

10 WAYS TO BEAT THE SUMMER SLUMP



VANCO
FAITH

We know summer can be a challenging time for churches as members, and their wallets, attend services less often. Vanco has been helping churches with eGiving tools for more than 20 years, so we're experts at beating the dreaded summer giving slump. Try these tips at your church to encourage your members to continue giving this summer!

1) Recurring Giving

One of the most important things your church can do to ward off the summer giving slump is to promote recurring giving. Because members only have to set up the amount and frequency for their donations once, they don't have to remember to send a check, make an individual payment online or even be present at church to contribute. For members and guests that spend several summer weekends away from church, this ensures their donations don't join them on their vacations.



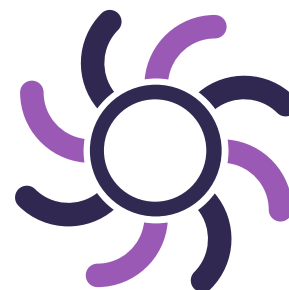
2) Know the Deadline

Although summer doesn't start until June, members have made most of their summer plans before Memorial Day. For this reason, Memorial Day is the unofficial start of summer for churches. We recommend your church has a plan in place and has encouraged members to sign up for recurring giving before memorial weekend.



3) Make the Case All Summer

If you miss the start of summer deadline, don't fret. You'll just need to be a little creative – and determined – in making the church's case for recurring gifts. Talk with members about it directly whenever you interact with them, whether it's at Sunday services or summer social events. Let parents pay for Vacation Bible School through the eGiving page on your website and add a note to the page reminding them to set up their recurring gift while they're there.



Social media can be another great way to remind members of the power of recurring gifts, since your members will still see your posts even if they're on vacation or busy with summer fun. To get the social media tips your church needs to see you through the summer slump, check out this [article](#) filled with strategies for encouraging recurring giving and more.

4) Share the Church's Summer Plans



Of course, church operations don't stop during the summer, even if there's a lull in weekly attendance. Encourage members to make recurring gifts during the summer by outlining the church's plans for the coming months. Whether you're undertaking some long-needed maintenance work, doing some exciting ministry or sending members on mission trips, remind members what their generosity supports. Reiterate to them that year-round support is what makes your church's work possible.

5) Stick to Your Schedule



Your church can make it through the summer by keeping communications to your members regular and uplifting. You're probably already making people aware of everything going on at the church through email newsletters, social media, your website, weekly bulletin announcements and other communication channels. But don't let summertime change your communication schedule! If your congregation is used to a weekly newsletter, make sure you stick with it, even if the content is lighter.

6) Recap Sunday Services



Make sure your congregation knows what they're missing when they're at the beach by promoting and recapping Sunday services. The volunteers in your video ministry may be scarce over the summer, so make sure your schedule is filled. If you can't post videos, put the text of your sermons online.

7) Investigate Livestreaming



Nearly nine in 10 pastors say they believe it's theologically acceptable for a church to provide faith assistance to people through the internet, according to a Barna Group study. So, it's not surprising that more and more churches are livestreaming services over the web to help members stay in touch when they're away. Research "livestreaming for churches" to find companies that offer services focused on faith-based organizations. Consider free streaming services such as Facebook Live if your church is on a tight budget.

8) eGiving

When it comes to beating the summer giving slump, the most important action you can take is adopting or expanding eGiving. As you probably noticed, church attendance drops during the summer. Unfortunately, member and guest donations often follow them on their vacations. With eGiving, members and guests can donate from wherever they are whenever it's convenient for them. And, most importantly, setting up recurring giving is a cinch. Within a few minutes, members can set up recurring giving with an [app](#), through [text](#) or [online](#).



We've also found eGivers not only give more often than traditional givers, they also donate larger percentages of their incomes. In our [Churchgoer Giving Study Vol.3](#), we interviewed 1,000 churchgoers about their giving preferences, and we found that over a quarter of eGivers donated more than the traditional 10% of their income. An uptick in the average donation amount goes a long way for churches, especially in the summer when churches need to pay most of the costs of building upkeep.

9) Show the Impact of Giving

Because your attendance will be lower, you'll need to strengthen the appeals you make to givers. The best way to do this is to show what your church is doing to make an impact in the community. This can involve sending letters, emails or talking about all the good your church has done or how you've improved your facility.



Knowing what their contributions accomplished inspires members to give more by making them a part of something bigger. Be sure to find ways to update your givers on the results of their giving all summer long. Many churches send thank you notes through the mail or email during the summer as they complete missions, projects or community aid. Or, you can get creative. Joe Mikell, a pastor and stewardship expert, shares the concept of an offertory moment in a [guest article](#) he wrote for us.

The offertory moment concept is simple. Before any offering is received, you'll need to take just a minute to illustrate how lives are impacted by the church's summer ministries. This concept can easily be adapted to newsletters, social media posts and email notifications to keep members engaged all summer long.

10) Plan a Re-Entry Event

Once the summer is over, it's important to welcome people back. And one of the best ways to do that is through a re-entry event. You don't have to be as creative as one [Saskatchewan church](#), which used Pokémon Go to attract people (though it's an interesting idea). A musical performance or volunteer event followed by a potluck supper could do the trick for your congregation.



WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT eGIVING?

To see how your church can use eGiving to increase donations, give us a call at **855.213.3705** or [contact us online to receive a demo](#). Vanco has helped churches for more than 20 years by providing eGiving solutions that have boosted donations for tens of thousands of churches.

VANCO
FAITH