

Y06 — The Donation Conversation

There is one conversation left in the journey of a site, and for a lot of people it is the most uncomfortable one: the donation conversation. So let us take the discomfort apart, because once you see how honest this ask is, it stops feeling like asking for money and starts feeling like offering a seat at the table.

First, remember where we are. The site is live. It has been a week or two. The owner has watched customers find them for the first time. The gift has fully landed, no strings, and they know it. THAT is when this conversation happens - never in the same breath as the gift. Gift first, always; the space between is what makes both of them clean.

Now, the honest math, and I want every one of you to actually know these numbers, because you should never make an ask you do not understand. Keeping one website on the internet costs about five dollars a month - that is the real bill the church pays to the hosting company. The AI tools the church pays for run about twenty a month. So when your youth group keeps five sites alive for the community, that is real money the church is spending every month to keep being generous. The donation conversation is simply telling that truth and letting people respond to it.

Here are the words. Like the call, they are shorter than your nerves think they need to be: We are so glad the site is working for you. One thing you might not know - our youth group keeps it online through donations to the church; the hosting runs about five dollars a month per site. If you ever wanted to support that, it would help us keep doing this for other churches and businesses like yours. No pressure at all either way - the site is yours regardless.

Notice what those words do. They tell the exact truth, with a real number. They make the money go somewhere bigger than one website - you are not paying your bill, you are helping us bless the next place. And they end with the pressure valve wide open: the site is yours regardless. Say that last line every time, and mean it.

Three rules, and these are iron. The money goes to the church - its giving page, its office, its name on the receipt. Never to you, never through any app of yours; if someone tries to hand a kid twenty dollars, you smile and point them to your leader. Second, whatever they answer, the site keeps running - we do not hold websites hostage, ever. If a donation never comes, the church is out five dollars a month for a neighbor; there are worse fates. Third, every single answer gets a thank you - the people who give, the people who say maybe later, and the people who just say the kind thing about your group. Gratitude is the uniform of this ministry; wear it on every call.

And here is the part most people miss: this conversation does not really end. Remember the powered-by line from launch day? If the owner said yes to it, that little link at the bottom of their site goes on quietly telling your story - to their customers, their cousins, the next shop owner who visits their page and thinks, who built this? Donations and new projects will arrive months later from sites you have half forgotten. You planted; the line keeps watering.

Your build for this lesson: the kid who made the original call makes this one too, leader in the room, words from the card. Whatever the answer is - a gift, a maybe, a warm nothing - log it, thank them, and bring the story back to the group. Then put a tally on the youth room wall: sites live, and neighbors served. Watch both numbers climb.