

Beyond *the* Offering

Energizing Congregational Giving



Alexander Haas
TRANSFORMING INSTITUTIONS THAT TRANSFORM LIVES



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www.fundraisingcounsel.com



from the Carolina office of
Jerry W. Henry | Managing Partner for Faith-Based & Human Services

Giving in the Time of Coronavirus

"We need to get moving with our capital campaign now! The market has been going gang-busters and some of us are feeling flush!"

That was the comment from a campaign planning committee member three weeks ago as we discussed the timeline for early solicitations in a church campaign.

How quickly things can change! Enter the increasing threat of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

The stock market has become volatile, making cautious investors and many church donors more nervous. In the first week of March, the Federal Reserve stepped in with an emergency rate cut and the Wall Street market numbers fell; then following Super Tuesday primary results, the market recovered a bit. Just this week, Wall Street moved into Bear Market territory. Some economists imply that there is as much as a 90% chance of a [U.S. recession later this year](#).

Many church denominations are recommending altering liturgical practices (the practice of intinction, passing the peace, etc.) to stave off possible spread of the virus. We'll watch to see if average Sunday attendance figures begin to dwindle as the virus spreads across the United States.

But, still, ministry to individuals must continue. Congregations must keep focused on raising resources to fund their ministries.

Recommendations for church leaders, at least for the short-term, include these:

- **Pay attention to your members.** When considering fundraising, to use a non-church term, be donor-centric. Take cues by listening to your members and ministering first to their anxieties.
- **Educate your flock** and share the most current information. While media is

rife with news that tends to heighten fears rather than calming them, use every opportunity to focus your members on what they can do to protect themselves. My parish recently shared information coming from a priest-physician that said we are much more likely to contract the flu than we are the coronavirus. Nonetheless, they're taking precautions to minimize risks.

- **Ramp up your communication via social media, emails and e-newsletters** since people may stay away from large group gatherings and even worship services.
- **Help people to recognize that your ministries haven't ceased...** if anything, the need for your various ministries have increased in importance. Help them understand that your church's need for financial support doesn't stop because of the threat of a virus. Again, since sabbath worship attendance may decrease in the coming weeks, encourage people by sharing stories of how your congregation continues to impact lives.

The first quarter of a new year is the primary time in which to plan for your annual giving/stewardship activities. As we navigate these challenging times, consider an assessment of your stewardship program to help fine-tune opportunities and to quell the anxiety within your flock.

And, as for the corona virus? Don't panic...but be vigilant. Avoid shaking hands... bump elbows instead... and as your mother would say "Wash your hands"...often!

We Are Here to Help!

**Would you like to have a video conversation
with one of our church consultants?**

Alexander Haas is dedicated to helping churches/congregations build strong fundraising programs to meet both immediate and long-term objectives for mission and ministry.

Simply send us [some basic information using this link](#) and we will reach out to get the ball rolling.

Charitable Giving for Churches

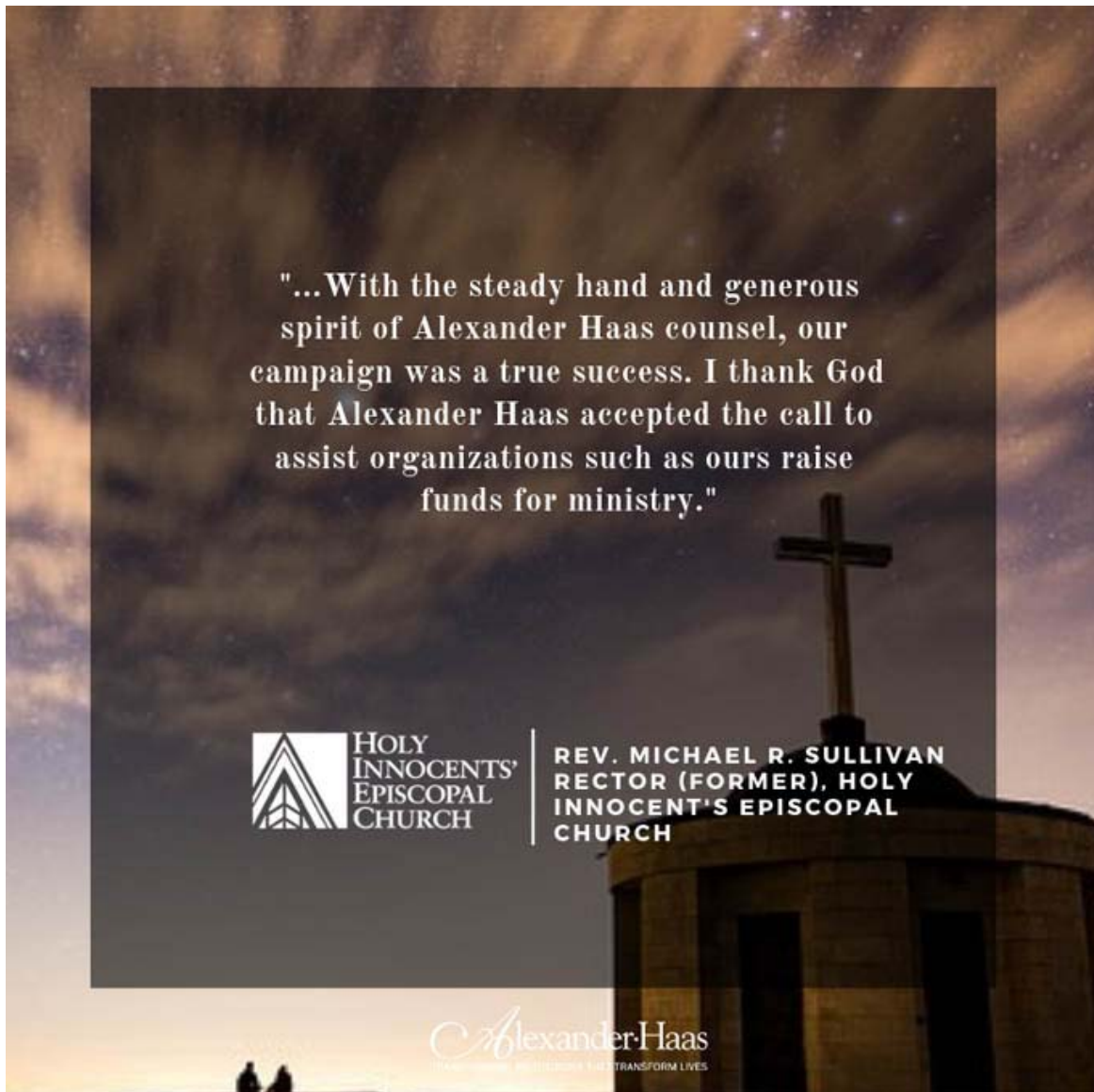
from NPSource

Giving to religion (defined as giving specifically to congregations, denominations, missionary societies, and religious media) has consistently remained America's single largest recipient of charitable giving. This data is from the year 2017 (most current statistics available)

- 49% of all church giving transactions are made with a card (credit/debit).
- 8/10 people who give to churches have zero credit debt.
- 60% are willing to give to their church digitally.
- Tithers make up only 10-25 percent of a normal congregation.
- Churches that accept tithing online increase overall donations by 32%.



- Only 5% tithe, and 80% of Americans only give 2% of their income.
- Christians are giving at 2.5% of income; during the Great Depression it was 3.3%.
- Only 3-5% of Americans who give to their local church do so through regular tithing.
- When surveyed, 17% of Americans state that they regularly tithe.
- For families making \$75k+, 1% of them gave at least 10% in tithing.
- 3 out of 4 people who don't go to church make donations to nonprofit organizations.
- The average giving by adults who attend US Protestant churches is about \$17 a week.
- 37% of regular church attendees and Evangelicals don't give money to church.
- 17% of American families have reduced the amount that they give to their local church.
- 7% of church goers have dropped regular giving by 20% or more.
- About 10 million tithers in the US donate \$50 billion yearly to church & non-profits.
- 77% of those who tithe give 11%-20% or more of their income, far more than the baseline of 10%.
- 7 out of 10 tithers do so based on their gross and not their net income.



We Want You to *Know*....

Transforming Institutions



Christ Episcopal Church in Pensacola, FL, is a new Client Partner. We are honored to begin working with this house of God.

For more than 30 years, Alexander Haas has been a fixture in the nonprofit community. We are honored to have worked with both large and small faith-based organizations, helping sew the seeds of compassion, hope and charity.

[See a list of our faith-based client partners...](#)

Our Transformational Services

Raising the funds to meet the mission and ministry needs of churches is becoming increasingly challenging. At Alexander Haas, we understand the challenges that congregations face in raising the funds to support their mission. More importantly, we understand how to overcome those challenges. We offer a variety of stewardship services for the unique needs of faith-based organizations.

[What can we help you with?](#)



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