

RECOVERING THE LOST OFFERING

- OF COVID19 -

by
Mark Brooks
The Stewardship Coach



Recovering The Lost Offering of COVID19

By

Mark Brooks

The Stewardship Coach

@StewardshipMan

<https://acts17generosity.com>

Table of Contents

Introduction

Setting the Course for Recovering *Your* Lost Offerings of COVID19 Page 3

The Right Target for Your Message Page 4

Part One: Laying the Foundation for the Appeal

The Right Message Page 5

The Right Tools Page 6

The Right Plan of Action Page 7

Part Two: Your Tool Box for Implementing Your Plan

Crafting Your Vision for the “Ask” Page 8

Vision Worksheet Page 9

Overview of Plan of Action for a Labor Day Offering Page 10

Basic Steps for Effective Appeals Page 11

Direct USPS Mail Appeal Sample Page 12

Email Samples Page 13

Offering Talks Page 17

Offering Envelope Sample Page 20

How to Get More Coaching from The Stewardship Coach Page 21

Setting the Course for Recovering *Your* Lost Offerings of COVID19

How is giving at your church? That is the question I always ask church leaders. My guess is if you are reading this that your giving has seen better days. You are not alone.

10% to 20% decline in giving has been my projection of the range of giving declines that most churches will see from the lockdown of COVID19. Some are seeing more than that, while others report an increase in giving. I rejoice for them, but my focus is on you and your church. My life goal is this,

To Reverse the Decline in Giving One Church at a Time, Starting With Your Church!

The goal of this manual is to help you **receive an amount equal to one week's offering** before COVID19 hit you.

That's what, *Recovering the Lost Offering of COVID19*, is designed for. My goal is to see you utilize the principle and plans of this manual to reverse your giving decline. I believe in the local church and its mission. So, let's work to fill up your offering plates, even if they are only digital offering plates. If you follow the simple ideas and plans here, I believe you can and will see a giving increase. This manual is designed to be implemented at the close of summer, giving you additional dollars for ministry and missions through your fall season.

Before we get started on the specifics, let me establish a key principle right off the bat. No matter how far behind in giving you are it is essential that you,

Don't panic. Panic leads to desperation. Desperation leads to poor decisions, and poor decisions lay the groundwork for future problems. Donors give to institutions with proven track records, not to ones they worry will implode. Your church is no different. This manual is designed to provide you with a plan of action that will negate any panic you feel. To that end, we will work to make the message of your plan be positive.

I am going to help you craft a plan around *your* unique mission and ministry. People give to that which matters. Non-profit fundraisers talk about making a case for the "ask." I am going to help you make a case for why you are asking your donors to give to your church.

Let's **connect the dots!** We want to show people the incredible things your church is doing to advance the Kingdom of God. By telling your story of life change, you show how a donor giving a dollar to your church impacts the world. That's what I mean by connecting the dots!

Before we do that, we need to spend some time preparing for the message you will communicate to help you recover your lost offerings.

The first part of this manual deals with the fundamental principles needed to help you recover any offering you might have lost. The last section not only gives you a step by step guide of how to accomplish this, but it also gives you tools that you can actually use. Let's get started recovering your lost offering of COVID19!

I am your Indiana Jones when it comes to revering the lost offering of COVID19!

The Right Target for Your Message

Here is a reality in every church in America. **On average, 15% of your donors give 50% of all that is given!** Even more shocking is that the average church sees as much as 90% of their giving coming from 20% to 25% of their donors! My team has analyzed more giving than any other stewardship firm in America. Our analysis has confirmed what we have always known; the few always give the majority of what is given.

For your come from behind strategy to work, you must take your message to this crucial group. This group has the spiritual maturity to hear your message, and they typically are the ones in a financial position to give more. If you are going to be successful with this campaign, you must have the right target. As my old boss, John Maxwell says, “Everything rises and falls on leadership.” Your leaders are the key to your come from behind giving strategy. I always start my giving initiatives by focusing on **Leaders First.**

Don’t take this key segment for granted! Let me share two important points. First, your leaders, especially your giving leaders, will always be the most responsive to requests for additional funds. It is essential to take your message to the right target group if you are to have success. Yet, you never want to take them for granted, assuming they will always float the boat for you. The second important point is that your top donors will appreciate a giving campaign that includes *everyone* doing their part.

I always advise that you get your leaders on board early by informing them ahead of time about the special come from behind offering you will be launching. **My tool section will show you how to do this.**

A subset goal of this come from behind offering is to motivate new donors to give to support your vision. Stressing this will help your current giving leaders know that you are not taking them for granted and that your plan will encourage others to do their part.

Every year you lose donors either from death, transfer, or other reasons. We call this The Churn Rate. Like attendance, your church has a front door and a back door. Since you are losing donors yearly out the back door, you must continue to replace them with donors coming in the front door. Special offerings allow you to attract new donors as a result of your compelling vision and message.

While our primary objective is to help replace at least one lost offering, your strategy can and will help you accomplish much more. If all we accomplish is raising one week’s offering, then you might very well be right back in the same place in a few months. However, if you have a strategy that attracts new donors, your path to financial stability is much brighter.

The reality is, however, that your leaders, both giving and ministry leaders, will comprise the bulk of what you receive in this special offering. This is why I advise you get your leaders on board early in the process. I have found that when you treat leaders like leaders, they act like leaders!

With this in mind, let’s get started recovering your lost offerings!

Part One: Laying the Foundation for the Appeal

How do you recover a lost offering? For one thing, you can't merely sit around wringing your hands about the decline in giving. You must act. The longer you wait to act, the deeper the hole you will find yourself in. Any chance of closing out the year strong will become more difficult. Using my manual will give you a strategy for recovering lost giving.

If you have ever built a house or a new facility at your church, you know how important the foundation is. The same is true when it comes to a plan for making up a lost offering. So let's start by laying the right foundation, and it begins with crafting the message of your appeal.

The Right Message

Your first step is to craft a message that matters. Dollars follow a vision. Your vision is what drives people to give you more money. Thus, every appeal needs a driver for the vision to penetrate and capture the hearts and, ultimately, the wallet of your donors. The more compelling the driver, the more likely you are to get a response.

Every "ask" needs a driver. What's a driver? The driver is the message or story you are communicating about *why* people should give to your appeal. There is no better driver to achieve generosity than a vision *if* it is communicated effectively.

What is vision? My friend Herb Buwalda came up with what I think is the best definition. He says, "Mission," answers the question, "Why are you here?" "Vision," answers the question, "Where are you going; What is God asking of you now to impact the mission?"

Let's make a case for your vision! When I work with a client for a significant giving initiative, I start by asking the Pastor to write out the vision behind whatever we are raising money for. Technically this is called a Vision Case Statement. On one page front and back, I want a broad overview of what we are raising money for. I advise you to do the same thing for recovering any lost offerings of COVID19.

The 3 C's of Vision Casting – Your vision must contain these three C's to be heard. Your vision must be,

1. **Clear** – Remember, Keep It Simple Somehow!
2. **Concise** – Can people repeat back in two to three sentences what you are asking them to give to? If not, then you need to work on the "ask."
3. **Compelling** – Does it touch their heart? If not, then the response will be less than you hope for.

Your message is your vision, and the better you craft that message, the more money you will raise. Take time to think through how to best craft a message for the vision driving this appeal to recover the lost offering of COVID19

Check out my tool section for a worksheet designed to help you craft your vision and message.

The Right Tools

Your vision is the driver, but the best driver in the world is worthless without **effective vehicles to drive the vision to those you want to impact**. In this section, I am going to share with you the essential tools you need in place to launch your come from behind, giving strategy effectively.

Back before COVID19, we had a captured audience every weekend. Some who are reading this have re-opened. You can thus use your campus and platform to communicate the message of your plan to recover your lost offering. Even when we can meet on-campus, the best strategy is a 24/7 approach to the offering. In the 21st century, we must use multiple tools to achieve giving success.

What systems should you have in place?

1. **Dynamic website.** Your website is the first place most people will visit BEFORE they ever darken your doors. Make yours a good one!
2. **Robust online giving platform, including text giving.** You should be working towards the majority of your giving coming in some type of digital means. I partner with what I feel is the best online provider, <https://gyve.com/>
3. **Social Media platform and presence.** Like it or not, social media is where many people spend a great bulk of their time. If you are not there, you are missing an opportunity to connect with your people and those in your community.
4. **Postage paid envelopes.** I know this sounds old school, but this can be a great tool if used properly.
5. **Extensive database of your donors.** A given is to have all your member's email addresses. Yet you need also to have the ability to break this list down by various subgroups like first-time givers, by consistency, etc.
6. **A mass email platform, such as Constant Contact or MailChimp.** There are many platforms to help you send out emails in multiple batches. Some offer free services for a limited number of sends. Most cost only a few dollars a month. Find the tool that suits your church database best.
7. **Offering talks.** On-campus or live streaming, it is essential that each offering time has a talk connecting your vision to giving. I'll share more on this later.

These are the essential tools for implementing the plan I suggest. Having these tools in place will not only help you with your plan to recover a lost offering, but it will also help throughout the year.

Remember the old saying, don't put all your eggs in one basket? When it comes to a 21st-century communication plan, you must use all the tools in your toolbox to get your message out. In the next section of this manual, I will give you practical steps on how to utilize the tools above to communicate the vision of your message.

The Right Plan of Action

What is your plan? The best message and tools, while essential, are worthless without a plan of action. Let me lay out my overall strategy when it comes to plans for special offerings. The following plan of action uses Labor Day weekend as the target giving date. However, the principles here can be adapted to fit any timeframe.

Understanding the Uniqueness of a Special Offering

Let's start by breaking out the difference from a large offering like a capital campaign and a special offering. Smaller offerings or needs take a somewhat different approach. Your giving goal is much different for a special offering, and they do not require as much time and planning as do larger appeals. However, please note that special offerings *do* require time and attention. You can't download this manual on Saturday at 10 PM and find it useful!

Special offering strategy - Here is an overview of a plan of action for special offering:

- At least one month out craft the vision.
- Communicate three weeks out with your leadership. Why? Their gifts will drive the success of your offering! I'll show you how in the tool section of this manual.
- Two weeks from the offering, start showing the ministry impact of the area of need across all your communication platforms. Show your story!
- One week out, start a more direct appeal through social media. Set it up through your online giving platform. With a 24/7 offering strategy, you can begin the offering any time, not merely on the weekends.
- Two Sundays from the offering begin announcing from the platform the special offering for Labor Day.
- Send a series of direct mail appeals the week before the special offering and continue through the day after the special offering. Again, I will show how to do this in the tool section of this manual.
- Take up the offering with boldness! In two minutes or less, craft an offering talk that gives a positive take on the need your offering will meet. The tool section will provide you with a pre-written offering talk for this.
- Thank those that gave to the special offering and provide an update on the offering's results and its impact. Thanking your donors paves the way for the next "ask."

The tool section of this manual contains samples for your review.

Need more help thanking your donors? **Check out my manual, "First Time, Next Time, All the Time: A Plan for 1st Time Donors,"** at <https://acts17generosity.com/shop/>

Part Two: Your Tool Box for Implementing Your Plan

Concepts and principles are helpful, but actionable plans are what raise dollars to fuel your missions and ministry. In all my manuals, I give you tons of material and steps that you can simply insert your name or the name of the church and send them out. You can also use the tools that will be listed in this section as idea starters.

Crafting Your Vision for the “Ask”

Let’s get started with the most essential piece of your plan, the vision that will become your message leading people to *want* to give to your church. Remember, your vision needs to be,

1. **Clear** – Remember, Keep It Simple Somehow!
2. **Concise** – Can people repeat back in two to three sentences what you are asking them to give to? If not, then you need to work on the “ask.”
3. **Compelling** – Does it touch their heart? If not, then the response will be less than you hope for.

To help achieve the 3 C’s consider these,

Six Key Points on How to Craft the Message of Your Vision

1. **Don’t make it about you. Make it about your donors.**
2. **Be positive, not negative.**
3. **It’s not about making your budget; it is about changing lives!**
4. **So, make the appeal about missions and ministry not making budget!**
5. **Focus on what you have done and what you have yet to do.**
6. **Make the appeal appealing by personalizing the message.**

I try to tell a story in every appeal I write or make for churches. People love stories. The more appealing and compelling your story, the more effective your “ask” will be. The more specific your appeal, the more effective the “ask.” For instance, you might focus on what your Student Ministry will be doing. By telling stories of students, your members know, and love, you will generate a more enthusiastic response from your donors.

However, the strategy of this manual is to help you make up for at least one week of general offering giving. You want undesignated gifts allowing you to funnel the money to the greatest need. So, it is imperative that you understand,

How to Make An “Ask” That “Feels” Specific – For instance, you could say,

“We are gearing up for our fall tele-retreat with our students. It costs \$xxx to hold this key learning event geared to disciple the next generations of leaders. Giving to our special offering helps us run programs like this training equipping students to live out their faith in today’s complex world.”

“You are not asking for restricted gifts. Instead, you are asking for help to “run” the programs. The codeword is “run” the programs. This keeps it in the unrestricted realm.

Vision Worksheet

The following points will serve as a guide for developing the case statement:

Step One: List 3 things your church has accomplished. You want to point to “wins” that show the impact of giving to your church. You want to *show* them that giving made a difference.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Step Two: List 3 things you want to do in the remaining year. Focusing on any missions and ministry coming up allows donors to make a difference with their gifts. You want to *show* them that their gift *now* can and will make a difference.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Why is it important to give to this now?

How can their gift *now* make a difference?

Here is a brief plan of action for a Labor Day offering:

- Finalize the three offering messages used for the special offering and who will deliver them. Focus on what the church is accomplishing and, most of all plans to accomplish in the fall. I have samples for you later in this manual.
- Prepare any bulletin inserts, newsletter comments, webpage, etc. You want the message of your special offering to be trumpeted across all your platforms.
- Set up through your online giving pull-down menu a line that designates the special offering you are going to hold. This allows you to track your results better.
- Monday, August 17th, send out a letter to all your giving and ministry leaders. See the sample letter later in this manual. Also, consider inserting a postage-paid self-addressed envelope with every direct USPS appeal you send. See the sample at the end of this manual. One goal for any and every appeal is to make it easy for people to give.
- Sunday, August 23rd, two weeks before the special offering, for a Labor Day appeal, announce the special offering from the platform of the church right before the time of offering. See the sample provided later in this manual.
- Monday, August 24th, two weeks out for a Labor Day appeal, use social media accounts to highlight the special offering. Show donors what giving to your special offering will accomplish. I recommend at least one to two posts a day. **Make sure each post contains a link to give online.**
- Monday, August 31st send out a snail mail appeal about the special offering. See the sample at the end of this manual. Remember to include a self-addressed postage-paid envelope.
- Thursday afternoon, September 3rd, send an email blast for a Labor Day appeal with an embedded link to your giving page asking people to give right then! See the sample.
- Sunday, September 6th, send a text appeal asking for a gift.
- Monday morning, September 7th, send out one final email blast encouraging participation in the special offering. See the sample that follows.
- Write notes and emails thanking those that gave with a special focus on first-time givers on Tuesday, September 8th.
- Sunday, September 13th, announce from the platform the results of the special offering focusing on what the offering will allow you to accomplish for missions and ministry in the weeks to follow.
- Monday, September 14th, across all platforms, celebrate the results of the special offering for the next few days. Provide a link to your giving portal so that people can still give.

Basic Steps for Effective Appeals

COVID19 showed us how our offering must be a 24/7. To be effective, your offering plate must never be closed. An effective come from behind giving strategy must include direct appeals both snail mail as well as email and text appeals.

The following are my basic steps I use to make my appeals more readable and thus more effective. You will see this in my samples that follow.

Direct USPS Mail Appeals – It might surprise you in this day of online giving *and* given the COVID19 flipping of how giving is now predominantly digital that I would have a focus on using the USPS for any appeal. Why would I do this? Easy, **Snail mail still works!** Think about it, how many appeals do you get in the US mail? There is a reason non-profits still send out snail mail, they work.

USPS Basics – Use these basics points to improve your snail mail appeals.

- Personalize the letter. The more personal the message, the more apt someone is to read it.
- Try and keep the letter to one page. The exception might be appeals sent to leaders.
- Use bold and underlined text to highlight key points. People skim, so highlight the important points.
- *Always* use a PS. Studies show people almost always read a PS.
- *Always* give your online giving portal address. Studies show that even Seniors will type in your giving portal if you provide one.
- Include a self-addressed postage-paid envelope in all my sends.

Email Basics – Many of the same principles above apply to email as well. One thing that is important to remember is that the majority of emails are now read on a smart device.

- Captivating Subject line! If they don't open it, they can't read your message.
- Short and to the point! Again, the majority of emails are read on a smart device.
- Two to four paragraphs of two to four sentences. Be short and to the point.
- Use bold and underlined text.
- Clickable links to your giving page. You want to make it quick and easy to give.
- Multiple links to the giving page.
- Always have a PS! I almost always have the online giving link as my PS.
- Personalize it! Programs like Mailchimp make this easy.

Direct USPS Mail Appeal Sample – Send Monday, August 17th

The following letter is designed to be sent out to your leaders, informing them of the special offering. Edit the following to best suit your message.

Dear _____,

To say that 2020 has been a challenge is an understatement. Who of us is not tired and weary from the daily challenges of the events unfurling around us? Our CHURCH NAME family has risen to meet these challenges!

Because of the faithful generosity of our members, we have been able to: (Insert your own examples)

- Provide caring for families in need, including many of our single moms and hurting families in financial need during this season of COVID,
- Continue our Serve days throughout the summer within our community, being the hands and feet of Jesus!
- Provide the funding needed for our new “multi-site” church with three campuses.

Thank you, NAME Church, for helping make all of the above and MUCH more possible!

You helped make all of the above possible through your generosity! We have so much more to do as we prepare for our mission to continue this fall. Consider these challenges of need: (Insert your own needs)

- We must upgrade all our technical gear to better minister to our three campuses.
- We must improve our Small Group ministry with these tools to continue personal ministry to you and your family as well as giving us the opportunity for virtual opportunities in apartment complexes and other outreach options.
- Funding is needed for Motion Student conference and local groups being held soon. We are passionate about raising NextGen leaders for Journey and the Kingdom. Your gifts can make this happen!

These challenges are an opportunity for our church to step up and continue being the hands and feet of Jesus!

I wanted to alert you to a special offering we will hold in the next few weeks culminating on Labor Day September 6th. We are challenging our entire church family to give a gift over and above of their regular giving for a special offering we are calling, **“Take the Challenge.”**

“Take the Challenge” has a two-fold goal with this offering. **First**, we have a goal of making up one week’s lost offering from as a result of COVID19. Achieving this will better position us for our fall ministries. Our giving goal is to receive an additional \$10,000 dollars above our normal offering. Your generosity will help us achieve that goal. The **secondary goal** is to motivate others to join generous people like you.

You will be hearing more about this in the weeks to come. Will you join me in taking the challenge by giving an extra offering for our **“Take the Challenge,”** offering?

Blessings,

Pastor Mark

PS. I have included a special envelope to make it easy for you to give, or you can go to our website at <http://ourchurch.org/give> and follow the simple steps to give.

Email Samples

First Email Blast – Send Monday, August 31st

Subject line: I'm tired, are you?

Dear _____,

Who of us is not tired and weary from the daily challenges we face from the events 2020 has thrown at us? We at CHURCH NAME have worked to address these challenges with the love and hope of Jesus. Our doors might be physically closed, but we have found ways to overcome that obstacle, thanks in part to the generosity of our members.

Unfortunately, **the challenges of 2020 are not over!** Now more than ever, we ***must*** meet the challenges of our present-day to continue to share hope to our city. This is why **I am asking our entire church family to give to our special “Take the Challenge,” Labor Day offering push!**

The goal of the “**Take the Challenge,**” offering is to assure funding for all our missions and ministry that starts this fall. We want to raise what would essentially be an extra weeks offering, **\$10,000!** I am asking you to pray about **giving over and above** your normal giving for this special Labor Day push. Give now at <http://ourchurch.org/give>

Taking the challenge will help us *meet* the challenges of ministry this fall!

Give now at <http://ourchurch.org/give>

I am taking the challenge and giving an extra offering! Will you?

Your Pastor,

Dr. Pastor

PS. We make giving easy through our online giving platform <http://ourchurch.org/give>

Second email blast to be sent out Thursday, September 3rd.

Subject line: Take the Challenge!

Dear _____,

2020 has been a challenge for all of us, including CHURCH NAME! By God's grace and the amazing generosity of our members, we are more active than ever proclaiming the Good News of Jesus. Yet this fall, we face some challenges. We must,

- We must upgrade all our technical gear to better minister to our three campuses.
- We must improve our Small Group ministry tools.
- Funding is needed for Motion Student conference and local groups being held soon.

To meet these needs and more, we have challenged our entire church family to respond by faith to our special offering called, "Take the Challenge." We are challenging everyone to give an extra offering between now and Labor Day. **Give now at <http://ourchurch.org/give>**

If you will, "Take the Challenge," your gift will help us run our ministries throughout the fall. We have a church-wide goal of raising at least an extra week's offering! With your help, we can do this! Please consider an over and above gift now at <http://ourchurch.org/give>

I took the challenge and gave an extra offering because I want to see lives continued to be impacted! Will you join me? Join me in giving at <http://ourchurch.org/give>

Thanks to you, we are making a difference in our city!

Your Pastor,

Bro. Mark

PS: We provide multiple ways to give to CHURCH NAME. Find out more at <http://ourchurch.org/give>

Third email blast to be sent out Monday, September 7th

Subject line: Did You Take the Challenge?

Dear ,

The **“Take the Challenge,”** offering is paving the way for CHURCH NAME to meet the challenge of providing hope to our city. Have you taken the challenge? **Take the challenge NOW at <http://ourchurch.org/give>**

This fall, we are gearing up to provide hope and healing to our challenged society. Your generosity will allow that to happen! We have challenged our entire church family to give an extra offering to help fulfill our mission. Your, **“Take the Challenge”** gift *now* will help us accomplish this! **GIVE NOW at <http://ourchurch.org/give>**

I took the challenge and gave an extra offering! I’m encouraging you to celebrate Labor Day with a ministry expanding gift that will help us meet the challenges of funding our missions and ministries this fall. Together all our gifts *will* make a difference!

Your Pastor,

Bro. Mark

**PS. Giving is easy when you use our online giving platform at <http://ourchurch.org/give>.
Thanks for your generosity!**

Fourth email blast to be sent out Tuesday, September 8th – While this email is meant to be a thank, you note it also provides one last opportunity for people to give. Thank you, notes pave the way for the next gift!

Subject line: You made a difference!

Dear _____,

Thank you for participating in our special “Take the Challenge,” Labor Day offering! Your gifts, combined with the other generous gifts of the CHURCH NAME family, are making a difference!

Because of your generosity has helped assure we can continue forward with our fall schedule. We are focused upon reaching our city for Jesus, and every gift given helps us accomplish this!

We will announce the total given on the weekend of September 12th and 13th.

Thanks again for your gift!

Your Pastor

Did you know you can set your giving up to be automatic? Find out how easy it is by going to our online giving page at <http://ourchurch.org/give>

DO YOU HAVE A 1ST TIME GIVING PLAN?

CHECK OUT MINE CALLED,

First Time,
Next Time,
All the Time:

**A Plan for
1st Time Donors.**

**First Time, Next Time, All the Time: A Plan for
1st Time Donors**

<https://acts17generosity.com/store/>



by
Mark Brooks
The Stewardship Coach

Offering Talks

You can increase your giving in 2 minutes or less by setting up every offering with an offering talk. Here are three talks designed to help increase your special offering giving.

August 23rd

How Do You See the Glass?

Do you see the glass half-full or half-empty? Filmmaker Woody Allen famously said, **“I see the glass half full...but of poison.”**¹ Woody Allen must have been prophesying about 2020!

This has been a challenging year for all of us. I won't sugar coat it, 2020 has been a challenge for us here at CHURCH NAME. Yet we have chosen to see the challenges of 2020 not as poison but as an opportunity to further the Gospel. Consider this:

- Our doors might have been physically closed, but we found ways to stay open.
- We are engaging now with more people than ever, in places we never dreamed of.
- List some outreach or activity your church accomplished recently.

Your generosity helped us turn challenges into opportunities! Thank you for giving!

Today I am announcing a special offering we will hold in the next few weeks culminating on Labor Day September 6th. We are challenging our entire church family to give a gift over and above of their regular giving for a special offering we are calling, **“Take the Challenge.”**

“Take the Challenge,” has a goal of making up one week's lost offering as a result of COVID19. Achieving this will better position us for our fall ministries. Our giving goal is to receive an additional \$10,000 dollars above our normal offering. Your generosity will help us achieve that goal.

You will be hearing more about this in the weeks to come. Will you join me in taking the challenge by giving an extra offering for our **“Take the Challenge,”** offering?

I am not sure how you see the glass, but I know how Jesus sees it. Like the story of the woman at the well, Jesus is offering a thirsty world living water. He said, **“Everyone who drinks the water I give will never thirst.”** Let's **“Take the Challenge,”** so we can continue to offer living water to our thirsty world!

1. Taken from www.azqoutes.com

August 30th

A Challenge of Epic Proportions

How many of you have ever heard the term, **I double dead dog dare you?** Anyone ever use that dare? You might be wondering why I'm asking you about this phrase as we begin our time of worship in giving. Let me explain.

We are in the midst of a special offering on top of our regular giving called **"Take the Challenge."** We are challenging our entire church family to help us raise an additional week of giving to fund all our missions and ministry this fall. This special offering runs through Labor Day. We have a goal of raising an additional **\$10,000!**

As I starting thinking about this challenge and other challenges I have received in my life, the phrase, I double dead dog dare you came to mind. While I didn't think that was an effective appeal for setting up our offering time, it did make me wonder where that phrase came from. So, I did some research.

The double dead dog phrase has its roots all the way back into the 1800s. It was made popular in our day in the 1980s in the movie *"A Christmas Story."* In that movie, set in 1940, one child double dead dog dares another child to touch a frozen flagpole with his tongue. Obviously, that did not go well. Do not go well. Please do NOT try that at home!

Here at CHURCH NAME we don't believe in dares. I am not going to double-dog dare you to give. Yet when I did a search on the phrase, here is a line of explanation that said, **"A double-dog-dare is a challenge of epic proportions."**¹

2020 for all of us, has been a challenge of epic proportions. Our **"Take the Challenge"** special offering is a challenge of epic proportions. Your extra gift will enable us to continue all our missions and ministries through the fall. We are making a difference, and your generosity is spurring that on!

We are seeing lives changed for eternity, and that is the ultimate challenge of epic proportions! This morning may each of us **"Take the Challenge"** of epic proportions!

1. <https://grammarist.com/phrase/double-dog-dare/>

September 6th

Take the Challenge

How many of you realized that tomorrow is Labor Day? Labor Day typically closes out the summer holidays for us. How many of you get the day off? Now how many of you know what the meaning of Labor Day is? Something about labor, right? As with many of our holidays, the meaning is being lost in our rush to enjoy a day off. So here is a brief history lesson for you.

Labor Day has been a federal holiday since 1894. According to the website of the United States Department of Labor, “Labor Day, the first Monday in September, is a creation of the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. It constitutes a yearly national tribute to the contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of our country.”

So, a big shout out to all our laborers! I want to give out a special shout out to our YOUR CHURCH NAME, laborers, our volunteers! Without your labor of love, serving in all our various ministries, we could never achieve what we do. Every time you give here, you help support their work. So, thank you for your generosity.

Tomorrow also culminates our special offering called “**Take the Challenge.**” We have been challenging everyone to give an extra amount or gift these last few weeks culminating on Labor Day. Our goal has been to receive an amount equal to what one week’s offering typically would be. For us, that is \$10,000. We’ve already seen scores of you give, and we are close to that goal! Thanks for your generosity.

Your “**Take the Challenge,**” gift along with your regular giving today, helps us accomplish all the life-changing work we do here. Your gift will enable us to move into our fall season fully funded. This morning we want to challenge you to “**Take the Challenge,**” so we can meet the challenge of **INSERT MISSION STATEMENT OR SAY, reaching our city for Christ!**

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN GETTING AN OFFERING TALK DELIVERED TO YOU EVERY WEEK? In my newsletter called, “**The Stewardship Coach,**” I write a fresh talk weekly. Find out more at,

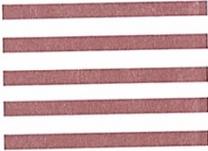
<https://acts17generosity.com/memberships/silver/>

Sample Envelope

205 FARNOL STREET SW
WINTER HAVEN, FL 33880
WWW.HEARTCHURCH.ORG



NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES



BUSINESS REPLY MAIL
FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 78004 WINTER HAVEN, FL
POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

HEARTLAND COMMUNITY CHURCH
205 FARNOL STREET SW
WINTER HAVEN, FL 33880



Looking for a newsletter that gives you incredible help in increasing generosity? I write the best weekly newsletter in America called **The Stewardship Coach Newsletter!** My members get this informative and packed generosity tool every Monday morning. Find out how you can get started receiving, **The Stewardship Coach Newsletter!**

Silver Level: Membership at this level gives you America's leading weekly newsletter on all things generosity related, **The Stewardship Coach.** This is a great tool for church leaders that want to stay abreast of the latest generosity news, information, and best-case strategies.

"The Stewardship Coach newsletter have been a tremendous help to our church. I encourage pastors and church leaders to take advantage of this powerful resource."

Pastor Nick Floyd Cross Church Northwest Arkansas an Outreach Magazine Top 100 Church

Each newsletter contains:

- Weekly thoughts from me, **The Stewardship Coach,** on the state of generosity, its impact upon your church with practical advice you can implement immediately!
- **Weekly offering talks!** Some sites charge as much as \$99 a month for this!
- Social Media advice, strategies, and suggestions to connect with donors and increase giving!
- Interviews with leading experts in the field of generosity and much, much more!

The cost is \$9.99 a month or \$99 for a year's subscription.

"I share Stewardship Coach with 70 of my leaders weekly. It is a good tool filled with relevant ideas that we can grow from."

Dr. William M. Campbell, Jr.

Union Bethel A.M.E. Church

Do you need more? Then check out my,

Gold Level: Designed for the church leader who wants to begin implementing a yearly approach to generosity. The goal of this level is to help your church establish a Digital Giving Strategy giving you financial stability for the present and future! A key for this level are the Coach's

"We used the Stewardship Coach's manual for our Easter offering. The weekly tasks helped us organize what needed to be done to have a successful campaign. Using the Stewardship Coach's plan, our offering was \$17K above our normal Easter offering."

Stephanie Dalton, Executive Pastor, Bethel Harvest Church

Gold members receive:

- **The Stewardship Coach Newsletter** sent to them weekly with key thoughts, offering talks, interviews, samples and more, PLUS,
- All my seasonal manuals like “The Successful Easter Giving Plan,” “The Fully Funded Summer,” “The Maximized Annual Campaign,” “How to Increase End of Year Giving,” and more that each sells for \$9.95!
- A review of your giving trends using our Generosity Assessment tool.
- A scheduled conference call with The Stewardship Coach, giving you a personalized generosity assessment.
- Unlimited email access for answering all your generosity questions and reviewing any direct giving appeals you write.

The cost is \$365 a year.

Do you need even more? Then check out my,

Platinum Level: Let me coach you to become a Top 100 generosity church! I regularly coach many of the nation’s top 100 churches in terms of size. I can help you become a **Top 100 generosity church.**

you get,

- **“The Stewardship Coach,”** newsletter, my weekly coaching piece that includes...
- **Weekly offering talks!** Some sites charge as much as \$99 a month for this!
- All my **seasonal giving manuals**, like, “The Fully Funded Summer,” and many others.
- The **Generosity Treasure Chest** of all my past articles, hundreds of offering talks, all my recorded group teaching time, and MORE!
- Twice a year **Generosity Assessment** with our deep-dive financial analysis of giving trends.
- **Group Coaching** every week, focusing on key topics of generosity with a Q&A time personally with the Coach.
- **Personal Coaching** through email and monthly teleconferencing.

The cost is \$99 a month. To find out more and to sign up, go to:

<https://acts17generosity.com/memberships>