

The 2016 Church Fundraising Guide

A Blueprint to Realize the Lasting Abundance and Prosperity God Intended for Your Church.



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This guide was written as a solution to a challenge church leaders face. Widespread declining church attendance across the nation due to the decline of traditional values and the strong attraction of entertainment from TV, cable TV, the Internet, video games and movies on demand via Netflix, the Internet or cable TV. Most of us have witnessed it, unless you are fortunate enough to be in area that is blessed with higher than average population growth. Additionally, every local church has competition from widely televised (or streamed via Internet) church services from popular TV ministries such as Joel Osteen, T. D. Jakes (the Potter's House), Ken & Gloria Copeland etc. Thus, many churches in the United States are struggling financially.

Now, how can we reverse that trend to raise enough funds to maintain/improve our church, grow our congregation and spread His gospel?

1. **Grant Writing** – As a nonprofit organization, there are many grants available to you. Unlike loans/financing, grants are generally from the government, a business or a private philanthropic organization and they do not have to be repaid. There is competition for grant funding of course, so the grant application you turn in must outshine the others and you must meet all the stated requirements for official approval and funding. ***Grant Writing is a highly specialized skill, so I would always recommend investing in the best talent you can find to improve your success rate dramatically.*** When you pay for genuine grant writing expertise, you will avoid the steep price of missed opportunities. What does it matter if your Grant Writer costs you \$500 per application if three out of every four applications are approved and the church is ahead \$75,000 at the end of the year?

If you have an amateur wing it, you would normally be lucky if any grants are approved because in addition to expert writing, editing and proofreading skills a talented Grant Writer normally has well-established relationships with key people at philanthropic organizations. That is because a great Grant Writer's focus is on grant writing approvals (aka results) vs. merely typing up documents. Expert Grant Writers also are well versed and enthusiastic about research and know how to focus on the grant applications that are most likely to be approved. Further, they are able to present compelling and convincing reasons why their church's grant application should be approved. Finally, they can invite key influencers or executives out to a business lunch/golf course were they make friends and lobby for your cause.

Thus, the best advice I can offer you would be to secure the services of an expert Grant Writer on LinkedIn.com, where on the bottom of every professional profile there should be plenty of recommendations from clients, supervisors and business partners. These recommendations cannot be faked or edited by the person receiving them plus, we know the full name, job title and can view the entire profile of the recommendation writer, if we want to verify credibility. Great writers will normally have plenty of recommendations on their LinkedIn profiles. You can search for local Grant Writers using the Omni-Search Bar on the top of your LinkedIn profile page or you can

also search using the Advanced People Search Tool. Note – Endorsements are not LinkedIn recommendations, they are freely given out to connections just like “likes” on Facebook.

2. **Install a Columbarium from [Columbarium Concepts](http://ColumbariumConcepts.com)** and your church will enjoy both an immediate and long-term financial resource. As some of you will already know, a columbarium is a practical, prestigious and permanent final resting place for the cremated ashes of your loved ones. It is a far less costly alternative to a traditional burial. For more information and beautiful full color photos, please visit our Columbarium Concepts website by clicking on the link in blue above. Now, I will explain the many benefits of a columbarium for the church, congregation and the local community...



A columbarium promotes loyalty with a return to the cradle to grave ministry, which tightens the bonds within the church congregation, promotes the communion of saints and encourages families to return to the church more often. Previously, many churches had their own cemeteries right on church property. When that practice declined, churches not only lost revenue, they missed several visits to the gravesite and church from family members monthly/annually. Today, many funeral services are held at local funeral

homes, since Funeral Home Directors are paid to increase revenue for their employers and most churches no longer have cemeteries.

As most people of faith know, the uplifting nature of a church service, Holy Communion, your Pastor's sermon, the emotional support and camaraderie of your church friends/the congregation and the singing of the choir help us all to keep the faith. Thus, the more people that show up for church services the better. A columbarium is a proven way to improve attendance and tighten bonds within the congregation because now families are served by the church from cradle (baptism) to grave (columbarium) again.

- † **A Columbarium Concepts Columbarium offers your church a staggering return on investment (ROI) of 10 times the original investment.** This is definitely one reason why many churches had a cemetery on church property generations ago. Now, that most of the population approves of/favors cremations, it makes perfect sense to bring the columbarium to the church instead of adjacent to the crematory or a veteran's memorial cemetery. *After all, wouldn't you rather spend the rest of eternity with your church friends vs. strangers?*

The average cost of our columbarium unit, which holds 40 companion niches is \$13,000. Although the suggested retail per companion niche is \$3,000 each niche has space for two cremation urns, so the real cost to the consumer is \$1500 per person. $\$1500 \times 80 = \$120,000$. Then there will be substantial and lasting revenue from 80 cremation urns, additional upgrade options and engraving. When you crunch all the numbers, it is easy to see the incredible return on investment is genuine.

- † **Every family/individual within the church/local community benefits because the per person cost of one cremation, columbarium niche space, cremation urn, inurnment ceremony and engraving is \$3000 vs. an average traditional burial with casket, burial, grave opening-closing, vault, cemetery plot and headstone for \$9,000 – \$12,000. That means that the average savings per person will be about \$6,000 – \$9,000.** During an average generation (two decades) when one family chooses the church columbarium over the local cemetery for three loved ones that died, that could result in \$9,000 of additional revenue to the church (vs. nothing), which is tax deductible, and a savings of \$18,000 – \$27,000 to the family over those two decades.

Many churches already have 60 to 120 families within their congregation. Thus, if we are conservative, $60 \times \$9,000$ in new revenue = \$540,000 over two decades or \$27,000 per year on average. I am also pleased to report that in this example, the average family will be able to save at least \$54,000 over 20 years and again each donation to the church is tax deductible. For the average church congregation of 60 families, that would mean a total savings of \$3,240,000 plus the savings from the tax deductions. What a blessing!

- † **The future generations of your family, the church congregation and the community also benefit because of the significant savings means there is more money for:**
 1. College education, home maintenance, tithing and retirement.
 2. Evangelical missions, Sunday school education, church maintenance, expanding the church and helping the less fortunate.
 3. Community service activities, food bank donations, church concerts, special events/lectures and theater that attract more people to the church and improve community relations.

- † **We can be heroes to the most underserved segment of our population, the millions of senior citizens who outlive their retirement savings today.** Sure, living to a ripe old age has many blessings like grandchildren and great grand children, but outliving your retirement savings is not so pleasant. The nursing homes, assisted living facilities and rehab centers for the indigent and low-income seniors are full of people who live on a small, fixed income and have no savings or assets. This means most have let their burial/life insurance policies lapse because paying for health care essentials, prescription medication and medical equipment was more important. Even our low to middle income seniors living in their own homes are struggling with the sky-high cost of health care and home maintenance enough to let life/burial insurance policies lapse for nonpayment.

These final expense deficits result in an unplanned financial obligation to the next of kin. To escape from this hardship and honor the final wishes of their parents, it is common for the surviving family members to go into debt to honor their parents. As you know, Funeral Homes and Cemeteries are for profit businesses, thus the financing they provide is merely another profit center. Fortunately, now that your church has a columbarium, seniors and their families can handle all the arrangements for cremation, engraving, a companion niche, cremation urn and the inurnment ceremony in advance. **The seniors win because one affordable payment, a donation to the church locks in substantial savings, protects them from price increases and eliminates any financial stress and worry...**

- † **Word of mouth referrals** – The lack of final expense funds for seniors is such a serious and pervasive issue today, that I can assure you that once the Social Workers, Nursing Home Administrators and Registered Nurses hear of the marvelous Columbarium (*solution*) in your church, they will be delighted to pass this good news on to their residents and their families. Once that happens, your columbarium niches will begin to be filled at a faster than anticipated rate, which means even more funding for the church. This works out wonderfully for all involved because, who doesn't want a practical, prestigious and permanent final resting place?

Isn't it wonderful that we can be **the solution** for the seniors in our community who are unable to continue to pay their own life insurance premiums due to the high cost of living, medical care, maintenance and food? Thankfully, every time that we help another family avoid this financial stress, people are happy to share the good news. This is why it is normal for press releases to be sent to the media and your website when construction is completed on a new columbarium. Once people know, they will be eager to reserve their place in your columbarium.

- † **Most people of faith believe in the communion of saints and life after death.** Your new columbarium gives your loved ones and church friends the benefit of communion of saints, spending eternity with their church friends and the ability to secure a beautiful permanent resting place on church property where family and friends can visit anytime.
- † **Our other columbarium essentials also generate revenue and improve your columbarium/celebration garden/memorial garden. Yes, more wins for the church.** We have granite Memorial Walls (engraved granite, no final resting space is included), Prayer Walls (engraved with a prayer to leave a legacy to the next generation), Granite Benches (engraving available), naming rights signage, columbarium signage, markers, granite placeholders and inurnment stands.

Any church member or community member can donate one of these items to the church and have it engraved as well. Example: a prosperous business in the community might be looking to improve community relations, thus a \$10,000 donation to purchase naming rights for five years will strengthen their brand at a mere \$2000 per year. This expense is a tax deduction for the business, so it is common for executive types within the church to facilitate this type of donation. These items will match or coordinate beautifully with the columbarium units and masonry encasement for the columbaria.

Even three or four humble stone benches that match would make a great donation for individuals, families or area businesses. These benches can be engraved in remembrance of loved ones and then delivered to your new columbarium. These benches would allow people to sit, pray and enjoy the beauty of your columbarium. Each gift to the church is a tax-deductible donation to a nonprofit organization. Our blank granite placeholders can also be engraved with an entire prayer (e.g. the 23rd Psalm) and strategically placed within your columbarium/celebration garden/memorial garden. Below are several photos of popular columbarium essentials, they are essential because they are built to stand the test of time just like the columbarium. Whereas, products made of lesser materials will require frequent maintenance/ replacement and cost more in the end.



Inurnment Stand with a Cremation Urn on top and a Memorial Wall.



Engraved Stone Benches, Signage, Sculptures & Plaques for Your Columbarium

- ✦ Attract more people from the local community to the church by enhancing your columbarium with attractive landscaping, arches, statues and fountains to create a breath-taking celebration garden/memorial garden/prayer sanctuary. Talented Landscape Architects are able to turn ordinary lawns/adjacent lots into marvelous attractions. The finished projects are often strikingly beautiful and

useful. Although this Landscape Architecture adds to the final cost, the overall return on investment is so significant, this is a minor concern. Further, the church wins again because now we have a wonderful enclosed space for Bible study, choir practice, weddings, baptisms, first confirmations, Sunday school graduations, youth group meetings, church meetings, lectures/guest speakers, interviews with church leaders and photo/video shoots.

The marvelous convenience factor of visiting your loved one's final resting place, visiting with your church friends and attending church services in one trip cannot be beat. Now, how can you top a beautiful celebration garden like this?



- † Hassle free financing – **Wait, there is no financing required** because normally we recommend a pre-construction sale! Pre-arrangements are excellent for the church and members of the church because they make better financial decisions when they are not emotionally distraught and they lock in significant savings during the one-time pre-construction sale. It is common for the church to recoup the entire cost of the columbarium in this sale (during the construction). Obviously, you want to emphasize the significant cost savings vs. a traditional burial, how this donation helps the church and relieves families of unnecessary financial stress. Each family can save an additional \$300-\$500 per person on pre-

arrangement reservations paid for during the pre-construction sale. Thus, this strategy accelerates the church's ROI. Then once the construction, installation and landscaping is completed, the sheer beauty of your new columbarium will ensure that new sales keep trickling in from the congregation and the community.

Your church can choose to include everyone, allow all local church and community members in or all people of faith in as long as they have been officially baptized. Keep in mind, we can install more columbarium units anytime and they will match perfectly, so you can continue to take advantage of this new financial resource despite being sold out well before you had planned.

- † Installing our granite placeholders, allows you to reserve spots for new columbarium units while you eliminate the expense and hassle of another building permit, building inspections, price increases and additional construction for the expansion. With a granite placeholder, you have the advantage of calling us up by phone to deliver more columbarium units for your church. After the truck is unloaded, we will pick up the granite placeholders in the same trip to minimize your expenses.

Experienced Construction Managers know that it is far more efficient to complete one larger project than several smaller projects because labor is one of the largest expenses of your columbarium. Now, if you start out with 4 columbarium units, two granite placeholders (for expansion), three stone benches and two memorial walls, you simply exchange the placeholders at a later time for your new columbaria.

Finally, our streamlined customer service process means that your Columbarium Administrator has a lot less work to do to serve the congregation and keep that revenue flowing for the church. Let's take a moment to review a few typical scenarios...

A single columbarium unit costs the church \$13,000 or \$162.50 per person. Revenue from 80 single spaces at \$1500 each is \$120,000. Revenue from 80 cremation urns is $\$300 \times 80 = \$24,000$ and total revenue from engraving will be at least \$2400 more. Thus, total net revenue should be about \$130,000 for a tenfold ROI. Note that this does not include any of the popular columbarium essentials. The revenue from those matching essentials is all gravy. Yes, it is true; this revenue will take a bit of time to materialize, so if you are a pessimist, another way to look at it is...

Many churches already have 60 to 120 families within their congregation. Thus, if we are conservative, 60 families x 3 niches each for \$9,000 in new revenue = \$540,000 over two decades or \$27,000 per year on average. Now that you know what a terrific financial resource a columbarium can be for your church, please

visit <http://columbariumconcepts.com> today and forward a copy of this Church Fundraising Guide to all of your church leaders via email.



- 3. You can sell tickets to Special Events, especially Entertaining events like Christian Music Concerts, Christian Themed Theater, Casino Nights, Tuesday Night Church Bingo and Best BBQ – Chili – Dinner – Desert – Cake/Desert Cook-offs/Contests etc.** This works well because publicity is nearly free and talent is often donated or provided at discounted rates to the church. These events can be combined with a terrific raffle, so that there is extra motivation to buy tickets and show up. If the total cost to the church is less than \$1,000 for one of these events and you can sell 500 tickets at \$10 each you have just raised over \$4,000 net.

Casino nights can be even more lucrative because gambling is fun and people do not mind losing to the church while they are having a ton of fun with their friends. Naturally, there will also be some winners, but overall one casino night with black jack, roulette, craps and baccarat can bring in over \$10,000. Before you plunge into a casino night, you will want to seek the advice a lawyer within the church to guarantee that all federal, state and local laws permit this. Additionally, you can combine your Casino Night with a Singles Night promotion to draw in more people from the surrounding community.

- 4. The Most Entertaining &/or Funniest Homemade Video Contest/YouTube Video Contest** – Families/individuals create their own 5 minute or less entertainment video and enter

in the contest for a small \$10 fee. The contest winner receives a \$500 prize and all of the better entries are included in the annual video contest DVD, which will be sold later at the church, in the community and online for \$10 each. Obviously, if you do not win the contest, it is still great to be included in the DVD because thousands of people will see you. Who knows, you might launch a new career in show business!

The first part of the contest is likely to sell 300 to 500 tickets/entries at \$10 each for \$3,000 to \$5000 less the reward for the winner = **net revenue of \$2500 to \$4500** depending on the size of your congregation and marketing campaign. The video recorder can be owned, borrowed or rented and nearly everyone has a video camera that came with their smart phone today.

The second part is the DVD sales of all the wonderful, wacky and weird homemade entertainment videos. In an average scenario, we can count on DVD sales of 500 to 1000 with a modest marketing effort. It would cost \$500 for video editing, DVDs, nice labels and production. **So, 500 sales at \$10 each = \$5,000 less \$500 in expenses = net gain of \$4,500.** Now, the best part about this fundraiser is its popularity builds each year like a snowball rolling downhill because of all the positive press, word of mouth in the community and the rivalries between the competing families who want to win the top prize.

5. Advertise and rent out your lovely celebration garden/memorial garden for weddings with a facility use fee for \$250. One big concern of brides to be is the selection of an attractive setting so the Wedding Photographer can create photographs that they are proud to hand out to friends and family. If your celebration garden can host just one wedding a week during the warmer months, the facility use revenue could amount to \$6,000 per year. If you were to host two weddings per week during the warmer months, your church could realize \$12,000 in annual revenue. It would definitely be useful to devote a website page with plenty of photos to this, that way the community will be aware of what a beautiful site for weddings you have. You can also make community announcements on Craigslist.org to improve revenues during the wedding season. This community outreach effort means more people will visit your church for the first time and naturally, some of those people will end up joining your congregation.
6. Rent out your meeting room or celebration garden/memorial garden to professional groups, Teachers, Photographers or Videographers. Because you have plenty of parking, nice facilities and affordable rates, there are bound to be people/groups that would be glad to rent out our meeting room or celebration garden/memorial garden for \$125-\$250. Photographers/Videographers always need attractive backgrounds for their photo/video shoots and they just pass this cost on to their clients. Local TV News Reporters are always looking for great places to interview community leaders/news makers. All sorts of groups and businesses need meeting rooms too, so why not make the most of your facilities? I recommend advertising on Craigslist.org (local) where the Photographers, professional groups and Teachers will see your announcement. **Again,**

the more people who visit your church and meet your church leaders, the more opportunities you will have to grow you congregation.

Now, I would continue with info on bake sales, car washes and potluck dinners, but now all that seems like small potatoes after these windfalls. Thanks be to God. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

Do you have any excellent ideas for church fundraising? If so, please send them along to the author, Darrell DiZoglio at ddizoglio@gmail.com, so that we can share your new strategies with other churches that would appreciate your contributions. We are all on the same team after all.