

Tips & Tricks: Fundraising During COVID-19

Looking to start your fundraising efforts to attend the 2021 ELCA Youth Gathering? Here are some fundraisers that you can do during the stay-at-home order, as well as some tips.

#1: Online Trivia Night

Using a virtual meeting platform such as Zoom or Google Hangouts, you can organize an online trivia night. Charge \$10 per person or \$20 per family to get access to the meeting link. You can set up the trivia game using a free software such as [Kahoot!](#) or [QuizWitz](#). Topics for the night could be Bible history, pop culture, Harry Potter or sports. Let the games begin!

#2: Art Show

Encourage your youth to be creative and start painting, sculpting, drawing or sewing different projects for an online art show and auction. Share pictures of the youth creating the pieces on social media as well as a small blurb about why they are wanting to gather next summer in Minneapolis. Once the projects are complete, post pictures on your church's Facebook page. Encourage people to "bid" on different pieces. You can even use services such as [Vistaprint](#) to upload drawings and paintings on products such as cards, mugs or t-shirts to sell. A great way to get every age group involved!

#3: Virtual Hangouts or Tutoring

Give the parents a break and let their kids schedule a virtual hangout or tutoring session on Skype, Zoom or Facetime with your high schoolers. Youth can plan a 30-minute virtual game, Bible study or activity with them. They could even offer some tutoring for various subjects like math or language arts. Each session could be a free-will offering or could be a set price.

#4: Zoom-a-thon

Organize a telethon through Zoom for a Friday evening or all day on a Sunday. Youth can have a scheduled amount of time where they share music, a dance, an activity or a testimony. Encourage your youth to talk about the importance of the Gathering and how they can't wait to be in community with others. Encourage everyone to share the Zoom link on social media with their friends and family. Donations could be accepted through an online platform, which can be shown occasionally in the chat.

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Then your lives will be filled with all that God is.**

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#5: Grocery Pick-Up

Those that are healthy and able to safely go to the store to shop could take orders for items and then deliver the groceries to older members (or just busy members) in your congregation. Charge a “delivery fee” for the service to put towards the Gathering.

#6: Connect with Garden Centers and Greenhouses

Try contacting your local garden center or greenhouse to see if they could use some help. Members of your group could deliver the mulch and plants to someone’s houses on behalf of the business. Work out a deal with the business to see if tips would be donated to group or if a percentage of the purchase would go towards sending your youth to the Gathering. Be sure to practice social distancing.

#7: Flamingos & Chalk

We’ve all heard of the flamingo flocking fundraiser—where you put a bunch of bright pink flamingos in someone’s yard and then they have to pay to remove them and send them to another house. Similarly, you could pay to send the crew to a someone’s house to draw on their sidewalks and driveways using chalk. Inspirational quotes, Bible verses, the Gathering’s logo... there are boundless options. Once you chalked their driveway, they can pay it forward and send you to another person’s house.

#8: Scavenger Hunt

Gather on Zoom with everyone that would like to participate. Once everyone is in the call, release a list of 50 items that they need to search their house for—items can be anything from a can opener to a clothespin. As households collect the items, sit back and relax—wait for someone to notify you that they’ve found all the items! First household to collect all the items wins (or whoever finds the most items in a set amount of time). Can be a pay-to-play activity or ask for a donation at the end of the hunt.

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Things to Note:

- The **impact of the Gathering** should be at the forefront of your fundraising efforts. You can do this by having previous participants give a short talk before your virtual activity or share their message on social media while promoting your fundraiser. You could also post #ThrowbackThursday pictures of your group attending in the past with a quick quote from the student about the impact of the event on their life and faith.
- Not all of these fundraisers or tips will work in every situation, so please **adopt them to fit** your context and community.
- Unfortunately, young people have had so many different special moments taken away from them in the past few weeks. **Highlight** how this is something that is still months away and something that our young people can look forward to.
- Think **outside the congregation** when fundraising. How can you get the community involved? Is it asking leaders in your community to share your Facebook posts highlighting your upcoming virtual fundraiser?
- If your church has an endowment, it might take some time to **access it**. Start having conversations with your church council and pastor about how to access some of these funds, since your fundraising might be impacted. Remember to share how important faith formation is for these young people and for the church as a whole.
- Was your church planning a mission trip or other event for this summer that got cancelled? **Save the funds** already raised for that and put it towards your trip to the Gathering. Make sure to reach out to your supporters to inform them of the change and to share what the purpose of the Gathering is.
- Are you looking for a **crowdfunding platform** to use? We've heard people using sites such as [GoFundMe](#), [Network for Good](#) and [Fundrazr](#).
- **Mention** what will happen to the funds if the Gathering doesn't happen next summer due to COVID-19. Will these funds be put towards attending the next ELCA Youth Gathering or be used to continue high school youth ministry efforts in your community?
- Be sure to **have fun** with your fundraising and share your tips with us—we would love to hear what you are doing during this time to prepare!

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