc.)?
- What resources do we need to support this work?

Or thank a board of directors for their support

Download and show this hopeful video as a way to thank them for their support. Or email them the link in a 'thank you' email:

- Video 24 (2-minute hopeful testimonies about the projects), or
- Show a clip from any of the three sermons (videos 2, 9, 15) for an inspiring moment of encouragement and gratitude.

Lead a session with pastoral leaders and/or seminarians on "Theology and the Economics of Ministry"

Download and show the following videos as a prompt for theological discussion. Or assign them for viewing prior to the session:

- Start with video 13 (3 minutes about theology, prayer and money),
- Followed by video 23 (3 minutes with Ida Carruthers, general secretary of the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, talking about a Theology of Sufficiency), and/or
- Show clips from any of the three sermons (videos 2, 9 and 15) for biblical exegesis, insightful storytelling and powerful testimony.
- For something very deep, show video 14 (41-minute panel on Thinking Theologically about the Economics of Ministry).

Ask the following (or similar) questions:

- What did you learn about faith and money when you were growing up? In church today?
- What do scripture and tradition(s) have to say about faith and money?
- If God gives abundantly, why doesn't everyone have enough to live?
- What do you need to be able to speak theologically about the economics of ministry?

Educate your project team, or other stakeholders, on the work of Matt Bloom's Flourishing in Ministry Project

Dr. Bloom's keynote (video 6) is 41 minutes and well worth the viewing. You could assign the viewing ahead of time and lead a discussion with your group when they gather. Find out more about his project at <https://wellbeing.nd.edu/flourishing-in-ministry/>

Ask the following (or similar) questions:

- In what ways do our program participants/constituencies flourish in ministry? Where is their wellbeing strong? What does it look like? Are they happy? Do they thrive?
- In what ways do our program participants/constituencies not flourish or struggle in ministry?
- What areas of wellbeing should we address in our program(s)?

Present your project to donors or prospective donors

Download and show the full-length documentary (18) at a donor event, or

- Show only the introductory video (19)
 - followed by any of the "episodes" (20, 21 or 22), or
- Show the introductory video (19)
 - followed by any of the event transition videos (5, 7, 11, 13, 16), and
- Close with the final video (24) for a hopeful message.

If they are already donors, show the final video (24) and thank them.

If this work is new to the donors, ask them to consider the following questions:

- How do they think their own pastoral leaders (in their churches) are doing financially?
- Have they ever asked a pastoral leader about faith and money, or about that pastor's own financial wellness?
- How important are pastoral leaders to the health and faith of local congregations?
- What kinds of institutions support pastors? How is theological education funded in your faith tradition?

Share videos in congregational settings (board meetings, pastoral support committees, personnel committees, pastoral search committees, etc.)

Download and show any of the following:

- Video 18, the full-length documentary (23 minutes), or
- Video 6, the keynote on Fostering Wellbeing (41 minutes), or
- Video 8, a panel of leaders talking about why this work matters (43 minutes), or
- Any of the sermon videos (2, 9, 15), or
- A combination of shorter event transition videos (5, 7, 11, 13, 16).

Ask the following (or similar) questions:

- Was any of this information surprising to you?
- How well does your congregational leadership understand your pastors' compensation and their financial needs?
- Does your denomination or larger community of churches provide any information or support about clergy financial wellness?

Share with a prospective seminarian or a person considering ministry

Download and show the full-length documentary (18), or

- Show a selection of the “episodes” such as video 20 (2 minutes on the economic challenges of the call to ministry) or video 22 (8 minutes about the economic challenges in ministry),
 - followed by the final video (24).

For a solo uplifting message, show the final video (24) by itself.

Ask the following (or similar) questions:

- Was any of this information surprising to you?
- How will your seminary education be financed?
- Have you researched the average level of compensation in churches of your tradition?
- Do you have other people you are or will be supporting financially, and have you talked with them about financial planning?

To share how seriously many schools and churches are taking these challenges, download and show:

- Video 7 (2:40 minutes entitled, *Why We Care About This Work*) and/or
- Video 8 (43-minute panel of leaders talking about why this work is so important).

Ask the following (or similar) questions:

- Why do you think these leaders are concerned about the financial wellness of students and pastoral leaders?
- Can you name the larger communities (religious, civic, personal) in which your ministry occurs?
- Do you feel like those communities are invested in your ministry? Why or why not?

For a project website

The following shorter videos could be downloaded and embedded on your site:

- Event transition videos (5, 7, 11, 13, 16),
- Video 20 (2 minutes about answering the call to ministry),
- Video 21 (5 minutes about theological schools),
- Video 24 (inspiring 2-minute closing video).

If you’d like to add a hyperlink to your website to tell the story of the January 2019 gathering, you could link to:

- Full-length documentary (video 18),
- The Welcome and Overview (video 3),
- One of the panels on which your institutional or project leader participated,
- Any video that makes sense to you.

Other ideas

- There are personal testimonies throughout the videos that could be used anytime. For example, videos 4 and 10 are each 8-minute personal stories and comments. Sermons include stories, too.

Technical and copyright considerations

You may download the videos or play them directly from the Showcase. To download a specific video, open the individual video page by clicking on the title of the video. On the individual video page, click the “download” button. To share specific videos, you could link to them by copying and pasting that page’s link, by using the “share” button on the page or by embedding the link on your website. Or you could copy and paste the link to the full Showcase.

All videos are the property of The Center for Congregations which hosted the January 2019 Summit made possible through a grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. You may use the material with permission, copyright ©ICC 2019.

Questions

For further assistance, project leaders may contact the coordination program director supporting their initiative.