

THE CONGREGATIONAL CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Wherever a congregation is actively engaged in the community and reaching out, it will at some point face the challenge of raising funds and building. The actual building project is not that daunting, but the task of raising funds certainly is.

And yet, pastors and congregations are amassing a track record in conducting fundraising and building campaigns that are financially successful, advance the ministry and build up people spiritually. They're doing it with prayer, faith, vision and, sometimes, more than a little courage

As consultants experienced in working with churches on fundraising and stewardship campaigns, we have distilled some of our findings that might be of help to you.

Six Major Benefits of an Effective Congregational Campaign

An effective campaign:

1. Raises money to help a congregation fulfil its mission.
2. Spiritually benefits individuals and the church.
3. Heightens unity, camaraderie, and a sense of vision and mission.
4. Helps churches focus on the stewardship and discipline of managing one's money.
5. Builds momentum and excitement for other areas of ministry.
6. Generates confidence for the future and grows faith in God.

Eleven Tips for Success in Your Congregational Campaign:

1. Offer a clear, exciting vision worth supporting.
2. Make sure there is a committed core, who have been nurtured even while the vision has been defined.
3. Choose your timing strategically.
4. Campaign when your church is healthy and feels healthy to most of your people.
5. Plan well and be seen to plan well. Exercise due diligence to build confidence and avoid mistakes.
6. Follow a thorough process for building broad ownership, including good communications over time.
7. Make a commitment to excellence in all aspects of a campaign and reflect that in the resources allocated to the campaign.



8. Involve the pastor: the pastor must be seen to be committed and significantly involved.
9. Know and apply the fundamentals of good fundraising that builds up the congregation (either through someone within the congregation or outside counsel).
10. Pray, deeply, over every aspect of the campaign, focusing on changed lives.
11. Celebrate your successes, at every stage.

Five Lessons Learned

1. The long-term commitment of the pastor to the congregation is crucial.
2. New people don't give at same level as those who conduct a campaign, so budget for ongoing operations accordingly.
3. Prepare very well to integrate new people or you will lose them.
4. Older people often have more vision than young people.
5. Not everyone will be able to give.
6. Not all pledges will be fulfilled.

Seven Frank Reminders About Congregational Campaigns

1. Building a new building or addition or any physical space is not the goal. The building is only a tool for ministry, so the goal is a more effective ministry by a congregation.
2. Following any expansion or development initiative, operational expenses grow and this must be factored in to the church's financial plan.
3. Not everyone will buy in, and you sometimes must deal with criticism, resistance and even opposition. This is spiritually challenging work.
4. Preoccupation with paying off debt early, or taking on too much long term debt that drains resources: both are killers of vision and ministry.
5. Honour your past, especially when starting something new. Those who sacrificed for past initiatives need a signal that the congregation continues to value that vision and effort.
6. Don't push people too hard. They're children of God, and they must make their own honest, heartfelt decisions,
7. Be careful, and do things right. A bad experience in a stewardship campaign can hurt a church and limit its effectiveness for a decade or more.

What Pastors Whose Congregations Succeed in Campaigns Have in Common

- 1.** They have earned their credibility. Past successes of varying types and degrees provide a platform for pastors to launch more significant initiatives. Pastors and churches celebrated such things as getting a bus, getting a bigger bus, seeing attendance exceed a certain benchmark in the morning service, transitioning to two services, completing an earlier campaign. Achieving a goal and celebrating successes helps build momentum, confidence and trust.
- 2.** They are in it for the long haul. Among the churches that succeed, pastors demonstrate their commitment to the church and community by the longevity of their service or with a clear articulation that they are in it for the long haul, beyond the campaign and the building program itself.
- 3.** They are highly involved. A campaign is a lot of work. Congregational campaigns that succeed have Senior Pastors who are highly involved, giving significant time, attention, commitment and focus to the campaign. They have a sense of their role as leaders and that it will take both active service and sacrifice, recognizing their ongoing responsibilities as well.
- 4.** They know they are not the whole story. Although a highly-involved pastor is crucial in a congregational campaign, no healthy campaign or building program can be solely based on the wishes or will of a pastor: forcing a campaign on a less-than-willing congregation robs congregational members of an opportunity to grow in vision and faith, and sews seeds for trouble down the road. Instead, a spiritually beneficial campaign occurs when there is a healthy balance between active pastoral leadership, a committed core of lay leaders and a congregational consensus or agreement built over time.
- 5.** They insist on good planning and an inclusive process. A healthy campaign requires early planning, representation from all key staff and volunteer leaders, and intentional communications within the congregation, both about the emerging vision, and the elements of its implementation. Ample opportunity for questions, comments and feedback as plans are being developed is usually vital.

6. They are focused on mission and vision. Pastors who can articulate a clear vision for their church and describe how the development initiative fits into that vision create enthusiasm and confidence. Among the multitude of “good causes” today, the church must recognize that people have only so much to give and they will give to what they believe will make a difference. Mission and vision, more than loyalty or “doing my part” is the critical factor.

7. They are committed to stewardship teaching. Effective pastors hold strong convictions about the need to teach and practice stewardship as a foundational element of discipleship. They believe that the biggest benefit of a campaign is not the money raised or the building erected but what God does in people’s lives, the blessing of seeing people come alive in their faith and growing spiritually. Effective pastors do not delegate stewardship education and spiritual direction to outsiders.

8. They have a healthy fear. Effective pastors communicate confidence and reliance on God. However, they are not cavalier or boastful. They are clear-eyed about the pitfalls and challenges, and therefore act strategically to account for them and embrace a campaign in all its dimensions as an act of faith.

KMA Consultants offers expert services to congregations seeking to raise significant amounts of funds for building or other projects that may not be possible through annual giving. All KMA services are customized to your setting, and take into account the current capacity of a congregation to implement a beneficial and successful campaigns.

- Pre-campaign planning studies
- Customized campaign plans
- Advice, direction and consultation during implementation
- Communications services supporting the campaign from establishing a campaign theme and preparing a communications plan, to writing, design and production of key tools.

Call us for a confidential discussion about your vision and how KMA could help you see it become a reality.