

OCTOBER TOOL

By Todd McMichen, Consultant

"Moving the kingdom forward in refreshing ways."

toddmcmichen.com

205.223.7803

toddmcmichen.com



Fall Is The BIGGEST Generosity Season of the Year!

It is time to get ready for an overflowing giving season and here is the best part, you do not have to force it. Giving will be on your people's minds and hearts. All you have to do is cooperate with this refreshing time of the year by providing meaningful opportunities of generosity release. Here are some ideas to consider.

1. VISION CELEBRATION - It has been a long year of many ups and downs in the lives of your people yet God has done amazing acts in your church. Look back on the year of vision investment to celebrate all that God has done. Try to cover a variety of ministries as well as different ways people lived generously through volunteerism, praying, and giving. Churches tend to be so busy always driving to the next Sunday. We might get a moment to celebrate a win here and there, but rarely do we pause in a meaningful way to honor the Lord's faithfulness and thank our people.

When you celebrate vision accomplishment several benefits occur:

- It affirms the vision direction. You as leaders did what you said you would do which builds confidence in the next vision iteration.
- It rewards your people. Lay people struggle with confidence their lives are bearing spiritual fruit consistently. When we faithfully live as the body of Christ, fruit can not be stopped.
- It encourages future participation in the vision. I have found this to be a great time to announce the next vision, approve future budget expenses, and engage in new volunteer opportunities.

If you handle this Vision Celebration opportunity well you will see End of Year giving increase, volunteerism grow, and it will kick start your next year with momentum.

2. STAKEHOLDERS EVENT - I mentioned this previously in my ["Springtime Generosity Opportunities Tool."](#) However, now that we have unwrapped ["The Spiritual Gift and Discipline of Giving Tool"](#) there is an enhanced moment. I encourage you to create a ministry team packed with people who desire to live a generous life in the unique way of giving above and beyond gifts all year long.

I will not repeat the content I created in the springtime tool so please review it. Here is one way you can create a generosity ministry team to fund future vision.

- **Create a name for this volunteer team.** Be as confident with this team as you would be enlisting a new Greeter or Small Group Leader. If God has put this passion in people's lives we need to serve them well. I assure you joyful givers want help with their giving. Typically, nonprofit's are very active in recruiting gifts during the fall, that is why you may see large gifts going elsewhere. Let's unleash these givers toward kingdom good.
- **Invite a wide variety of people that you believe show evidence of this passion or gift.** You can even invite the entire church to the kick off event so they can self select in or out of future gatherings. However, the size of the room for the launch event may determine who gets invited. Here are sample invitees to consider:
 - Long Time Members
 - Highly Leveraged Leaders
 - Key Donors
 - Consistent Donors
 - Young Leaders with Future Potential
 - Staff
- **Host an event.** At this event decorate with visionary items around the room that show the fruit of church ministry and call to future activity. It could be a sit down dinner, dessert or finger foods. Celebrate vision success in specific ways that may be a little more involved than what you can do in a worship service. Preview the next big vision direction. Thank them and reward them for their investment.
- **Launch an above and beyond giving fund.** Key ministry areas that stir generous hearts are next generation opportunities, local outreach, national and international missions, and capital projects. Gather an active project expense list of items in these categories that provide immediate above and beyond giving opportunities. Be sure to only include items that you will execute if a gift arrives. This list can comprise items currently in your annual budget as well as items that will most likely appear in future budgets if they are not cared for sooner.
- **Provide a handout and gift.** The handout would include giving opportunities previously mentioned along with how to make a contribution. The gift would be a sign of your appreciation as well as a possible call to pray for future vision advancement.
- **Follow up with regular communication.** Like any other ministry team, ongoing communication is important. Consider a quarterly vision report of what this team is accomplishing along with giving updates. You will also want to schedule a spring and fall event every year to gather the team. Lead Pastors should be in a regular discipleship and shepherding relationships with these high capacity leaders via text, email, phone calls, notecards, coffees, and lunches during the year.

3. NEW MEMBER GATHERING - Many guests can sit on the sideline until a clear vision opportunity for engagement is presented. If you successfully celebrate your vision and are able to cast a new direction for the future year, these efforts will create the energy for new people to join. I would schedule a New Members Class around this same season. I would also encourage you to host a New Members Reception gathering all those who have joined during the calendar year. This is a great opportunity to tell them thank you and help them take their next step of vision engagement. Remember the more engaged a person is in fulfilling the vision the more generous they become.

4. END OF YEAR - This is simply the most productive giving season of the year. Bonuses are being distributed at work and small business owners are discerning their giving potential. These types of individuals are motivated to help pastors move vision forward. The confidence you have built by revealing vision success along with casting a new direction for the future will have peaked their interest. If they attended the Stakeholders Event they clearly know the opportunities before them. Feel free to send a Christmas card, make a phone call, or schedule a coffee. Oftentimes these type givers have questions and want to know more. Your personal investment will mean a lot to them.

At the end of the year it is very common for churches to have designated missions offerings and communicate about personal giving via letters with giving statements. These elements are certainly helpful. However, "Catch Up Offerings," because you are behind financially, are not ideal to encourage joy filled generosity.

So give some thought to these four opportunities. Seek to practice the one that feels the easiest to you. You will not have time to start them all in the same year, but make a note of what you would like to add to your schedule in future years. Fall only comes once a year so lead well.