

A tactical step-by-step campaign guide with sample messaging to help transition givers to online giving.



HOW TO RUN AN ONLINE GIVING CAMPAIGN DURING TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY



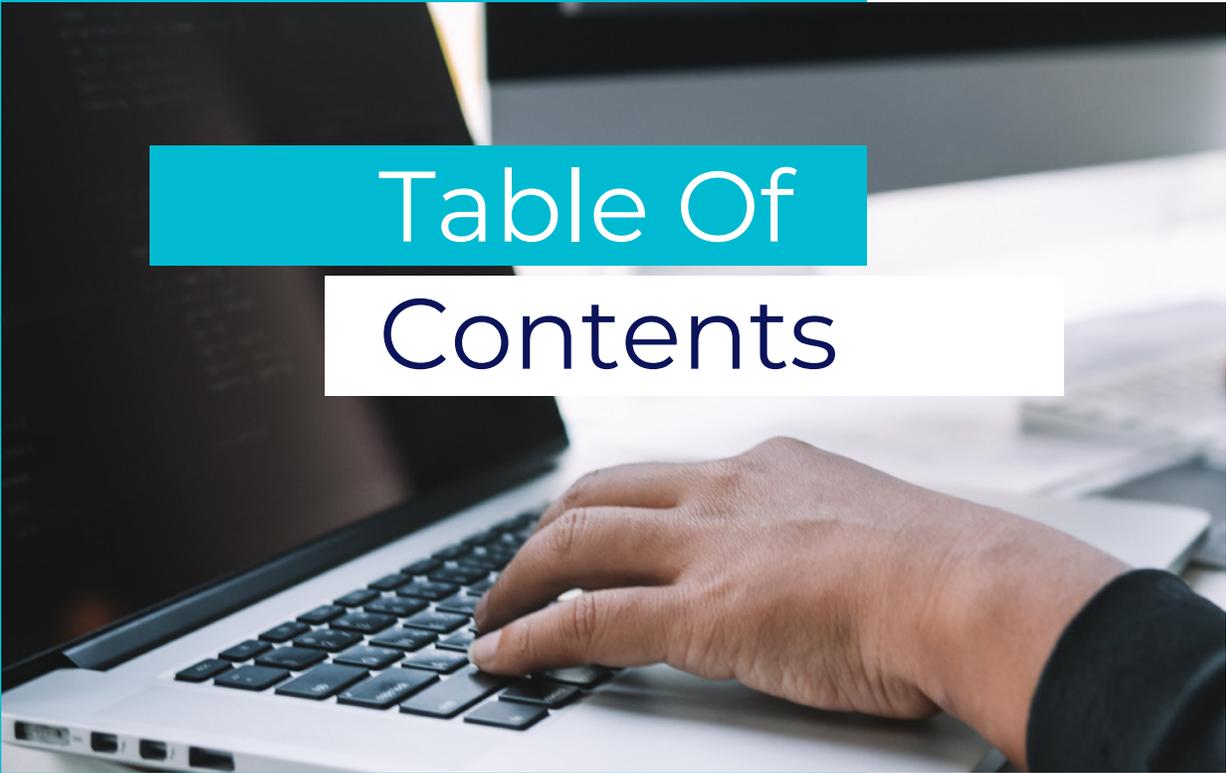


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Reaching Your Giving Potential During Times of Uncertainty

Whether it is a natural disaster, an economic crisis, or a global pandemic, the church rises to the occasion.

During times of upheaval and uncertainty, the church needs financial resources to maximize its impact, making online giving more important than ever.

This companion to our [How to Talk About Giving During Times of Uncertainty whitepaper](#) provides a step-by-step guide for building a campaign to:

- Help transition cash and check givers to online giving.
- Encourage current online givers to continue giving or even increase their generosity.

You'll also find sample messaging you can use verbatim in your campaigns.

Be sure to leverage our illustrated [Givers' 3-Step Guide to First Time Gifts](#) to show how easy it is.



Gather Your Past Giving Data

Baby Boomers hold 70% of disposable income in the US. Whether they are givers or not, consider this group as a potential source of new or greater generosity.

Start by gathering any historical data you have about your givers from your church management system and/or church giving platform. This data will allow you to identify groups based on giving patterns and then you can tailor your communications based on the needs of these various groups.

Begin with a simple list containing the name and contact information for those who donated to your church over the past 12-18 months, how often they donated, what method they used to donate, and if they donated to any special causes.



Always consider household giving rather than individual giving. It is the most reliable tracking factor.

Contact Information

You will eventually want to send multiple forms of communication to each person, so be sure you collect the following:

- **First and last name for head of household** to personalize your communications.
- **Primary and secondary email address** for the quickest and most efficient form of communication.
- **Home address** so you can send a physical mailer to those without an email address.
- **Phone number** for individuals who may prefer this method.

Giving Frequency

While all your messages will have the same end goal, you should try to communicate to givers in a way that makes them feel known. This means writing separate messages for specific groups, such as:

- **“Holiday” givers** are those who have given 3 or fewer times in the past year. For example, if Easter is coming up, this group will require their own email, specifically referencing the holiday and directing them to an Easter ministry opportunity on your online giving page.
- **First-time givers** are new givers, typically in the last 3-6 months. When communicating with this group, include a welcome message and additional information about the church's activities during the crisis.
- **Irregular givers** donated between 4-12 times in the past year. This group may need some tips on how to set up a recurring gift within your online giving system.
- **Consistent givers** donated consistently throughout the past 3-12 months. You will want to thank them for their consistent generosity and make them aware of any new ministry opportunities.
- **Major donors** are your largest givers, who may be looking for ways to increase their contribution to the church's community impact during the crisis. Show them how their gifts will be used to help those who need it the most.

Giving Mode

Lastly, it's very important to determine "how" your givers made their donations.

- **Cash or check givers** - This group needs specific instructions and encouragement on how to donate to your church online, which may include your website, church app, or text-to-give options.
- **Online givers** - This group is familiar with your church's online giving options but they may need a reminder or nudge to set up recurring giving or to donate to a special ministry opportunity.

This guide will help you proactively reach out to those who are not familiar with online giving and provide details on how to get started.

Plan Your Communications

Email is a fast and convenient way to reach the majority of your members. However, your email will have a lot of competition from countless other emails people receive daily.

To ensure your email stands out, make sure you follow these tips.

Email Subject Lines

- Keep it short and sweet
- Make people feel special
- Create a sense of importance or urgency
- Pose a compelling question
- Start with action-oriented verbs
- DON'T USE ALL CAPS or overuse exclamation points!!!
- Send the email from a familiar name and email address
- Use a different subject line for each giving group



TIP

During the pandemic, one of our clients sent an online giving email with a subject line: "A Message from the Pastor."

It was opened by an astounding 80% of recipients.

In times of crisis, hearing directly from the Senior Pastor is comforting.

Non-Email Campaign Types

DIRECT MAIL

The same basic principles used for email apply to developing a physical mailer. Be sure to include a bold, clear "call to action" directing them to an easy-to-remember location on your church website.

PHONE CALLS

There are a number of pay-as-you-go auto-dialer solutions that will allow you to create a recorded message for potential givers.

MAJOR DONORS

The Senior Pastor or pastoral staff should call on major donors directly. They may be looking for ways to increase their contribution to the church's community impact during the crisis.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Lastly, be sure you post to your social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) with details about how your church is helping during the crisis and how your members can get involved.

Include images and videos as those posts will often get the most engagement. Don't be afraid to include a link to your online giving page.



TIP

Ensure that the Pastor and other executive leaders maintain consistent communication with top givers and always show appreciation for their support.

Key Messaging Tips for All Campaign Types

- Keep it short and sweet.
- Ask about their needs.
- Be specific about church and community needs.
- Offer additional resources givers might find useful.
- Always provide a prominent "Give Now" button, or link to a dedicated landing page (see page 23) with instructions, details and "Give Now" button.

Targeting Email Sequencing

Now it's time to email your givers based on their giving frequency and giving mode, such as those shown in the chart below.

This allows you to adapt your messaging to help the recipients feel known.

You're familiar with an email "blast" – sending the same email to everyone on your list.

In contrast, email sequencing refers to a series of targeted emails you send to specific segments of people on your email list, which triggers a second specific email based on how they responded to the first one. The sequence shown to the right is fairly simple:

TIP

We recommend text-only emails for crisis communications, as they are more likely to be delivered and feel more personal and reassuring to recipients.

- **Email 1** goes to everyone in a particular category.
- **Email 2** goes to people who didn't open the first one. It's the same email but with a new subject line.
- **Email 3** goes to those who opened the first one and gave online. It allows you to thank them and ask for a next step: Creating an account.

This doesn't mean you must write 18 unique, start-from-scratch messages. As you'll see on the following pages, you simply adapt your core message (or use our sample copy provided) for each group.



| Giving Frequency | Giving Mode | Emails to Send |
|---|---------------|---|
| Holiday Giver 0-3 gifts in past year | Cash or Check | Email 1 - From Pastor to all Email 2 - From Pastor to non-openers of Email 1 Email 3 - Follow-up to new online givers who didn't set up an account |
| | Online | |
| New or Irregular Giver New givers in past 3-6 months or members with sporadic giving in the past year | Cash or Check | Email 1 - From Pastor to all Email 2 - From Pastor to non-openers of Email 1 Email 3 - Follow-up to new online givers who didn't set up an account |
| | Online | |
| Consistent Giver Consistent donations in last 3-12 months | Cash or Check | Email 1 - From Pastor to all Email 2 - From Pastor to non-openers of Email 1 Email 3 - Follow-up to new online givers who didn't set up an account |
| | Online | |

Emails for **Holiday Givers**

Please adapt these sample messages to your own style and to the specific crisis or season that currently applies. Add hyperlinked resources at the end of the email, as shown below.

If possible, direct cash and check givers to a dedicated landing page (see page 23).

EMAIL 1: Cash or Check Givers

SUBJECT LINE: A message from Pastor _____

[Greeting],

I hope this finds you safe and well. In light of [our current circumstances], I wanted to reach out with several thoughts.

Many people are in great need of peace, comfort, assurance and intercession. How have you been affected by [the crisis] and how can we be of help to you?

In times of upheaval and uncertainty, we ramp up our efforts to help our members and community. I'm so grateful for your support for [Church name] in the past.

With [Easter/Christmas/Other Event] right around the corner, our online giving platform makes it incredibly easy for our givers to help us increase our impact and continue to be here for our members.

Click here [hyperlink to landing page] to see how easy it can be to give online.

Thank you for your generosity and partnership in our ministry. My prayer is that [final encouragement].

In Him,
Pastor _____

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Find answers to [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
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Emails for **Holiday Givers**

EMAIL 2: Cash or Check Givers

Use same content as Email 1, but with a new subject line.

NEW SUBJECT LINE IDEAS:

- Checking in with you during [the crisis]
- How can we help you during [the crisis]?
- An invitation to connect with us in a new way
- An invitation to partner with us during [the crisis]

EMAIL 3: Cash or Check Givers

NEW SUBJECT LINE IDEAS:

- We couldn't do it without you
- We're so grateful for your generosity
- Thank you for trying out our online giving platform

Hi [name],

We are so grateful for your recent online gift! Thank you for responding to the increased needs of our church and community during this [crisis]. Your gift will allow us to [name of impact].

I hope you found our online giving experience simple and easy. I'd like to invite you to visit [link] again and bookmark the page or set up an account, if you haven't already. This will allow you to give future gifts even more efficiently. With an account, you'll also be able view your giving history, set up recurring scheduled gifts, and update your personal and financial information.

Thank you again for your generous gift. We appreciate your support and look forward to what God will do in and through [Church name] as a result of your giving.

In Him,
Pastor _____

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Emails for **Holiday Givers**

EMAIL 1: Online or App Givers

NEW SUBJECT LINE IDEAS:

- We couldn't do it without you
- We're so grateful for your generosity
- Thank you for trying out our online giving platform

Hi [name],

We are so grateful for your recent online gift! Thank you for responding to the increased needs of our church and community during this [crisis]. Your gift will allow us to [name of impact].

I hope you found our online giving experience simple and easy. I'd like to invite you to visit [link] again and bookmark the page or set up an account, if you haven't already. This will allow you to give future gifts even more efficiently. With an account, you'll also be able view your giving history, set up recurring scheduled gifts, and update your personal and financial information.

Thank you again for your generous gift. We appreciate your support and look forward to what God will do in and through [Church name] as a result of your giving.

In Him,
Pastor _____

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Hi **[name]**,

We are so grateful for your recent online gift! Thank you for responding to the increased needs of our church and community during this **[crisis]**. Your gift will allow us to **[name of impact]**.

I hope you found our online giving experience simple and easy. I'd like to invite you to visit **[link]** again and bookmark the page or set up an account, if you haven't already. This will allow you to give future gifts even more efficiently. With an account, you'll also be able view your giving history, set up recurring scheduled gifts, and update your personal and financial information.

Thank you again for your generous gift. We appreciate your support and look forward to what God will do in and through **[Church name]** as a result of your giving.

In Him,
Pastor ____

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Emails for New and Irregular Givers

Please adapt these sample messages to your own style and to the specific crisis or season that currently applies. Add hyperlinked resources at the end of the email, as shown below.

If possible, direct cash and check givers to a dedicated landing page (see page 22).

EMAIL 1: Cash or Check Givers

SUBJECT LINE: A message from Pastor _____

[Greeting],

I hope this finds you safe and well. In light of our [current circumstances], I wanted to reach out with several thoughts.

Many people are in great need of peace, comfort, assurance and intercession. How have you been affected by [the crisis] and how can we be of help to you?

In times of upheaval and uncertainty, we ramp up our efforts to help our members and community. I'm so grateful for your support for [Church name] in the past.

If you are able to help at this time, are you aware of our online giving platform? It makes it incredibly easy for our givers to help us increase our impact and continue to be here for our members.

Click here [hyperlink to landing page] to see how easy it can be to give online.

Thank you for your generosity and partnership in our ministry. My prayer is that [final encouragement].

In Him,
Pastor _____

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- How can we help you during [the crisis]?
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- Thank you for trying out our online giving platform

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I hope you found our online giving experience simple and easy. I'd like to invite you to visit [link] again and bookmark the page or set up an account, if you haven't already. This will allow you to give future gifts even more efficiently. With an account, you'll also be able view your giving history, set up recurring scheduled gifts, and update your personal and financial information.

Thank you again for your generous gift. We appreciate your support and look forward to what God will do in and through [Church name] as a result of your giving.

In Him,
Pastor ____

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Emails for New and Irregular Givers

EMAIL 1: Online and App Givers

SUBJECT LINE: A message from Pastor _____

Hi [name],

I hope this finds you safe and well. In light of our [current circumstances], I wanted to reach out with several messages.

Many people are in great need of peace, comfort, assurance and intercession. How have you been affected by [the crisis] and how can we be of help to you?

In times of upheaval and uncertainty, we ramp up our efforts to help our members and community. I'm so grateful for your support for [Church name] in the past.

If you are able, will you consider helping us increase our impact and continue to be here for our members?

GIVE NOW BUTTON

Thank you for your generosity and partnership in our ministry. My prayer is that [final encouragement].

In Him,
Pastor _____

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Emails for New and Irregular Givers

EMAIL 3: Online or App Givers

NEW SUBJECT LINE IDEAS:

- We couldn't do it without you
- We're so grateful for your generosity
- Thank you for trying out our online giving platform

Hi [name],

We are so grateful for your recent online gift! Thank you for responding to the increased needs of our church and community during this [crisis]. Your gift will allow us to [name of impact].

I hope you found our online giving experience simple and easy. I'd like to invite you to visit [link] again and bookmark the page or set up an account, if you haven't already. This will allow you to give future gifts even more efficiently. With an account, you'll also be able view your giving history, set up recurring scheduled gifts, and update your personal and financial information.

Thank you again for your generous gift. We appreciate your support and look forward to what God will do in and through [Church name] as a result of your giving.

In Him,
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Emails for Consistent Givers

Please adapt these sample messages to your own style and to the specific crisis or season that currently applies. Add hyperlinked resources at the end of the email, as shown below.

If possible, direct cash and check givers to a dedicated landing page (see page 22).

EMAIL 1: Cash or Check Givers

NEW SUBJECT LINE IDEAS:

- We couldn't do it without you
- We're so grateful for your generosity
- Thank you for trying out our online giving platform

Hi [name],

We are so grateful for your recent online gift! Thank you for responding to the increased needs of our church and community during this [crisis]. Your gift will allow us to [name of impact].

I hope you found our online giving experience simple and easy. I'd like to invite you to visit [link] again and bookmark the page or set up an account, if you haven't already. This will allow you to give future gifts even more efficiently. With an account, you'll also be able view your giving history, set up recurring scheduled gifts, and update your personal and financial information.

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Emails for Consistent Givers

EMAIL 1: Online or App Givers

SUBJECT LINE: A message from Pastor ____

[Greeting],

I hope this finds you safe and well. In light of our [current circumstances], I wanted to reach out with several thoughts.

Many people are in great need of peace, comfort, assurance and intercession. How have you been affected by [the crisis] and how can we be of help to you?

In times of upheaval and uncertainty, we ramp up our efforts to help our members and community. We can only do that through the faithful, consistent generosity of givers like you.

If you are able to continuing to give at this time, or even increase your donation, it would help us make an even bigger impact in and through [Church name] and continue serving our community.

Will you consider helping us increase our impact and continue to be here for our members?

GIVE NOW BUTTON

Thank you for your generosity and partnership in our ministry. My prayer is that [final encouragement].

In Him,
Pastor ____

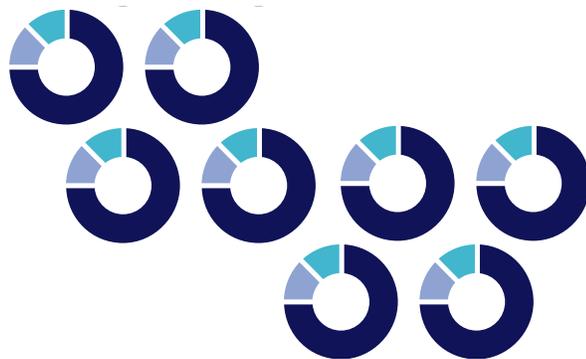
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Emails for Consistent Givers

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I hope you found our online giving experience simple and easy. I'd like to invite you to visit [link] again and bookmark the page or set up an account. This will allow you to give future gifts even more efficiently. With an account, you'll also be able view your giving history, set up recurring scheduled gifts, and update your personal and financial information.

Thank you again for your generous gift. We appreciate your support and look forward to what God will do in and through [Church name] as a result of your giving.

In Him,
Pastor ____

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Sample Phone Scripts

If you don't have email addresses, adapt your emails for each giving group for a phone conversation.

Note: Be sensitive! Find out how they're doing first. If you discover in the course of the call that the family is in need, adjust your message from giving to how the church can help them.

HOLIDAY, NEW & IRREGULAR GIVERS Cash or Check

Voicemail

"Hello, [Name]. This is [Name, Role at Church]. I'm calling to find out if you and your family are safe and well. Please give us a call back at [###-###-###] so we can help with any needs you have or to let us know you're okay.

Again, please call back and let us know how you are."

In person

"Hello, [Name]. This is [Name, Role at Church]. I'm calling to find out if you and your family are safe and well."

If they are not in a dire situation:

"There's just one last thing I wanted to let you know. We're so thankful for your generosity and partnership in our ministry. If you're able to help out, we're ramping up our efforts to help our members and our community during [this crisis] and we're letting our givers know about our online giving platform. Would you like to learn how to make a gift online?"

(If they're not comfortable or interested, let them know other ways gifts can be received.)



CONSISTENT GIVERS

Cash or Check

Voicemail

"Hello, [Name]. This is [Name, Role at Church]. I'm calling to find out if you and your family are safe and well. Please give us a call back at [###-###-###] so we can help with any needs you have or to let us know you're okay.

There's just one other thing I wanted to let you know. We're so thankful for your generosity and partnership in our ministry. We're ramping up our efforts to help our members and our community during [this crisis] and we're letting our givers know about our online giving platform. Our giving page is easy to find on our website and we're here to help if you'd like to give but need assistance.

Again, please call back and let us know how you are."

In person

"Hello, [Name]. This is [Name, Role at Church]. I'm calling to find out if you and your family are safe and well."

If they are not in a dire situation

"There's just last thing I wanted to let you know. We're so thankful for your generosity and partnership in our ministry. If you're able to help out, we're ramping up our efforts to help our members and our community during [this crisis] and we're letting our givers know about our online giving platform. Would you like to learn how to make a gift online?"

If they feel strongly about giving in person each week as an act of worship

"I totally understand that. You're not alone! Others have found, especially during this crisis, when we can't come together, that giving online can be a close second if they transact their online gift on Sunday or even during our online streaming service."

(If they're not comfortable or interested in online giving, let them know other ways gifts can be received. Also make sure they're familiar with your livestream service.)



CONSISTENT GIVERS

Online or App

Voicemail

"Hello, [Name]. This is [Name, Role at Church]. I'm calling to find out if you and your family are safe and well. Please give us a call back at [###-###-####] so we can help with any needs you have or to let us know you're okay.

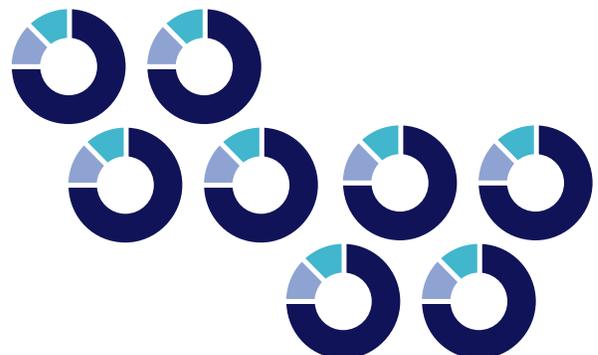
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In person

"Hello, [Name]. This is [Name, Role at Church]. I'm calling to find out if you and your family are safe and well."

If they are not in a dire situation

"There's just last thing I wanted to let you know. We're so thankful for your generosity and partnership in our ministry. If you're able to help out, we're ramping up our efforts to help our members and our community during [this crisis]. We couldn't do it without your faithfulness."



Landing Pages

A “landing page” is where someone “lands” after clicking your email or social media link inviting them to give online. It is a simple page without all the distractions and options of your website giving page.

Shine the Light on a Single Objective

For *current online givers*, create a landing page that focuses solely on the urgent need for resources with the crisis itself. For cash and check givers, create a landing page that introduces online giving to help with the crisis. (In other words, mention both.) Your giving software may provide landing pages as part of their platform.

Make sure the landing pages do not contain unrelated information or too many ways to take action.

Imagery

Imagery is powerful. For current online givers, use a quality image at the top of the page related to the crisis. For your convenience, we have curated a collection of [free imagery suitable for churches and online giving messaging](#).

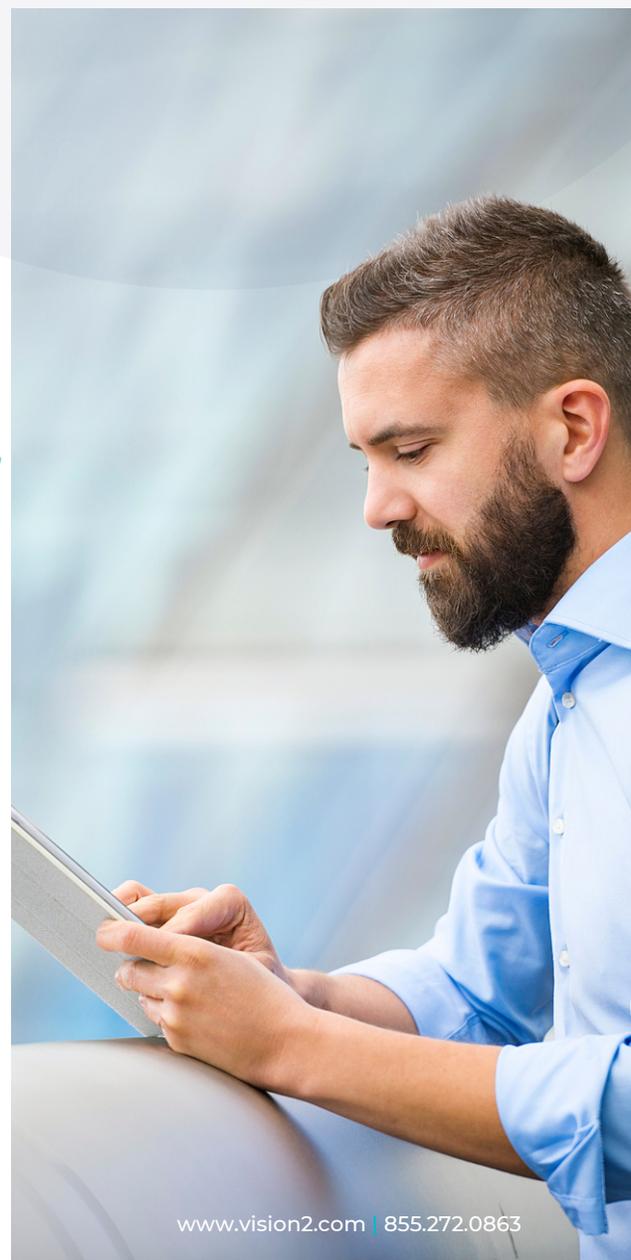
For cash and check givers, you can also include imagery relating to the crisis, but focus on introducing them to online giving as the best way to help with the crisis. To include easy instructions, download our illustrated 3-step guide for first time givers on the [Tools](#) section on our [Resources](#) page to show them how easy it is.



Clear and Compelling Headline

Reference the ease and effectiveness of online giving to get funds more quickly into the most urgent areas of need. For example:

- 3 Steps and 5 Minutes to Give Online
- How to Give Online to **[Church Name]**
- It's So Easy to Give Online to Help with **[the Crisis]**
- How to Help **[Crisis]** in Minutes with Online Giving



Your Message

Keep it short. You could get by with one well-crafted sentence and perhaps a quick 30-60 second video of the Pastor explaining how online giving helps the church during a crisis and thanking them for their support, or a quote from an online giver about how easy it is

One Clear Call to Action

Ask visitors to click the prominent Give button to make a donation.

Say Thank You

You can never show too much appreciation for your givers! Be sure to include contact information should givers have questions or need help.

Learn. Adapt. Repeat.

Each message is an opportunity to learn, evaluate and improve the results of the next communication you send.

Every email campaign is an opportunity to learn more about effectively communicating with your members and attendees.

What did they respond best to? What did you learn about the types of contact information you need to collect in order to customize messaging to each giver type next time? **It's important to remember...**



The Rule of 7

The Rule of 7 is a marketing adage which states that people need to see or hear a message at least seven times before they take action.

The worst mistake you can make is to simply send one email, flyer, or voicemail and then assume it worked (or didn't). The first message may have been inadvertently overlooked or received when the recipient was busy.

Don't Forget to Follow Up

Many email tools will show you who opened the email or clicked on your call-to-action, and, more importantly, who did not. You can then send an additional email (or more) to those who did not open or click on it, using different subject lines and content to see what worked best.

The guidelines and samples in this kit are geared toward communicating about giving during a crisis. They can also be adapted to future campaigns. Return to our original companion whitepaper, [How to Talk About Giving During Times of Uncertainty](#), and this set of templates to apply to future campaigns what you've learned during the crisis.

We're here to help.

We're here to help if you have questions about email campaigns or how to use your data to maximize your campaign effectiveness.

Contact us at support@vision2systems.com.

Not a Vision2 client? Contact us at letstalk@vision2.com for more insight on how we can help your giving weather a crisis.

Do Good. Better.™

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Our Promise:

As your partner, we'll support you every step of the way.

