



# Ask & Receive

## Raising Funds and Friends for Campus Ministry

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March, 2011

### An Initiative of the Ecumenical Campus Ministry Team

- ◆ The Episcopal Church
- ◆ The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- ◆ The United Church of Christ
- ◆ The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- ◆ The United Methodist Church
- ◆ The Presbyterian Church (USA)



Affiliated with the Education and Leadership Ministries of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA

To learn more about the Initiative and apply for training or consultation services, go to the ECMT Web site at [www.higheredmin.org](http://www.higheredmin.org)

### A MISSION STATEMENT AIDS THE ASK

Mission is a hot topic these days. Everyone has one: businesses, universities, churches, and nonprofits, even Google, Starbucks, McDonalds, and Amazon. The Blues Brothers were “on a mission from God.” Peter Graves led a team on “mission impossible.” So if your campus ministry doesn’t have a stated mission, you need one—now!

Mission statements are brief, carefully crafted declarations of purpose that describe the reasons for an organization’s existence, its core values, and the activities it engages in to live out the mission. It’s purpose is to guide the work of the ministry and interpret the ministry to its constituency, seeking to attract attention, support, and involvement.

A mission statement is both theoretical and practical. It is the framework or context within which the organization’s strategies are formed. It is the link between strategic planning and goal-related activity. Mission states who you are now and points to the vision of where you want to be.

Within the church, mission is theological at its core. It defines the ministry in terms of who you are as the people of God and describes what God is calling you to do in the world on God’s behalf (*missio* is Latin for “act of sending”).

The mission statement is filled with value-laden language. It is a heartfelt response to human need. It explains in passionate terms WHY your ministry exists. It connects physical, emotional, and spiritual needs to the core values of the ministry. It doesn’t explain what you are doing as an organization but why you are doing it. It becomes a bonding agent for board and staff.

Mission statements may grow out of the original purpose of the ministry, but chances are the context of that ministry has changed over time and, therefore, the mission statement must change as well. Although the language may seem timeless, it is a rather fluid statement that addresses needs and opportunities in contemporary ways. It needs to be evaluated and reworked on a regular basis, certainly at every annual meeting or planning retreat. If the mission is askew, everything else will be slanted and out of focus.

A “centering statement” may emerge as a brief, memorable encapsulation of the mission, sort like a bumper sticker.

A clear, concise mission statement is essential for raising funds and friends for campus ministry. Potential donors want to know who you are as an organization. Insightful donors may ask you directly about your mission or they may infer the lack of one from your rambling, inept conversation. Experienced donors expect a straightforward presentation of the organization’s mission upfront, with direct and convincing language. They want to know the principles that guide your work and will agree to support your work only if they can connect their own purpose with yours and see how together you can accomplish God’s work in this place and time.

Try this: take a notebook with you and jot down all of the mission statements you can find—especially those that connect with you. What is it about their language, style, and passion that moves you? Develop your own in a similar vein. Check out [www.missionstatements.com](http://www.missionstatements.com)

## RECEIVING GIFTS ONLINE



“It’s not enough to simply put up a ‘donate now’ button and hope for contributions to come in. Online fundraising yields few results if it is unplanned and not a part of an overall fundraising strategy. . . . Now you have to create a fundraising campaign that gets people’s attention, plugs them into your issues and campaigns in a real world, and makes a clear and determined pitch for their financial support.”

Michael Stein

The most frequently asked questions these days have to do with online giving. The hope behind the query is that there is a magical way for potential donors to drop loads of cash in our accounts without the boring labors of mailings or the time-consuming face-to-face meetings. In reality, online giving works for some, mostly large nonprofits, but for those of us in small shops, the speed of giving online hasn’t broken the sound barrier. What do you need to know to make online giving work for you?

The first thing I want to tell you is that I’m not an expert on this subject. So I’m going to point you to some those who are and suggest that you do a lot of Googling yourself to find what fits for you.

*TechSoup.org* is project of [TechSoup Global](http://TechSoupGlobal.org), a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit, that was founded in 1987 on the belief that technology is a powerful enabler for social change. It provides other nonprofits and libraries with technology that empowers them to fulfill their missions and serve their communities. The Learning Center section of the TechSoup Web site has lots of resources and information, such as “A Primer on Online Fundraising for Nonprofit Organizations,” A Few Good Tools for Online Distributed Fundraising,” and Selecting an Online Donation Tool.” You may not become an expert overnight, but you will begin to know your way around. [www.techsoup.org/learningcenter/funding](http://www.techsoup.org/learningcenter/funding)

PayPal is used by many smaller organizations, both for its relative ease to set up and is widely recognized and trusted. The donation fees are among the lowest. Your local bank will be helpful in setting up an account with Visa or MasterCard. Again, there are fees for services, usually 2% or 3% of the total. Vanco Services is a standard in the field and is used by many campus ministries to provide both one-time and recurring donations to a variety of listed funds by whatever pay-

ment methods you choose. Check them out at [www.electronicdonations.com](http://www.electronicdonations.com)

It would be impossible to list all of the service providers for online fundraising. Let me suggest a few here and you can continue the search:

- ◆ [Networkforgood.org](http://Networkforgood.org)
- ◆ [Clickandpledge.com](http://Clickandpledge.com)
- ◆ [Greatergiving.com](http://Greatergiving.com)
- ◆ [eTapestry.com](http://eTapestry.com)
- ◆ [Donordigital.com](http://Donordigital.com)
- ◆ [Gifttool.com](http://Gifttool.com)
- ◆ [Memberclicks.com](http://Memberclicks.com)
- ◆ [Charityweb.net](http://Charityweb.net)
- ◆ [Firstgiving.com](http://Firstgiving.com)
- ◆ [Contribute.com](http://Contribute.com)
- ◆ [Entango.com](http://Entango.com)
- ◆ [Givengain.com](http://Givengain.com)

Nick Allen has written one of the first fundraising books focusing on online donations titled, [Fundraising on the Internet](#). In an article titled, 13 Tips for Raising Money Online, he offers several insights focusing on the use of email.

1. Ask for special projects, not for general support, and set a deadline. That makes it urgent and timely.
2. Ask as many people as you can. If your list is short, see if another organization will send a message for you. Use a “tell a friend” request to expand even more.
3. Don’t bury your “ask” in a longer email or e-newsletter. Make it the main text of your message.
4. Be sure your recipients know who the email is from. On the subject line be sure you are clear about why you’re writing.
5. Keep the message short and clear. Direct donors easily to the donation link to your Web site.

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6. HTML (Web-like) emails get better response than plain text, but will take more time to format and text.
7. Expand your email list every chance you get. Obviously you will want to allow people to discontinue receiving correspondence from your organization if they choose.
8. Test your message with your “insiders.” Get feedback before you send it to large numbers of people who don’t know your organization well. A company like *convio.com* offers a number of services that support fundraising via email. Check out their bi-monthly newsletter called Convio Connection.
9. If and when this approach begins to work for you, don’t forget to keep in contact with your donors in a variety of ways. Nothing beats a personal phone call or special letter.

Finally, while there have been warnings recently about the demise of email because of the rise of social media such as Facebook and Twitter, other reports say that email is still the preferred way of receiving significant information, even by young adults. Notable, social media have been used to capture immediate attention and direct donations to critical causes, such as relief in Haiti and Japan. Use a variety of ways to communicate; try several and keep using what works best in your situation. Network with other organizations like yours to see what is effective for them. It’s a new day. Enjoy!

## FUNDRAISING/BOARD DEVELOPMENT SEMINARS ON THE HORIZON

The Ecumenical Campus Ministry Team is sponsoring a continuing series of seminars on fundraising and board development across the country this spring. The seminars are open to all campus ministry leadership, including staff, board members, denominational representatives, and student leaders. There is no cost for the seminars, except for the cost of travel to the location. Contact the coordinators listed below for more information about these future seminars.

- ♦ May 14, 2001 in Chicago, Illinois  
Brent House at the University of Chicago  
Coordinator: Stacy Alan [stacyalan@brenthouse.org](mailto:stacyalan@brenthouse.org)
- ♦ May 21, 2010 in Ft. Collins, Colorado  
Lutheran Campus Center at Colorado State University  
Coordinator: Connie Winter-Eulberg [lcmsu@lamar.colostate.edu](mailto:lcmsu@lamar.colostate.edu)

Five successful seminars are already completed: Columbus, Charlotte, Palo Alto, University Park, PA, and Houston. More seminars are in the planning stages and will be held in the coming months, time and budget permitting. For more information about seminars or for general resources, you may contact the Rev. Galen

## ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

*Ask & Receive* is a newsletter designed to supplement the Fund Raising Initiative of the Ecumenical Campus Ministry Team. It presents a series of ideas and resources on a monthly basis to address the challenges of fund raising and board development, focused on the particular context of campus ministry. Each issue deals with an aspect of fund raising, such as the annual appeal, visiting donors, trends, or tuning up the board.

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“Effective leaders never say I. They don’t think I. They think we. They think team. They take responsibility to make the team function, but the team gets the credit. There is an identification with the task and with the group. This is what creates trust and gets the job done.” Peter Drucker

## THE CAMPUS MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Campus ministry finds its life in a variety of settings, functions with a host of models, and enjoys support from a spectrum of governance structures—from highly organized nonprofit boards that follow secular 501 (c) 3 styles, to more loosely-knit committees and *ad hoc* units.

Whatever the organizational structure, the purpose is essentially the same.

1. Keep the focus on the **purpose** of the ministry. This means identifying the core values and ensuring that they are key to the vision and goals.

2. Be good stewards of all of the God-given **resources**, including finances, facilities, friends of the ministry, both securing necessary resources and accounting for their use.

3. Oversee the **effectiveness** of the ministry and its staff, providing personnel guidelines and annual evaluations. (Note: evaluations are done to learn, not to reprimand).

In congregational settings, where the campus ministry is housed at the local parish or where the campus pastor/minister may also serve as a part of the pastoral staff, members of the congregation often constitute the campus ministry committee. On a flow chart it usually reports to the parish council, with a member or two of the council serving as liaison on the committee. The budget may be a subtext of the congregational budget.

In other settings, the campus ministry may be a free-standing organization, but may rent from or be given space in the local church. While this is still a hand-in-glove arrangement, the budget will be separate and the committee will be comprised of members beyond those representing the congregation. Staff may or may not participate in the life of the congregation.

Boards provide accountable leadership for organizations that are formally incorporated with the state in which they are located. Members of the board represent a wider constituency or appointed to represent a higher entity. They have a job description and term limits.

Committees are often less structured. They are not incorporated, although they may have guidelines. Members are usually self-selected or recruited through the congregation. There may or may not be term limits. Their accountability is to the congregation, although in some cases they may be networked into other campus ministries in the area. They may not be asked for regular reports or have an annual meeting. They do not employ staff, although they may participate in staff evaluation.

Specifically a campus ministry committee can provide the following services:\*

- ♦ Function as a bridge that connects the congregation, the denominational unit, the university, and the local community.
- ♦ Understand and support the mission of the denomination (or denominations where it supports an ecumenical ministry).
- ♦ Provide vision and strategic direction for the ministry.
- ♦ Evaluate the work of the committee and the ministry on a regular basis.
- ♦ Support and evaluate staff in cooperation with the congregation process.
- ♦ Attend program events of the ministry as appropriate.
- ♦ Provide regular and annual reports as requested.
- ♦ Receive, allocate, and manage ministry finances within local context. Sources may include the congregation budget, grants from judicatories, and fundraising events.
- ♦ Provide budget spending guidelines without micromanaging.
- ♦ Recruit volunteers to provide assistance with programs or ministry tasks, such as newsletters, mailings, phone calls, or cooking meals.
- ♦ Speaking in area congregations on behalf of the ministry.

While there is wide variation in the work of campus ministry committees from place to place, they provide essential support services that strengthen the ministry and guide toward a common vision.

\* A tip of the hat to the Rev. Jack Saarela for his original work with congregation committees and their organization.