# A culture of generosity.

**Victory Church partners with Thrivent to offer financial education.**

By Donna Hein

Victory Church in Yorktown, Virginia, is what Pastor Jamé Bolds would call an average, small-town church that has stewarded well the resources God has given them.

And it's the principle of stewardship that stands out at Victory. Bolds is a visionary and scholar, who since coming to the church in 2013, has encouraged the congregation to step out of the box and find ways to be generous, especially when the church and its preschool, Victory School, were in the red.

Early on, Bolds floated the idea to sell the parsonage, which was paid for but still incurring debt, and create an endowment for the church. By doing so, the congregation reinvested part of the sale proceeds back into the church and started an endowment fund through Thrivent Charitable Impact & Investing™ with the rest.

"People didn't know what an endowment was, so I explained that it's like a retirement savings vehicle for the church, which never retires," says Bolds, a Thrivent client with membership.

As people donated or left money in their wills to the endowment, it grew quickly and enabled the church to pay off its mortgage of more than $1 million and eliminate the debt that was a burden to the church.

"It revolutionized our church," Bolds says.


Pastor Jamé Bolds encourages his congregation to step out of the box to be generous.

More recently, the church decided to offer a $1,000 scholarship for children who begin Victory School in the infant program and graduate from the Pre-K4 program. The Victory Scholar Program requires in its guidelines that the scholarship be deposited into a legitimate college savings plan.

"The family must meet with a Thrivent financial professional or other licensed financial advisor to guide them through the process," Bolds says. "We want to make sure the money is used for future educational purposes.

"This is a way we can invest in children's lives after they leave us. And we can do that because we have an endowment."

Bolds appreciates the relationship between Thrivent and Victory. Pre-COVID, Thrivent financial professionals held a number of workshops at Victory, and Boldsanticipates doing more.

"Asset management, money management and financial education, really understanding how money works, are the three big topics," Bolds says. "And we get a great turnout. We're really building this into the life of the church."

And the financial clarity that comes from the education enables the congregation to have the culture of generosity it desires.

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