

# Fundraising tips

By Joe Beckler

## *Principles of Fundraising...*

- Think in terms of building relationships instead of raising funds. Meaningful relationships remove the pressure of the awkward “ask”.
- Determine how to frame your funding challenge as a God-sized opportunity. How will this experience transform our understanding of God?
- Invite people to invest in what God is doing. This means you use your story-telling skills to educate and excite people towards the great things that are happening.
- Merge your communication/ marketing strategy with your fund raising.
- Create the broadest base of people to communicate with about your church and funding opportunities.
  - How many people are in your congregation?
  - How many outside partners do you have? How many could you have?
  - How big is your prayer network?
  - The more people in your communication web, the better. (I sought to have 500 people in my prayer/ partnership network for all church communication.)
- Do not underestimate your outside connections. People who know you and love you (and are not part of your church) will give towards your ministry.
- Consider what you want to communicate to congregation. Is it different from what you would communicate to outside partners?

## *Planning Tips...*

- Purchase an academic calendar that is large enough for you to stick to the wall in your office. Mark it up with a schedule of fundraising deadlines and projects:
  - How often are you sending a newsletter to your network of supporters? (Monthly, Bi-monthly, Quarterly, Annually) I recommend a quarterly newsletter that can be used for three months. Color print is good if possible. This is a tool for telling the story of what God is doing. This tool needs to be full of short stories. What is God doing? Stories of changed lives. If someone give to your church, they need to know how their kingdom investment is making a difference.(Make this a hard ask for funds.)
  - How often do you send a letter asking for funds? (Monthly?) I recommend monthly (except for months when newsletter is sent). Make this a hard ask for funds.

- How often are you sending email prayer updates? Weekly is good! Make this a soft ask for funds.
- Your web site is critical! You must keep information that relates to needs up to date and dynamic. Make your web site the place to go for the most current information about your church. When you speak, write, or communicate in any way talk about your web site. This is called driving traffic to you site. Do this all the time. Instead of sending a long email. Build a hyperlink that takes someone to your site for information.
- “Hard ask for funds” is when you are specific and direct. “Soft” is when you communicate needs but may not do a direct ask.
- How often are you meeting one-on-one with people who need to become partners? (keep track of how often you are doing this on your calendar).
- Stick to your calendar. Make notes about how you use all of the above towards your funding opportunities.
- Determine your internal (congregational) plan for tithing. You know your congregation best. They need to know funding needs and challenges.
  - Make it easy to give – envelopes for giving, regular communication, online giving, and clear expectations of those who are part of your church – they need to give to the cause of the Gospel.
  - Create as much transparency as possible with financials. Communicate accessibility of records, etc. Reinforces trust in usage of funds.

### *Tactical Tips...*

- Whenever you send anything to people, communicating anything about your church, make it easy to give. Include a pledge card and addressed envelope... always. THIS IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT! Make it easy for someone to react quickly and give generously. The easier you make it, the easier it is for people to give!
- Pledge cards should be direct but not forceful... Include info like:
  - Name:
  - Address:
  - Email:
  - Would you like to become a prayer partner?
  - Would you like to become a financial partner? One time \_\_\_\_\_, Monthly \_\_\_\_\_, Other \_\_\_\_\_
  - How much?
  - Other comments
- Keep your communication low cost. Printing contribution envelopes, newsletters, pledge cards, etc... does not have to be extravagant. Just make sure everything is done in excellence.
- One of the most important things you can do is communicate gratitude. Thank people always for what they give. If you receive a contribution from an

outside contributor (be it \$10 or \$10000) thank them the same way. Overwhelm them with thanks and define their contribution as “partnering in the Gospel cause of your church.”

- Ask in an assortment of ways.
  - Face-to-face asks
  - Mass mailers/ communication
  - Web site
  - Sundays
  - Small groups
- As the leader, you know how much to communicate and when to let off the pedal. Allow your leadership to help you with a sense of how the church is feeling about this, BUT never lose the ability as a leader to assertively ask!