



# horizons

S E E I N G B E Y O N D

**EASTER FUNDRAISING**

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Easter is the greatest celebration in the Christian year. It is a time to shout, sing, and rejoice that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, rose from the grave to live forever and ever. Christ the Lord is Risen...Pass the Plate!

I am quite often asked about giving on Easter Sunday and why it is not more than it is. After all, for just about every church on the planet more persons will be in worship this day than any other Sunday of the year. Many a finance committee have said to me that they were waiting for the Easter offering or holding out to see what comes in on Easter or something like that because they believed persons give a lot on that day. They look at church like a store. On days when there are more customers there are usually more sales and higher receipts. This is, however, not a good analogy when it comes to giving to the church. In fact, if you wanted to measure per capita giving you might find that Easter was one of the lowest Sundays for giving per worshipper during the year. The reason is really quite simple, but one that pastors and laity never seem to quite understand.

Persons who truly love Jesus give. Those who do not love Jesus usually do not give. Persons who truly love Jesus as their Lord and Savior are in church most every Sunday of the year and do not wait around for Easter to show up. These persons will drop a dollar or two in the plate, but they do not have the church prioritized for a large gift. They have come for the pageantry, special music, fellowship, tradition, family gathering or some other reason. It seldom has anything to do with the joy that Christ arose. These persons will pay something for admission to the event, but will not usually make any real commitment or contribution.

Now, I do not want to minimize the fact that these persons are there. I am thrilled that they have come to be exposed to the Gospel. We should rejoice in that, just do not expect it to produce lots of funds for the rest of the year, unless that Gospel truly takes root.

But, you say, can't we do something to get their wallets to loosen up a bit? Yes you can. You can have a special offering envelope prepared for persons to use to make a gift to a mission opportunity like feeding the hungry at the downtown mission, or building a habitat home, or repairing an inner-city school playground. It must be something outside of the church. Tell persons that 100% of the funds in those envelopes will go to this project. Show a short video of the need and how the church can help. Share how this is an expression of the Risen Christ at work in their lives. This offering is taken up at the same time as the regular offering, but the envelopes will separate the funds.

You will find that visitors or infrequent attenders will like the idea of giving to something like this. They will give considerably more to this than they would to "the church". It will not interrupt your service, but actually add a wonderful mission component to what is done that day. This will not necessarily help your operating budget directly, but it will take money out of person's pockets to serve God's least and lost and I bet that is a better use for it than what those persons were going to use it for.

You can follow this model during Christmas Eve or any other Sunday where you will have a substantial number of non-members or nominal members present. Christ is Risen...He is Risen Indeed!