

Thrivent Magazine



A year unexpected

Tips for a sound financial strategy during these unpredictable times

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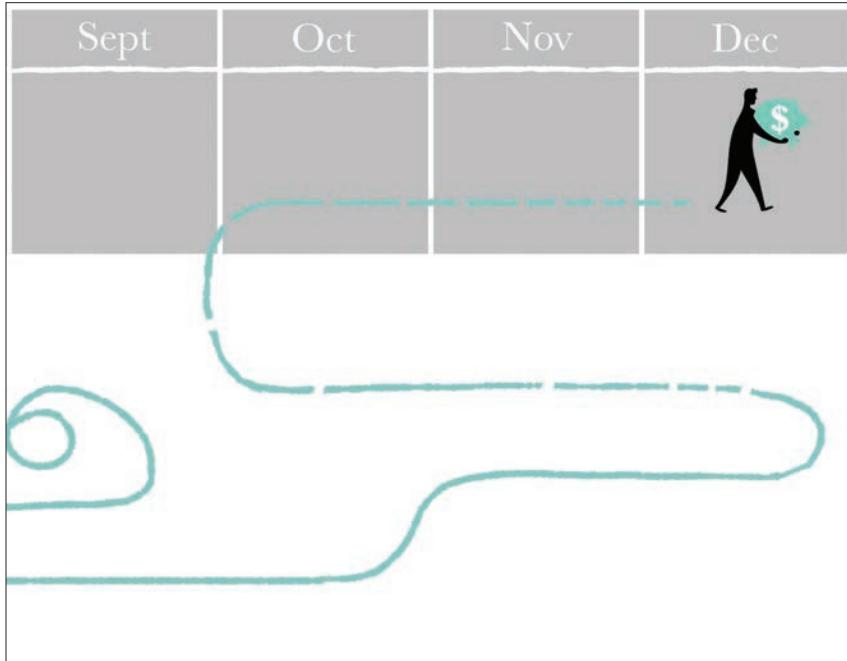
Hope

Oh holy night, the stars are brightly shining;
It is the night of our dear Savior's birth.
—“O Holy Night”

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Winter 2020
Volume 118, No. 697

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Illustration by David Saracino

Welcome

My lessons from 2020

Our first snowfall in Minnesota arrived early this year, and it seemed that overnight I was thinking about the holidays and the end of the year.

As we approach the end of 2020 and all that's happened, let's take time to reflect on what we've experienced. For each of us, I'm certain this year taught us lessons we might not have learned elsewhere. And those learnings can help us prepare for 2021 and the seasons ahead.

Here are some things 2020 taught me:

Don't take the little things for granted. When we're finally able to return to a semblance of normalcy in our lives, I'll appreciate the simple things. Sharing a meal with friends. Attending concerts in person. Catching a smile from a stranger. It's truly the simple moments that add up to a full life.

Money is a tool to live a purposeful life; it's not a goal in and of itself.

The important things in life are not measured in dollars and cents. We've always believed this at Thrivent, but this year illustrated the importance of taking a deeper look at finances—to know where you are today, where you want to be, and the path needed to get there. Without that clarity,



tumultuous times can seem overwhelming. But with it, you can adjust and move forward, using your faith to guide your decisions.

Practicing gratitude can change your mindset. I've always believed that gratitude is powerful, and it certainly proved true this year. When I start to feel down about our current state, I think about something I'm grateful for. Technology in times of social distancing. Generosity of strangers. Faith that gives us hope for the future.

While our Christmas celebrations may look a little different this year, my prayer for you remains the same—that you may find joy, hope and peace this season and in the year to come.

Merry Christmas!

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Thrive

Insights and inspirations



In Dallas, Lily Grace's parents, Kathy and Steve Stigall, along with Lily's three siblings did a family run with Lily in a stroller.

Race for Lily Grace

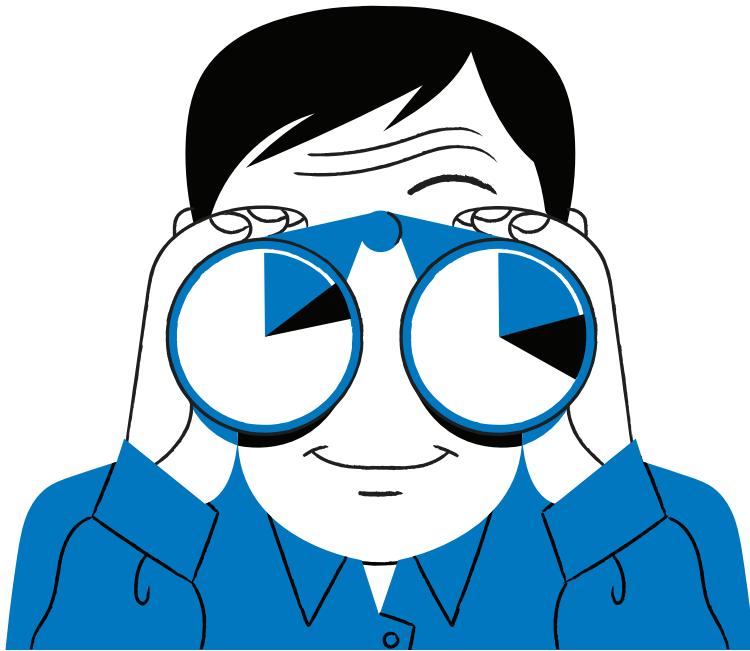
Virtual run/walk raises money for near-drowning survivor

By Donna Hein

Bonnie Hahn's 5k in her Marble Falls, Texas, neighborhood on Oct. 3 only included a few people. But at the same time, she knew that more than 850 people in 22 states across the country were walking or running, while social distancing, in the virtual Race for Lily Grace.

They were raising funds to help with medical expenses for Lily, Hahn's 4-year-old granddaughter, who survived a drowning accident on Dec. 2, 2017.

Lily was just 15 months when she nearly drowned. A severe anoxic brain injury has left her unable to speak or walk. While therapies are helping on her road to recovery, several are not covered by insurance. The goal was to raise \$50,000 to help defray medical expenses for one year. **(Continued on page 5)**



“Rather than engaging in political prognostication, I generally find it more useful to look at what markets are telling us.”

tech stocks were also relatively weak, potentially reflecting investor concern about paying large valuations for earnings far out into the future in an environment of higher inflation.

Despite strong growth in the third quarter, the U.S. economy is still well below its pre-COVID trend. We're producing fewer goods. Yet we've added trillions in Fed liquidity and deficit spending. More dollars chasing fewer goods can eventually lead to inflation (which we haven't seen yet, as Americans have largely used stimulus checks to save and pay down debt). Whichever party controls Washington, we're likely to see another stimulus bill and we'll continue watching what the market is telling us about interest rates and inflation.

Market outlook

What are the markets telling us?

By David Royal

It may seem counterintuitive, but I'm not going to dedicate this column to the results of the election. It can take a while for the implications of an election to develop, and they aren't always what one might have expected. For example, four years ago, the market experienced a powerful rotation into cyclical stocks, but it was a trend that took some time to emerge.

Rather than engaging in political prognostication, I generally find it more useful to look at what markets are telling us.

In my last column, I warned of the potential for a rise in inflation in the intermediate- to long-term. I hesitated even to suggest such a possibility, since it was so far from the Wall Street

consensus. Then, October ended up being the worst month for stocks since March, as COVID cases spiked. Unlike most stock market declines, in which investors flock to the relative safety of U.S. Treasury securities and drive down rates, interest rates increased during October. Large



David Royal is chief investment officer at Thrivent.

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(Race for Lily Grace continued from page 3)

More than \$121,000 was raised.

Hahn led a Thrivent Action Team, one of 16 across the U.S. She rallied family and friends to join her team or lead a team in their communities. “We had a group in Colorado that was 20-people strong organized by my sister-in-law,” Hahn says.

In Dallas, Lily’s parents, Kathy and Steve Stigall, along with Lily’s three siblings, did a family run with Lily in a stroller. Elsewhere in Dallas, a friend ran a half-marathon. Friends in Nebraska—a family of six—set up a relay and competed against each other to raise funds.

“Logically, an event like this shouldn’t work during a pandemic,” Hahn says. “But it just took off, and it feels like God has blessed it in a big way.”

Participants received a T-shirt and a bracelet that reads Pray for Lily. The packets also included water safety information and a link to a water safety quiz (colinshope.org/quiz), provided by Colin’s Hope, a nonprofit in Austin, Texas, dedicated to children’s water safety.

“Until we lost Colin, I didn’t know about how many young children accidentally drown,” says Dale Wolter, Thrivent client and grandpa to Colin, who drowned in 2008 at age 4. “When you learn what can happen and what to look for, it makes such a difference.”

Lily’s mom, Kathy, is amazed at the race results.

“It’s really humbling and a blessing to be a part of this race, to see people’s generosity even in a pandemic,” she says. “The Lord has reminded us that he will take care of us.”

5 ways to celebrate the Christmas season virtually

How to connect with family and friends using technology

By Rebecca Lubecki

If you’re celebrating the Christmas season virtually this year, there are plenty of ways to keep your traditions going.

1. Host a virtual gathering

With fewer parties to attend in person, see which ones you and your friends could throw virtually instead. Coordinate ahead of time to make sure no one has to miss out because of technology issues.



2. Prepare slideshows to share

Ask several guests to prepare a photo slideshow beforehand and give them a chance to share. That way, when others ask your niece how wedding planning is going or how your cousin’s newborn is doing, everyone can share stories and see for themselves.

3. Start a photo chain

Email your family members with photos of Christmas gatherings from past years and encourage everyone to respond with their own. It’s a great way to share some laughs, remember those who may have passed away since, or show younger or new members to the family some of its history.



4. Share family recipes

Part of the Christmas spirit includes sharing everyone’s favorite seasonal treats and dishes. Have several family members make a favorite family recipe and pick a day to enjoy it together over video chat or email.



5. Make a difference

There’s no better way to get into the giving spirit than supporting a great cause. Organize a virtual Thrivent Action Team with family or friends, bond and make projects together over video calls, like making blankets for the homeless.

From India to North Dakota

Christian values and calling guide Thrivent client Prakash Mathew

By Donna Hein

When Prakash Mathew traveled from India to Fargo, North Dakota, in 1971 to pursue his graduate degree, he had no idea that it would later become his home.

Mathew grew up as a Christian in India. During his undergraduate program in Agricultural Studies in 1968 in India, he met Pastor Ross and Peg Robson from Fargo, North Dakota. Unbeknownst to Mathew, the Robsons began raising funds for his travel to and graduate tuition at North Dakota State University (NDSU).

Mathew, a member of the board for the Thrivent Member Network—Northland Region, believes it was God's calling.

After earning his degree, he spent his career at NDSU. He retired as vice president of Student Affairs in 2014.

Mathew and his late wife, Sandy, raised two sons, now in their 30s. Twin granddaughters joined the family in 2019. And this past May Prakash married his wife, Jane. He's also author of the book *We are Called ...to do the Right Thing*, coming out in early 2021.

What's your first memory of money?

I came to this country with a suitcase and the few Indian

rupees I had in my pocket. On the way to the U.S., I had to stay in a London hotel. When a hotel employee brought my bag to my room, I looked for money but had to apologize that I didn't have any. I felt so bad. While I'm still not rich in money, I am rich in the ways God has blessed me.

How did you first learn about Thrivent?

My late wife's parents were Thrivent members in Fosston, Minnesota. When we'd visit the farm, I'd see newsletters and ask them about it. They were proud to be part of Thrivent. Most meaningful to me is that we are a membership organization of Christians.

What are your guiding principles around money decisions?

It starts with the belief that everything I have is a gift from God. I want to be wise with how I use the money I've been given, and generosity plays a significant role. I believe we need to give as we've been given.

What's the best piece of financial advice you've received?

Live with what you have. Don't borrow money you can't afford to pay back. Stay within your limitations.

What's your favorite volunteer activity?

There are several. I enjoy serving at the emergency food bank, Churches United for the Homeless

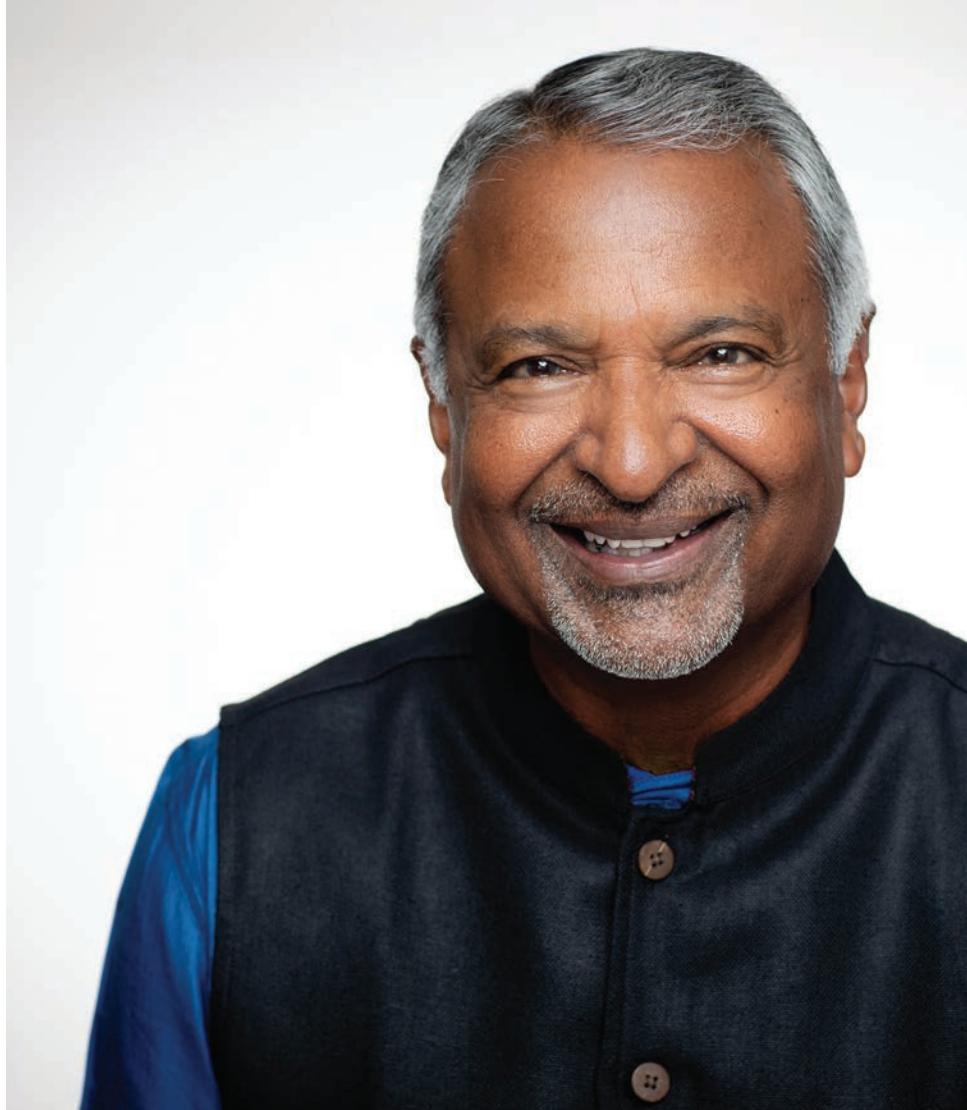


Photo by Britta Trygstad

“I want to be wise with how I use the money I’ve been given, and generosity plays a significant role.”

–Prakash Mathew

is about values and principles, and the application of them in our daily lives, both personal and at work. Coming out in early 2021, it’s filled with stories of learning these values and principles from my parents, but also includes lessons from 30-plus years of work in higher education, including how I developed and used the 80/20 principle at NDSU and in life. My inspiration for the book is from Micah 6:8.

What is the 80/20 principle?

The fit between your values and your employer’s values is shown as a predictor of job satisfaction. I really developed the 80/20 principle to help employers and employees determine if it’s a right fit for both. If your values conflict with a perspective employer’s values more than 20% of the time, you will be uncomfortable and stressed at work. However, it’s nearly impossible to find a 100% match.

Who was the most influential person in your life?

My father. He was a pastor for more than 40 years in a Protestant denomination in India. His life was a true testament to me and others. He was a true servant leader.

The client’s experiences may not be the same as other clients and does not indicate future performance or success.

Generosity in action



Committed to giving Mooreville, North Carolina

Lifelong volunteer Dorothy (Dottie) Franks lives out her belief that people should serve their communities. Her care for children in need is endless, so Dottie led a Thrivent Action Team to support a project called “Our Gift of Care.” The program helps children who are homeless and living in poverty in grades kindergarten through 12 by providing schools with “Go Bags.” Each bag contains a sleeping bag, pillow, blanket, small hygiene kit and healthy snacks.

Dottie’s team used its Community Impact Card to furnish 20 sleeping bags, food and hygiene items for the bags. She asked store managers to give her a gift card or a discount. They sewed more than 100 colorful pillowcases to include in the bags. Each creation is made with love in hopes to bring a smile to the children and show them someone cared and wanted to make and give them this special gift.

“Our Gift of Care” is part of Bright Blessings, a nonprofit organization located in Lake Norman, North Carolina.

in the Fargo-Moorhead area, and the Samaritan’s Feet project. I also support a mission project in Kenya, where Thrivent has played a major role in helping build schools and other projects through financial and voluntary help.

How do you define values?

They are our compass. These are the firmly held beliefs and convictions that we support and nurture. They also define our character. What you do every day should reflect your values so who you are as a person helps you identify your beliefs and values.

What’s your new book about?

We are Called...to do the Right Thing

How do beneficiaries work?

By Denise Logeland

Who are the beneficiaries on your 401(k) or IRA? How about your life insurance? If it's been many years since you chose beneficiaries, maybe it's time to take another look.

It's easy to change your beneficiaries. As you think about your choices, here are some basic facts to be aware of, says Tom Hussian, an advanced markets consultant for Thrivent.

What is a beneficiary?

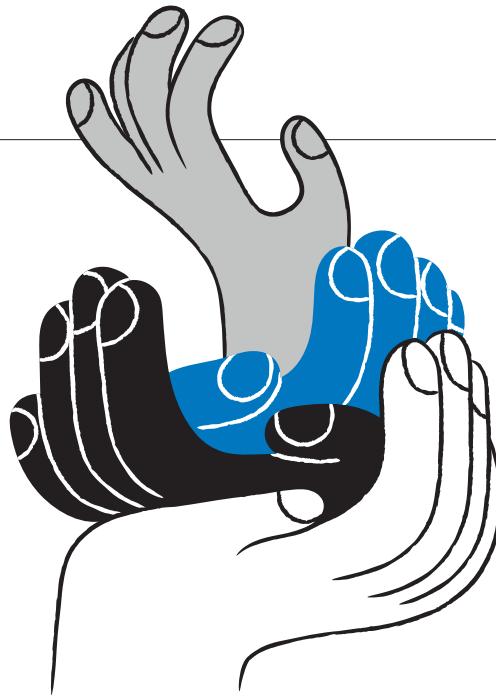
A beneficiary is "one who benefits," according to the dictionary. In financial terms, your beneficiaries are the people or organizations that benefit when you leave money or other assets to them, such as a payout from your life insurance. Thrivent's bylaws, in Section 5, detail who can be designated as a beneficiary.

If I have a will, do I still need to have up-to-date beneficiaries?

The short answer is: Yes. "There are certain types of accounts—like IRAs or life insurance—that pass to named beneficiaries independent of what the will says," Hussian explains. "You may say in your will, 'I want my husband to get everything,' but if your life insurance says your sister is beneficiary, that's where [the insurance payout] is going."

Are all beneficiaries treated the same way?

No, they are not. "Primary" beneficiaries are first in line. But if a primary



beneficiary has died or declines the money, it will pass to a "contingent" beneficiary, if you've named one. For example, if "my primary beneficiary is my son, a contingent beneficiary might be another individual or a charity," Hussian says. In that case, he adds, it's important to let his son know that he'll have the option of turning down the money that's been left to him—which his son might want to do for tax or other reasons—and to tell his son who the money will pass to next.

What should I think about when choosing beneficiaries?

Many things will factor in, but under the SECURE Act, a law that took effect at the beginning of 2020, you should think in a new way about tax impacts for your beneficiaries. Generally, the SECURE Act requires them to empty any retirement accounts that you've left to most

Your beneficiaries are the people or organizations that benefit when you leave money or other assets to them, such as a payout from your life insurance.

non-spouse beneficiaries within 10 years, rather than stretching disbursements out over a longer period. You can help your beneficiaries minimize their tax bill by moving some retirement funds into other vehicles, such as life insurance or a Roth IRA. While Thrivent does not provide specific legal or tax advice, we can partner with you and your tax professional or attorney.



Ready to make a beneficiary change? Thrivent's beneficiary designation forms are available to download at [thrivent.com/forms](https://www.thrivent.com/forms).



Bright ideas

Gifts from the heart

You don't have to spend a lot of money to give a meaningful gift this holiday season. Here are some ideas to make the most of your time and talents.

By Rebecca Lubecki

1. Deliver gift baskets

Bring your community together during the season by delivering homemade gift baskets to your neighbors. It could be as simple as your famous cookie recipe, complete with hot chocolate and other goodies.

2. Share your health

A simple way to give back or even save a life is to register as an organ donor or sign up to donate blood. According to the American Red

Cross, there's a shortage among blood banks. Or perhaps your next haircut is an opportunity to donate to a charity that accepts hair donations.

3. Give back with knowledge

Do you know kids in the neighborhood or from church that are having a tough time with virtual learning? Volunteer to help tutor students and help keep them on track with their education. There are ways to do this from a safe distance or virtually. Their parents will thank you!

Generosity in action



Help during a crisis

Mason City, Iowa

Dianna Francis led a Thrivent Action Team of teens to help with a blood drive at St. James Lutheran Church for the Red Cross of the Tri States Chapter. Each chapter helps serve the need to keep a reliable blood supply for patients who need it, especially during the COVID-19 crisis. The teens helped with setup, checked in donors and served refreshments.



Meals for seniors

Naples, Florida

George and Jane Turczyn wanted to help shut-ins receive a hot meal at home. The Christus Victor Lutheran Senior Ministries supports the Café of Life Senior Meals Outreach program, which provides seniors with food prepared in a team members' kitchen. They led a Thrivent Action Team and assembled 32 meals and packaged them with a Bible verse.

Connecting art and faith

By Joanna Reiling Lindell

In a vibrant glow of red-orange, Mary and the infant Christ emerge. She tenderly draws her child to her face; they appear inseparable as their heads touch and Jesus gazes intently up at his mother. Mary gazes at us, drawing us into the power and love of this duo. Mary's exceptionally large hand, cradling the infant, emphasizes her loving care and the responsibility she bears in raising the Son of God.

Artist Grace Hartigan painted this remarkable celebration of the Saint Madonna in 1984. The large size of this work of art, and prominence of Mary within the image, reinforce her central role in Christianity and in the life of Jesus. Looking at traditional and modern images of the Madonna and Child, especially this time of year, can offer unique inspiration and reflection.

The loose, spontaneous mood of line and energetic washes of color are characteristic of Hartigan's style, and that of the American Abstract Expressionist movement of the 20th century, of which she was a central figure.

While this watercolor is a stunning example of modern art, Hartigan references the rich history of Madonna and Child imagery. The vivid red-orange wash that makes up the background contributes a



© 1984 Grace Hartigan Estate; reprinted with permission.

sense of warmth to the scene and references the radiant all-gold backgrounds of Byzantine and Eastern Orthodox icon paintings. Often, too, in these earlier paintings, the Christ Child wears a garment of orange-red. Such connections to earlier examples of this motif are dynamic ways that artists can both honor and reference our shared humanity, making visual and conceptual connections with people and cultures of times past, even as we innovatively look ahead.

Joanna Reiling Lindell is the director and curator of the Thrivent Collection of Religious Art (thriventcollection.com).

Grace Hartigan
(American, 1922-2008)

Saint Madonna, 1984

Watercolor
30¼ x 22¾ inches

Thrivent Collection of Religious Art

Reflecting

What meaningful Christmas traditions do you hold on to in your family?



Good question:

What does it mean to you to think about money as a tool, not a goal?

Money isn't a goal of its own. It's a tool to reach real goals: providing for family, leaving a legacy, giving back to community and living a happy life.
Mike Kozak, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

A goal is something you reach, and you are done. A tool is something you continually use to maintain and fix things. Finances need constant tweaking and maintaining.
Shiela Diaz, Longwood, Florida

God has given us a mission: Love God, love our neighbor, make disciples of all nations. Aligning our lives with God's mission gives us our goal and purpose, and it helps us to see money as a tool to accomplish that goal, not as the goal itself.
Dan Antoine, Okoboji, Iowa

I use money as a tool to get to a goal. I also do not worry about money as much and it seems to get to my savings easier.
Sarah Schiermeister, Omaha, Nebraska

Being debt free, I use money as a tool often. Using it to help others and donating to charities.
Jonathan L. Bouse, Wabash, Indiana

Money is a tool to help plan your future.
Alan Sorenson, Beloit, Wisconsin

Money is there to help with our financial needs but should not be a goal of earning as much as you possibly can.
Rodney Bell, Clermont, Florida

Generosity in action



Rock painting fundraiser Jackson, Nebraska

When Patricia Teager learned her community food garden, run by the nonprofit Voices for Food, needed a new tiller, she formed a Thrivent Action Team to help.

Teager used her Community Impact Card to buy supplies for local artists who spent 500 hours painting rocks to sell. They raised \$6,000. The garden works with the state of Nebraska to provide food to local food banks and churches.



Serving together virtually Rockville, Maryland

Sharon Kemmerer led a Thrivent Action Team to support EveryMind, an organization that provides services for people in crisis.

A team of youth from Rockville United Church met virtually to create bags for the homeless. They included a space blanket, materials for bracelets and bandanas for masks.



Question for next issue:

What did you learn in 2020 that you'll carry forward to 2021?

Tell us in 50 words or fewer at Thrivent.com/share or email thriventmagazine@thrivent.com

Myth buster

Myth: The stock market is too risky for my retirement money.

By Donna Hein



Sometimes when people see the stock market fluctuations like we've had in 2020, or they think back to the stock market crash decades ago or the smaller crash in 2008, it causes some uncertainty. And they may believe the stock market is too risky.

It's riskier, frankly, to *not* be investing money in the market, says Mark Simenstad, vice president and chief investment strategist at Thrivent.

"The mix of your portfolio should take your age into account, but the stock market should be part of any well-diversified portfolio," Simenstad says.

It's really not about whether the stock market is too risky. It's about how your investment risks are being managed according to your retirement goals.

"You need to take a bigger view of the market," Simenstad says. "For example, if you take a 10-year view of the market, there have only been

a few periods that if you held steady for 10 years you didn't make money." Working with a financial professional can help you align your long-term goals with the right investment tools.

It's also about riding out volatility, says Patrick Egan, director, Financial Advice, at Thrivent. "The longer you stay invested, the impact from the volatility is lessened."

Plus, Egan asks, where else would you put your money right now? Certificates of deposit and money market accounts don't offer much benefit in a low interest rate environment, he says.

"We're at historically low interest rates," Egan says. "If you save for retirement in these accounts, it's unlikely you could save enough with the yield you would be getting. Sure, you'd still be saving money, but after modest inflation like we've had, you'd have a negative real return. You'd lose spending power."

All financial decisions come with some level of risk; the stock market is no exception. Past performance is not necessarily indicative of future returns. It's important to understand your own risk tolerance, your goals and, working together with a Thrivent financial professional, create a strategy that allows you to invest confidently.

CDs offer a fixed rate of return. The value of a CD is guaranteed up to \$250,000 per depositor, per insured institution, by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. (FDIC). An investment in a money market fund is not insured or guaranteed by the FDIC or any other government agency. A money market fund seeks to maintain the value of \$1.00 per share although you could lose money. The FDIC is an independent agency of the U.S. government that protects the funds depositors place in banks and savings associations. FDIC insurance is backed by the full faith and credit of the United States government.

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Send Us Your Ideas

Do you have a personal finance myth you want busted? Send your ideas to thriventmagazine@thrivent.com and we'll consider your myth.



Mary Jane Fortin speaks with Thrivent leaders during a virtual fireside chat.

On my mind

Why Thrivent? A unique purpose and ability to serve

By Mary Jane Fortin

When I first considered the opportunity to join Thrivent, I was inspired by the purpose-driven nature of this organization. I've always believed financial services is a noble profession, but Thrivent takes it to the next level. Our shared belief that humanity thrives when people make the most of all they've been given is unique in the industry, and it deeply resonated with me.

With our combination of financial expertise and purpose-based advice, Thrivent has a unique ability to serve our clients' needs broadly and holistically. We help clients protect their financial futures, manage through the uncertainty of these challenging times, prepare for retirement, and leave a legacy. What's more, we are committed to delighting them with an engaging financial service delivery model that

is second to none.

Our dedicated financial professionals are at the center of that commitment. They build client relationships that last a lifetime. With a focus on delivering purpose-based advice, they partner with clients to understand their personal goals and values. Then we help clients create the right strategies to achieve financial clarity, enabling lives full of meaning and gratitude.

That purposeful approach to finances distinguishes Thrivent across everything we do. We offer a fusion of finance and faith, where

money is viewed as a tool, not a goal. We inspire generosity and amplify its impact through our many programs, products and advice. Everything we do is in service of our clients, and we invest in one another to help our clients and their communities thrive. And we know that relationships are built on transparency and honesty.

Our clients can have confidence that Thrivent has the resources and capabilities to help them through every life stage. We're a diversified financial services company that is financially strong and stable, seeking to grow and focused on delivering an amazing customer experience.

And because the world is changing, Thrivent is making strategic investments to serve our clients in more modern and contemporary ways. For example, we're working to create a more seamless digital experience across Thrivent's products, programs and services. Our transformation will bring more exciting changes as we combine the power of our purpose with added convenience and choice in how our clients work with us.

While joining a new organization during a pandemic was a leap of faith for me, walking the virtual halls of Thrivent makes my spirit soar. I am incredibly excited for all that is to come.

Mary Jane Fortin, executive vice president, chief commercial officer, started at Thrivent in July of 2020.

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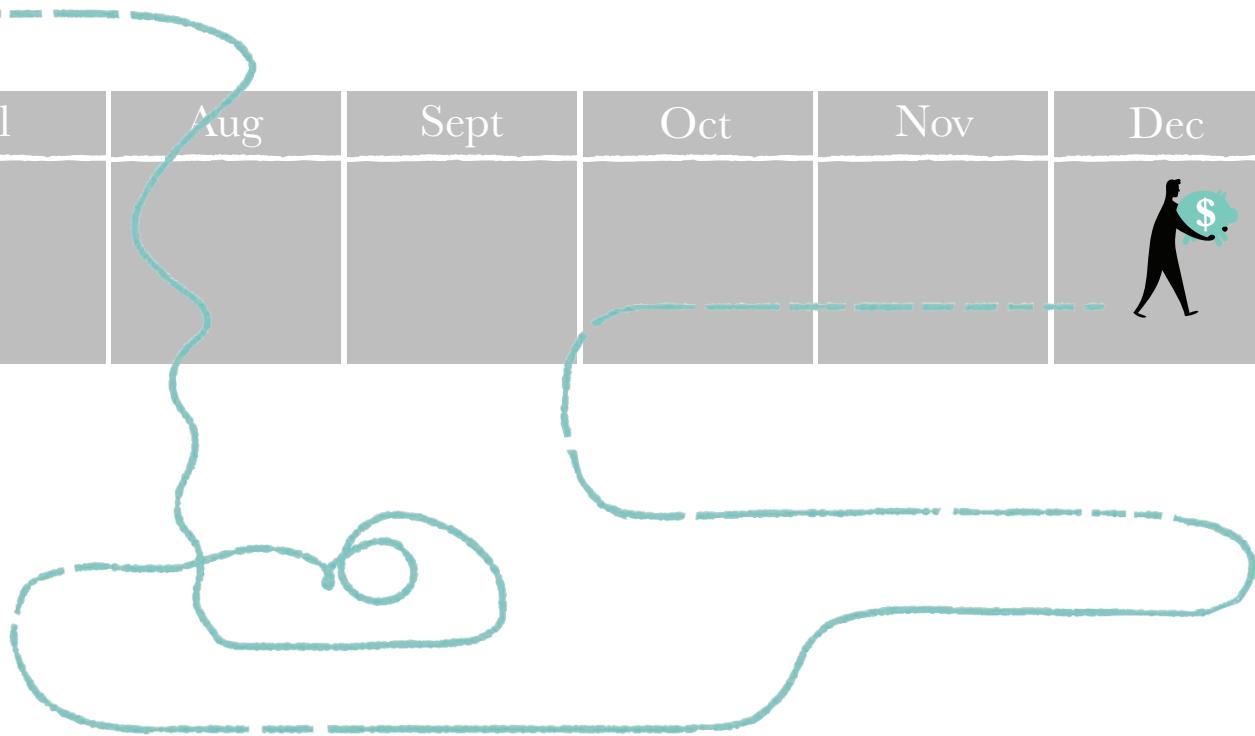
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A year unexpected

Our daily lives—and the rest of the world—have changed a lot this year. Your finances likely have, too. Here's how to end the year and start 2021 with a sound financial strategy.

By Eric Best / Illustrations by David Saracino

Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
					



This year has seen month after month of curveballs. From a global pandemic and civil unrest to record stock market ups and downs, 2020 likely has reshaped your daily life, including your finances and even how you approach money.

Now, as we look ahead to 2021, are there financial lessons you can take away from the COVID-19 crisis and a year of volatility? Is it time to set or re-evaluate your goals? Nate Collier, a Thrivent financial associate in Lexington, Kentucky, says one silver lining to this experience is how universal it has been. A key takeaway from the pandemic, not to mention the year in general, is to expect the unexpected.

“I definitely think COVID-19 is a stiff reminder that anything can happen,” he says. “That gives us something to point to that everyone has touched. It’s

truly trickled down to everyone.”

It’s time to take stock of what you’ve learned in 2020 and plan for 2021. Here is what to consider as you go about forming or re-evaluating your financial strategy.

Assess your finances

You’ve worked hard to align your values and finances as you seek to achieve financial clarity. So, if you’ve lost a job or had your hours reduced, or you simply changed your spending habits this year, it’s important to revisit the major building block in your financial strategy—your budget.

You’re not alone. Nora Herrera, a Thrivent manager in San Antonio, Texas, who helps improve peoples’ budgeting and savings habits, says many have seen changes to either their income or their money behaviors because of COVID-19. For example, many people are spending less on

travel, entertainment or going out to restaurants. This has helped them put more money toward their savings or other financial goals.

“We’re hearing the stories: ‘I’ve either been let go or furloughed,’” Herrera says. “People want to talk about their budgets, saying: ‘I really need to adjust. Can you help me through that?’”

Stephanie Shields, a Thrivent wealth advisor in Costa Mesa, California, says it’s essential to revisit what your true expenses are, especially if your lifestyle has changed or is in need of a change as a result of COVID-19.

“The biggest commonality is that people realize they can live on a lot less and they can live a lot simpler,” she says. “It’s understanding the concept: What can I get my life to look like?”

What if you’re starting from scratch? You really didn’t have a

strategy for saving and spending. Collier takes an approach toward budgeting that reframes income as family revenue where bills, savings and other regular expenses are taken care of first. For example, if your budget covers your monthly mortgage payment right away, it won't be looming over you the rest of the month or if something unexpected happens. The aim is to feel secure and have your finances in order.

"Pay yourself what you need to live as well as what you'll need in the future," he says.

Save for an emergency

After you evaluate your finances, you'll know how much you're able to save. COVID-19 has brought to the forefront the importance of an emergency fund that can cover a few months—or more—of unemployment, lost income or other gaps. The key, Collier says, is having savings on hand that is accessible, rather than in an untouchable account.

"Having cash on hand is important for when things change or when our way of life feels threatened," he says. While it's important to have money that's locked away in long-term accounts that have

5 financial to-dos for 2021

Pencil in these tasks to put you on better financial footing.

1. Set or evaluate financial goals.

Being intentional with your money will better guide your financial decisions throughout the year, including during life events or unexpected circumstances.

2. Automate savings.

Set up a deposit that automatically goes into your savings or another account, either when you get paid or regularly sometime during the month. Any amount means progress toward a savings goal.

3. Revisit risk temperament.

The pandemic and its economic impacts serve as a reminder that there are risks and uncertainties to any investment strategy.

4. Review insurance coverage.

Go over existing insurance contracts or consider new ones, such as disability income insurance or life insurance, if you feel you or your family need more coverage.

5. Get legal documents in place.

Don't wait for a crisis to strike to get documents, such as power of attorney, a will or a trust, in place. Getting these basics taken care of may save you and your loved ones from scrambling in a stressful time. While Thrivent does not provide specific legal or tax advice, we can partner with you and your tax professional or attorney.

the potential to grow, such as a 401(k) or IRA, Collier says having a financial cushion that's available at a moment's notice is important, too.

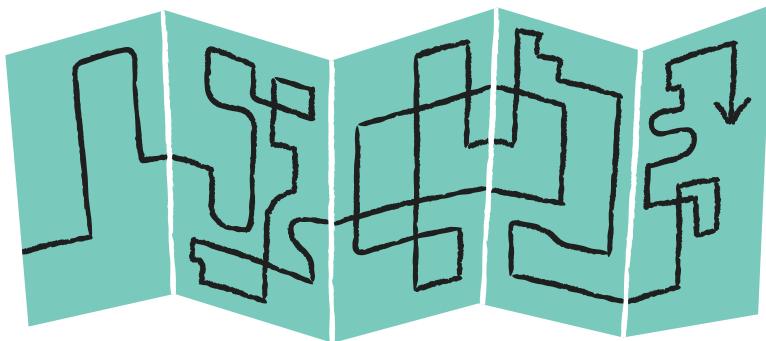
The starting point for savings is recurring transfers, or automatic,

often monthly, deposits into a savings account. If you don't have one set up yet, Herrera says, it's important to start. It doesn't matter if you're putting away \$25 per month or \$250 per paycheck at first. "We always encourage baby steps," she adds. "It's changes, not necessarily drastic changes."

Plan based on what you know

This year's uncertainty may push some to revisit how aggressive or conservative they've been with their investments. Collier says that highlights the importance of having an investment strategy.

"With a small handful of folks, their initial reaction is to take money out of the market when



“Focus on what you can control. That goes back to saving, spending and being reasonable.”

—Stephanie Shields,
Thrivent wealth advisor

things start to go down,” he says, adding that when times are good and investments are up, those gains can go away just as easily. “That message is going to be the one I hit home the most.”

These market fluctuations had a significant impact on retirement plans. Similar to budgeting, it may be time to revisit your retirement contributions if your needs have changed. You may need more cash on hand or you may want to boost your retirement savings.

Don’t kick yourself for not seeing 2020’s curveballs coming. Shields says the key difference between COVID-19 and the last economic downturn is that the Great Recession of 2008 happened due to actions by financial institutions and loan borrowers instead of something as unforeseen as a global pandemic. Realizing that uncertainties can happen will ultimately make us more resilient to the next crisis.

Regardless of how much 2020’s ups and downs have affected you, Shields reiterates one takeaway: Focus on what you can control.

What to ask your financial professional

Between a global pandemic and economic uncertainty, 2020 has caused many to revisit their financial strategies. Here are topics to discuss with your Thrivent financial professional:

Do I need to change my budget?

For many, this year has been a reset for their personal finances. Do you need to budget more for your home or food? Would you like to refinance your home or invest in your house? Have you pocketed planned expenses like travel that you can allocate elsewhere? Do you anticipate a large purchase? Are there opportunities to tweak your budget to better reflect what is truly important to you?

How can I be more tax efficient?

Taxpayers are still getting used to the large tax code revisions in 2018, so there may be opportunities there. Converting a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA may be an option to consider, which would convert the account from taxable to tax-free. But it also may increase your taxes in the

year of the conversion.¹ (Also see Finding Efficiencies on page 24 for more information.)

How do I boost my savings or emergency fund?

While retirement accounts and investments can be important pieces of a financial strategy, so is having cash available for an emergency or unplanned event. A financial professional can help facilitate a conversation on savings between a spouse or family members.

How can I protect my family financially?

Do you have a plan for covering health care expenses? Are you adequately covered by insurance? What strategies could potentially reduce your family’s tax burden in the event of a death?

Reach out to your Thrivent financial professional with these questions and any others you may have. His or her name can be found on the back page of this magazine or go to thrivent.com and click on “Connect With Us” to learn more.

“That goes back to saving, spending and being reasonable,” she says. “I don’t care about all the bad decisions you may have made. It’s never too late to plan. Do the best with what you have and make good decisions going forward.” ■

Eric Best is a writer in Minneapolis.

¹State tax rules may differ from federal rules governing the tax treatment of Roth IRAs and there may be conflicts between federal and state tax treatment of IRA conversions. Consult your tax professional for your state’s tax rules.

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Maximize your giving

Make a charitable giving strategy so you can have a greater impact.

By Kathleen Childers

These days, there seems to be a never-ending stream of calls, emails and letters asking for donations. With all those requests, it can really put you in a bind. You want to help, but it can be overwhelming deciding who or what to support and how much to give.

The solution? Reconsider your approach to giving. If you build it into your financial strategy, you benefit in several ways. You have the satisfaction of knowing you've thoughtfully chosen who and what you want to help. You have a plan in place that makes generosity happen. You may be able to give more, and you might even gain some tax advantages.

That's just what Kristin and Chris Daniels discovered. In 2019, Thrivent wealth advisor Jennifer Cords, along with InFaith Community Foundation,

helped the Daniels structure their giving with a donor-advised fund (DAF).

Like many people, the Daniels, from Plymouth, Minnesota, gave regularly to their church and other organizations, reflecting their deeply ingrained values around generosity. "What we have isn't ours forever," says Kristin. "It's something we've been given, and we see it as our obligation to give away. We have more than enough, and we can share that."

But they felt their way of giving wasn't as playful as it could be, and they also wanted an approach that would help them teach their two boys the importance of being generous.

The DAF was the best choice for the Daniels, but it's just one way you can structure giving. There are financial tools that fit a wide range of incomes and allow you to donate assets or

Photo by Carolyn Lagattuta/Stocksy





This photo of Chris and Kristin Daniels was taken through the window of their home in Plymouth, Minnesota.

money. With each of them, you set the course according to how and who you want to help. In doing so, you make sure to meet your goals, and the organizations you support benefit, too, by knowing they can count on you. If you also want the option of giving money spontaneously, you can build that into your strategy as well.

Set goals and target causes

The first step to integrating contributions into a financial strategy is deciding how much you want to give.

"We tell our clients to think about giving much like you think about saving for retirement, college or a family vacation," says Cords, founding partner at Cedar Cove Wealth Partners in Bloomington, Minnesota.

"You typically set specific goals for how much to put away for retirement in a given year. It should

be the same for generosity. If you want to give 10% back, then make sure that's included in your overall financial planning."

Mandy Tuong, president and CEO of InFaith Community Foundation, agrees. "We help clients decide from a numbers perspective and what is in their heads," she says. "And we also help them consider what is in their hearts."

You then need to decide where to donate your funds. The Daniels were interested in businesses that support women. But if you have causes in mind and don't know what organizations work in those areas, Cords suggests several resources:

- **Charities Review Council:** It evaluates the internal practices and governance of charities to help you evaluate an organization beyond

financials and programming. Smartgivers.org

- **GuideStar:** It allows you to search for charities by different criteria. You must set up an account to use the service, but it's free. Guidestar.org
- **Charity Navigator:** This website researches the fiscal responsibility of a charity. Charitynavigator.org
- **GiveWell:** This website rates charities according to how much good they do per dollar spent. Givewell.org

InFaith researches organizations for their clients. "We are part of national and international networks of grant-makers," says Tuong. "And we leverage the collective wisdom

of our own donors as well, to get the best information on who is doing great work.”

Find what works for you

Once you've established your giving goals, talk with your financial professional to determine the best way to work toward them. These are some of the more popular options.

Cash donations

If your preference is to write checks or use a credit card, consider setting up scheduled contributions to a charity of your choice or to a donor-advised fund (see below). That way, you won't have to worry about remembering to do it, and the organization can count on your regular donation. There is a tax benefit for 2020 for filers who take the standard deduction on their federal income tax returns. Up to \$300 in cash donations given directly to a charity can be claimed as a deduction, which is a direct reduction to your reported income.¹

Donor-advised fund

“A donor-advised fund is essentially an account you set up that is solely devoted to making charitable donations,” says Cords. It's the fastest-growing tool for giving in the U.S., according to the National Philanthropic Trust,² for several reasons. They allow donors to make grants to charities whenever it makes sense for them and choose investment options for the funds. They also offer lots of options for the types of assets that can be donated and they're easy to set up.³ In fact, you can set up a DAF to donate money and other assets (more about that later).

Here's how a DAF works. You work with a donor-advised fund sponsor to make a gift of cash or other assets



How Thrivent can help

- Talk to your financial professional for more information about the financial tools and concepts mentioned in this article that can help you maximize your giving.
- For more information on InFaith Community Foundation and the ways you can donate assets or create a donor-advised fund, go to infaithfound.org.
- Learn more about how Thrivent Trust Company can help you set up and administer a trust at thrivent.com/trust.

In addition, Thrivent has many programs you can access to make direct donations to the causes you care about, including these:

- **Thrivent Action Teams:** You can donate money to a fundraiser led by a client with membership or organize your own.
- **Thrivent Choice®:** Make a personal donation or direct Thrivent Choice Dollars® to various causes and organizations.
- **Thrivent Member Networks:** These regional groups of Thrivent clients with membership bring people together to do good, including providing opportunities for making donations.
- **Disaster response:** If you want to help communities recover from disasters, Thrivent has multiple ways that you can make a difference.

To learn more, visit thrivent.com/generosity

Member benefits and programs are not guaranteed contractual benefits. The interpretation of the provisions of these benefits and programs is at the sole discretion of Thrivent. Thrivent reserves the right to change, modify, discontinue, or refuse to provide any of the membership benefits or any part of them, at any time.

You should only purchase and keep insurance and annuity products that best meet the financial security needs of you and your family and never purchase or keep any insurance or annuity products to be eligible for nonguaranteed membership benefits.

that will fund your donor-advised fund. Many sponsors will have minimum required gifts to open a fund—averaging \$5,000—and some like InFaith Community Foundation, have no minimum, Tuong says. As soon as you make the gift, the value of the gift (i.e., if it is cash, the amount given, or if it is another type of asset, like real estate, its appraised value) is considered a donation and may be eligible as a tax deduction that year. Then you choose when to grant money from the fund and which charities to give it to. Any investment growth in the fund stays in the fund, so it's not taxable and it increases how much you can give.

The Daniels worked with InFaith to set up their DAF. The fund⁴ they chose to invest in supports women-owned businesses, something they feel passionate about. So, while their money sits in that fund, they're helping a cause they care about. "We set it up because it makes it so easy to give," says Kristin. "We can put money aside on a schedule that works for us and give to the charity of our choice, plus while it's sitting in the DAF account, it's invested in something that has impact."

When statements from the DAF arrive, the whole family reviews it. "The DAF gives me an opportunity to talk to our kids about how we give," says Kristin. "We can go through the statement with them and they can see what we're helping." It also gives



the boys a chance to talk about what causes they would like to help.

Qualified charitable distribution

When owners of IRAs reach a certain age (currently age 72), they must make withdrawals from their accounts, called Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs).⁵

"These withdrawals typically would be considered income and subject to income taxes," says Alan Cox, director of estate and trust planning for Ronald Blue Trust, a division of

Thrivent Trust Company. "But you could instead create a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) with the RMD, where the withdrawal becomes a donation to an organization of your choice. The advantage is that you're making a contribution, and you won't have to pay taxes on the IRA withdrawal." However, there are various requirements that must be met for a distribution to qualify as a QCD; you should work with your financial professional and tax professional to ensure requirements are met.

With a QCD, the money is transferred directly from the IRA to the designated charity. Charities like InFaith also offer funds that can accept QCDs where donors name the charities when creating the fund that can benefit from the fund over time.

You also can make a QCD before age 72. "If you have an IRA, you can make a QCD starting at age 70½," says Cox.

Treating generosity as you do your other financial goals allows you to be more planful about your giving.



Other ways to give

While donating money is popular, there are other ways to be generous, and they may have some tax advantages as well. These include:

- *Stock*: You can transfer stock to a charitable organization.
- *Life insurance*: You can designate a charity as a beneficiary or you can assign the contract itself to the charity.
- *Will*: Your estate can be left to a charity.
- *Home*: You may be able to set up what's called a "remainder interest" where you gift your home to a charity while you're alive but are allowed to live in it for the rest of your life. Upon your death, the charity gets the home.
- *Charitable Gift Annuity*: You can set up an annuity with a charity. You make the donation and the annuity then pays you an income.

Upon your death, the remainder of it goes to the charity. The minimum typically required for this type of an annuity is \$5,000.

- *Trust*: There are trusts that are structured for giving. A charitable remainder trust is set up so that you or others you designate have an income stream from the trust while you're alive and a charity receives the remaining proceeds upon your death. A charitable lead trust provides support to a charity while you're alive and the remaining proceeds go to your family or others upon your death.

All of these tools can be a way of supporting your favorite charities directly, or they can be used to fund longer-term giving vehicles like a donor-advised fund. Treating generosity as you do your other financial goals allows you to be more planful about your giving. "But it doesn't mean you give up flexibility," says Cords. "Your strategy can be re-assessed as frequently as you want, and you can and should make adjustments along the way."

The Daniels plan to stick with their DAF but they remain open to who and what they want to support. "Our goal is to give away all of the funds in the donor-advised fund in a two-year cycle," Kristin says. Then they'll reload it and align it with their giving goals at that time.

Incorporating their generosity into their financial strategy takes away the stress of deciding whether and how much they can give. "It's so comforting knowing that decision has already been made," says Kristin, "and we can give freely without worry." ■

Kathleen Childers is a writer in Minnesota.

¹Kiplinger, <https://www.kiplinger.com/slideshow/taxes/t054-s001-cares-act-expands-charitable-giving-tax-deductions/index.html>

²<https://www.nptrust.org/philanthropic-resources/philanthropist/resources/2019-daf-data-highlights/>

³<https://www.nptrust.org/reports/daf-report/>

⁴WomenInvest Portfolio, infaithfound.org/about-us/financials-reports

⁵<https://www.irs.gov/retirement-plans/plan-participant-employee/retirement-topics-required-minimum-distributions-rmds>

*Advisory services available through investment adviser representatives only.

The client's experience may not be the same as other clients and does not indicate future performance or success.

InFaith Community Foundation is a public charity that serves individuals, organizations and the community through charitable planning, donor advised funds and endowments. InFaith works collaboratively with Thrivent and its financial professionals.

Donors must itemize deductions to receive a charitable income tax deduction.

Charitable giving can result in tax, legal and financial consequences.

InFaith Community Foundation, Thrivent and its financial professionals do not provide legal, accounting or tax advice. Donors should consult their attorney or tax professional.

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Finding efficiencies

Understanding income tax diversification can help position your assets more efficiently.

By Donna Hein



You may be familiar with the old adage: don't put all your eggs in one basket. Essentially it means you shouldn't put all your efforts or resources into one type of investment, or you could lose everything.

The phrase is often used in reference to your retirement savings strategy, when you're encouraged to diversify your investments across a variety of asset classes. While this approach can't protect against losses in a declining market, it can be a good way to minimize risk.

The basket adage also is helpful when it comes to thinking about income taxes and your retirement savings.

"All your money is taxed in one way or another; that's usually understood," says Nathan Smith, Thrivent wealth advisor in Overland Park, Kansas. "But how and where you save it can impact when it will be taxed. Tax benefits you take early in life could impact your retirement strategy, if you don't plan."

Whether you're just starting out, planning for retirement or already

in retirement, there are several things you should know about income tax diversification.

The basics

At its core, income tax diversification means that your investments are in a mix of accounts with different tax treatments—taxable, tax-deferred or tax-free. You also may hear it described as tax now (or always), tax later and tax never.

Creating a strategy can help you position the money you're saving—or already have saved—to be more income-tax-efficient and potentially increase your total spendable income when you need it most.

Tax now

This basket holds the savings accounts where any potential interest, dividends and gains that you earn are taxed immediately. Typically, these are the accounts like checking, savings, certificates of deposit and mutual funds.¹ The accounts are more liquid, meaning you can take out the funds when you need them, says Ron Lutes,

advanced market specialist at Thrivent. But you must claim any gains annually on your taxes as income.

“Everyone needs to have liquid money,” Lutes says. “Life happens—the car breaks down, a storm comes through, you become unemployed. This is your emergency savings fund. It also can be your short-term savings account if you’re saving to buy a house or a new car.”

Money in many of these accounts won’t fluctuate with the market, Lutes says, but for all of them, the money will be there when you need it.

Bottom line: *Gains on this money are taxed annually, but the contributions and potential gains are readily available for a rainy day.*

Tax later

These accounts, which include 401(k)s,^{2,3,4} 403(b)s^{2,3,4} and traditional IRAs,^{2,3,4} are funded with pre-tax dollars and grow tax deferred. This means you pay the income tax on both your contributions and any potential gains when you withdraw the funds. Fixed and variable annuities^{2,4,7} are another option and are funded with after-tax dollars. These dollars grow tax deferred and you pay income tax on the gain when you withdraw the funds. There are rules and restrictions with these accounts, which may include premature distribution penalties.

“For many Americans, the majority of savings is in the tax-later basket,” Lutes says. “It’s the easiest place for people to save.”

As you get closer to retirement, you may want to take a closer look at this bucket to determine how much taxable money you’ll have once in retirement and potentially take some steps to change it. The more taxable income you have in retirement, he



says, the greater the taxation of any Social Security benefits you’ll receive.

Bottom line: *In this basket, contributions and any potential gains are tax deferred, and the assets are generally earmarked for longer-term needs, like retirement and college funding.*

Tax never*

“The gains you may get on accounts in this basket may not get taxed,” Smith says. “You won’t get taxed on them annually, and when you take the money out, you won’t get taxed either.”

Roth IRAs⁵ and Roth 401(k)s,⁵ municipal bonds⁶ and life insurance with cash value are the most common accounts in the tax-never basket.

For most people, the Roth IRA is the most obvious. Contributions are made with after-tax dollars and would not be taxed twice. And if you follow distribution rules from the Roth, earnings also would not be taxed, Smith says. However, you must have earned income to contribute to a Roth, and there are income limitations.

Bottom line: *Funded with after-tax dollars, these assets generally offer*

preferential income-tax treatment on the accumulated value and its distribution.

Common considerations

“It’s never too early or too late to begin considering your tax diversification options,” says Karen Birr, manager in Advanced and Retirement Consulting at Thrivent.

Traditional or Roth?

No matter your age, if you’ve got the option of a traditional or Roth 401(k) from your employer, or you’re thinking about starting either a traditional or Roth IRA, consider whether you’d benefit from the tax deduction now (tax-deferred) or the tax benefit later (tax never). One thing to remember: your employer’s contribution to your Roth 401(k) is pretaxed, so that portion will be taxed when withdrawn.

“Based on current tax laws, the 30 to 40 years of potential growth that could come out of a Roth 401(k) or Roth IRA may be advantageous—you’ve already paid taxes on your contributions, and your earnings are tax free when it’s a “qualified distribution,” Birr says.

Extra dollars in a tax now account

Annuities are an option for those who have money in tax-now accounts that they don’t need. “You may get a better rate of return and you won’t get taxed every year on any earnings,” Smith says. An annuity would move the assets from the tax-now to the tax-later basket.

Individual stocks¹

If you own an individual stock outside of a traditional retirement account, it is taxed when you sell.

Roth conversions^{**}

If you’re planning to convert all or part of a traditional IRA (tax later)

How Thrivent can help

What-if tax calculator

A unique tool that Thrivent financial professionals can use that is designed to help you better understand the federal income tax implications of your financial decisions. While financial professionals do not provide tax advice, they can partner with you and your tax professional or attorney to help you create a well-rounded, customized financial strategy that keeps tax considerations in mind.

Contact your Thrivent financial professional to learn more. His or her name is on the back page of this magazine or visit thrivent.com and click on “Connect With Us.”

to a Roth IRA (tax never), you may want to do a mock tax return that estimates your income in the calendar year of the conversion or talk to your Thrivent financial professional about a tool called the What-If Tax Calculator, Smith says. Because it’s taxable income, a conversion could bump you into the next tax bracket.

Social Security

Your Social Security is taxed based on your income, Lutes says, so the more taxable income you have in retirement, the greater the taxation on your Social Security benefits. If you’re planning to do a Roth conversion, for example, plan for it before you start drawing Social Security.

SECURE Act

The SECURE Act that went into effect on January 1, 2020, changed the age for required minimum distributions (RMD) from traditional IRAs and employer tax-deferred accounts from age 70½ to 72. “This change enables our older clients to have more years to accumulate

“It’s never too early or too late to begin considering your tax diversification options.”

—Karen Birr, manager in Advanced and Retirement Consulting at Thrivent



assets and gives them more time to facilitate Roth conversions, moving more money from the tax-later into the tax-never bucket,” Birr says.

Estate planning

The considerations above reflect income taxes to the owner, and depending on your situation, you also may want to consider the impact on your beneficiaries. When leaving assets to your children, there are options to avoid leaving them taxable dollars, such as 401(k)s and traditional IRAs. Consider funding life insurance for the children, which is not taxable to beneficiaries. And leave the taxable dollars (such as your retirement accounts) to your favorite charity or donor-advised fund, since these are non-taxable

entities. In addition, your estate could receive a charitable deduction. (Donors should consult with their attorney or tax professional.)

“Everyone’s situation is different,” Birr says. “The best strategy is to talk with your financial professional, who will take into account your needs, wants and objectives, and the resources you have to meet your objectives. Together, you’ll consider your risk tolerance and develop a strategy that makes sure your investments are in the appropriate types of accounts to be as efficient as possible and enabling you to live a life of meaning and gratitude.” ■

Donna Hein is editor of Thrivent Magazine.

¹Any interest, dividends or capital appreciation is subject to taxation when realized.

²Gains subject to income tax when withdrawn.

³Generally funded with pre-tax dollars.

⁴Distributions prior to age 59½ may incur a 10% premature distribution penalty.

⁵Funded with after-tax dollars, qualified distributions of gains are penalty and tax-free. Non-qualified distributions of gains prior to age 59½ may incur a 10% premature distribution penalty and are taxable.

⁶Interest is free from federal income tax may be subject to state income tax, federal alternative minimum tax and capital gains tax.

⁷All distributions may incur surrender charges.

*The withdrawal of dividends or the amount of a loan or partial surrender may be subject to ordinary income taxes.

**State tax rules may differ from federal rules governing the tax treatment of Roth IRAs and there may be conflicts between federal and state tax treatment of IRA conversions. Consult your tax professional for your state’s tax rules.

Thrivent financial professionals have general knowledge of the Social Security tenets. For complete details on your situation, contact the Social Security Administration.

To learn more about these and other provisions of the SECURE Act, visit Thrivent.com/SECUREAct or contact your Thrivent financial professional.

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What's happening at Thrivent



Thrivent completes new Corporate Center

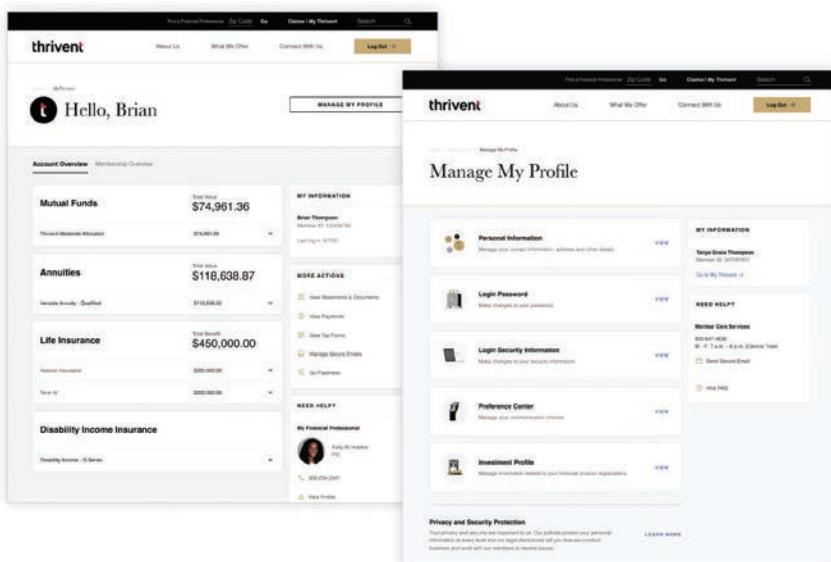
The completion of Thrivent's new Corporate Center in downtown Minneapolis in June coincided with the launch of the organization's new brand. It was a milestone moment—representing the organization's transformation and all we have to offer.

"The new Corporate Center is fresh and modern, with an eye toward the future," says Kirsten Spreck, vice president of Workforce Experience at Thrivent. "Our new building embodies

our commitment to attracting and retaining a talented workforce in order to continue to grow and serve our clients well. The building architecture and layout emphasizes collaboration and innovation, two foundational elements to providing exceptional products, programs and services for our clients."

Most Thrivent employees have been working from home since the COVID-19 ([Continued on page 30](#))

What's happening at Thrivent



(Thrivent completes new Corporate Center continued from page 29)

pandemic hit in March. Immediately, move plans for June had to be reimaged and a new strategy developed, not just for moving employees' office items, but also the 1,200 treasured pieces in the Thrivent Collection of Religious Art.

The new eight-floor building features a modern, flexible work environment and includes:

- A flexible, free-address environment where employees can choose where to work each day. They also can choose from height-adjustable desks for sitting or standing with dual monitors or booths.
- Spaces for both collaborative and quiet work, including meeting rooms, focus rooms and a variety of team spaces.
- Floor-to-ceiling windows to provide more daylight in the building.
- Easy-to-access spaces for our Thrivent Credit Union and art gallery. The gallery is visible to the public walking through the skyway.
- Reliable user-friendly meeting technology and fast connectivity.

The only employees currently working in the new building are those approved to perform critical job functions that cannot be performed remotely. Comprehensive guidelines are in place for those employees, including social distancing, adhering to robust hygiene habits in the office and wearing cloth face coverings.

"While everyone is excited to experience the new building, we are taking a measured and phased approach," Spreck says. "We'll return to the new building once we can ensure the safety and well-being of all. That's our top priority."

MyThrivent gets new look

Your time is valuable, and we want to make sure you can find what you need, when you need it. With that in mind, our client website, MyThrivent, recently was visually refreshed to improve your experience.

Here's what you can expect:

- Clear navigation with easy-to-access content.
- An updated account overview page that gets right into the details that matter to you.
- A shortened profile page that includes only the essentials.

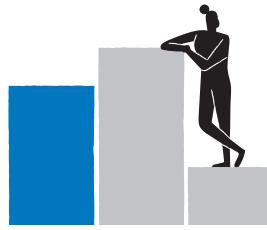
Though we've made visual changes, you'll still be able to do everything you could before, from checking your statements to making changes to your personal information.

To explore the new layout yourself, go to thrivent.com and click on Log In in the upper right corner.

'Member ID' now called 'Thrivent ID'

The term "Member ID," is now being called "Thrivent ID." You'll see this change on thrivent.com log in and registration screens and on statements, among other items.

Watch for your 2020 tax statements



The new year is around the corner, and so is the time to start gathering documents for tax returns. Here's what you can expect regarding the availability of your tax statements from Thrivent.

Mailing

- All tax forms (1099s and 5498s) for 2020, except from brokerage and mutual funds invested in real estate investment trusts (REITs), will be mailed by Jan. 31, 2021. Please allow at least five to seven business days for arrival.
- Typically, statements for mutual funds with holdings in real estate investment trusts (REITs) are delivered in late February.
- Tax statements for most brokerage accounts will be mailed by mid-February.

Online

- All annuity and insurance tax statements, and most mutual fund statements for 2020 will be added online by Feb. 1. To access them, go to thrivent.com and log in. (You

also can register for MyThrivent account access there.) Once logged in, under More Actions on the MyThrivent page, click View Tax Forms and then Tax Forms again under Statements and Documents.

- Tax statements for most brokerage accounts will be available online by mid-February. Go to thrivent.com, log in and select an account. On the next screen, in Wealthscape Investor, select "Accounts" in the upper left. Then select an account and click on the Documents tab and Tax Documents.

Please note that if you have signed up for eDelivery of your tax forms, you will not receive a paper copy. Edelivery is not available for mutual fund tax statements at this time.

You also can visit the Thrivent Tax Resource Center at thrivent.com/tax-resource-center. Consult your tax advisor about your specific tax situation.



What's your financial personality?

If you've ever filled out a personality quiz for fun, you may have learned some interesting, and even amusing, tidbits about yourself. But have you ever taken a financial personality quiz?

Now's your chance. Thrivent has created the Financial Personality Quiz to give you insights about what money means to you, so you can make the most of your finances.

After completing just eight questions, you'll be assigned one of six personality types—designer, delegator, improviser, free spirit, climber or gardener. Simply provide your email address, and you can receive more information about your personality type.

To take the quiz, go to thrivent.com/personality.

Find us on social media

You may be a follower of Thrivent on Facebook, but did you know you also can find us on Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn?

On each of these social media platforms, Thrivent shares a variety of financial and inspirational resources to help you achieve financial clarity and reach your most important goals. You'll find posts about financial products and services, market insights, messages from our leaders and inspiring articles of generosity.

To find us:



facebook.com/thrivent



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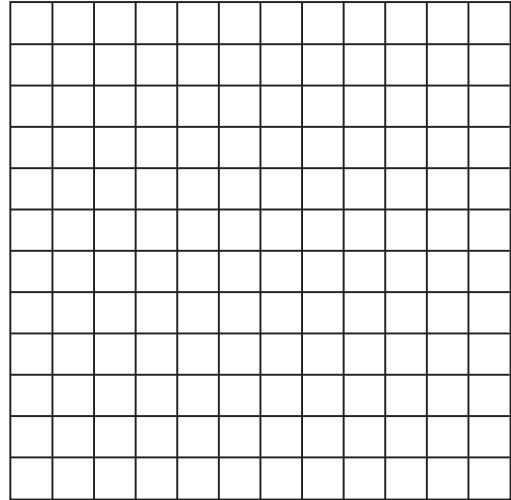
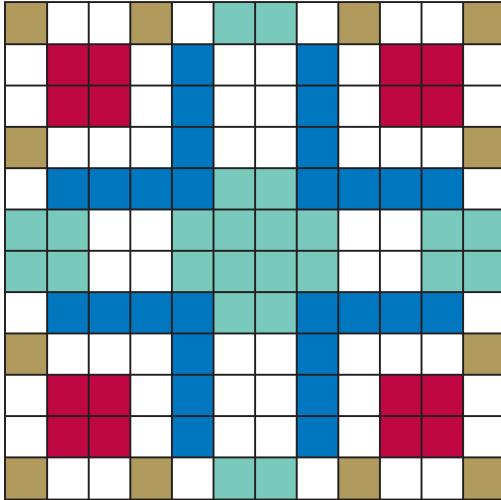


linkedin.com/company/thrivent

Just for fun

Copy the pattern

Color the squares in the blank grid to match the colorful grid on the left.



What am I?

Solve these riddles.

1. If you have me, you want to share me. If you share me, you don't have me. What am I?
2. Turn me on my side, and I am everything. Cut me in half, and I am nothing. What am I?
3. I jump when I walk and sit when I stand. What am I?
4. I am lighter than air, but 100 people cannot lift me. I am fragile. What am I?
5. You can serve me but never eat me. What am I?

Answers:
What Am I? 1. A secret, 2. The number 8, 3. A kangaroo, 4. A bubble, 5. A tennis ball
Fill In The Blank 1. angels, exultation, 2. stars, look down, 3. trees, sea

Fill in the blank

Do you know the missing lyrics to these Christmas songs?

1. "O Come All Ye Faithful"
 Sing, choirs of _____
 Sing in _____
 Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above
2. "Away in a Manger"
 The _____ in the sky
 _____ where he lay
3. "Do You Hear What I Hear"
 A song, a song
 High above the _____
 With a voice as big as the _____

Editor's note:

We received a few responses to the Math Puzzles in the Fall issue that the answers were incorrect. The puzzle should be worked from the outside circle to the inside circle to reach the middle number.

Before you go

With a new year comes a clean slate and a fresh start. It's the perfect time to set a new goal or dream for yourself. What are some dreams you have for 2021?



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The best way to retire? With confidence in guaranteed income.

Confidence in your retirement strategy means not having to wonder where your income will come from, or if you'll outlive it. An annuity ensures steady guaranteed income for life — with the potential to grow — so you can look forward to a fulfilling retirement.

Thrive with Purpose™

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