



# ENGAGING YOUR INITIAL ONLINE GIVERS AFTER EASTER **2020**

# Engaging Your Initial Online Givers After Easter 2020

Church leaders have a keen sense of important spiritual threshold steps. We celebrate monumental and small moments of a person digging deeper into their spiritual lives. Those moments joyfully signal a more pronounced relationship with a church

Easter 2020 represents a rare, once-in-a-church-lifetime moment to engage initial givers.

Your digital attendance will be very high. The eagerness to engage in the spiritual journey through your church will be white-hot.

Many of these viewers will engage in giving for the first time through your digital giving portal. We are already seeing high levels of initial givers in the first weeks of Covid. You should invite, expect and celebrate initial givers on Easter weekend.

Engaging with these initial givers pastorally, quickly, and clearly will:

- Honor the bold and often risk-filled step of engaging with your church
- Create a pastoral connection quickly to serve them in this Covid season if they are wounded and hurting
- Create a long relationship with the church as initial givers can often enter small groups and volunteer
- Prompt and receive the important second gift
- Move the giver to a recurring giving preference

How do we engage initial digital givers after Easter 2020?

Note: the focus here is unique to first-time givers to your church. A first-time giver is not the same as a first-time visitor. You will need to determine your preferred manner of engaging a first-time visitor who opted not to give on Easter.

First and quite important, determine the type of initial giver.

Is the giver an initial giver **completely new as a giver to your church?**

Or, is the initial giver using digital **a prior giver** to your church now engaging in a new way of giving?

The type of giver determines your response.



## The Initial Giver Who Has Never Given To Your Church

- Get the list of initial givers to your church from Easter 2020 by Monday, April 15. The sooner you can thank and engage this group the better the pastoral connection for them and for you.
- Tuesday, April 17, send a personalized email from the pastor, thanking them for their gift to the church and personally inviting them to watch/experience the next Sunday service. Have the pastor encourage them to follow the church on social media to build community and to see the church in action. Include a prominent section on inviting them to engage with a pastor or with the church if they wish. Consider offering a link to schedule a time now with a pastor.
- Tuesday, April 17, the pastor writes a short personal note to the first-time giver. This pastoral touch is often the most referenced important engagement that the first-time giver mentions. For larger churches, the pastoral team can divide the new giver list and personally write the notes. For multi-site churches, this step is an ideal time for the campus pastor to engage through the note. If the first-time giver receives the personal note by Thursday, the pastoral and church relationship is more deeply rooted, with increased church engagement more likely.
- Thursday, April 16, send a follow-up email with details of your "COVID-19" online schedule. Let them know how they can virtually plug into online events, Zoom calls, prayer groups, etc. Offer again to connect with them if they need anything.
- Between April 21 and 23, 2020, send an email from the church office offering easy ways to give. Encourage making giving easier by setting up an automated gift online or through the bank. Write the email as a courtesy communication vs an ask with a tone of making giving to the church convenient.
- The week of May 11, 2020, consider offering a giving opportunity to this group of initial givers to give again to a unique project or aspect of your church. We want to help encourage the initial sense engagement with the church while inviting them to give once again.

Note: We can help you frame this giving project, as each church needs to design and craft this giving opportunity with care. You can reach out to us for [a complimentary support call](#) to help you think through your options.

## If The Giver Is A Prior Giver To Your Church But Using The Digital Portal For The First Time

- Get the list Monday, April 13, 2020 of those in this group
- Tuesday, April 14, 2020 send an email from the pastor thanking them for their engagement at Easter and for the financial gift for the first time using the digital platform. Offer easy ways to give and encourage making giving easier by setting up an automated gift online or through their bank. Write the email as a courtesy communication with a tone of making giving to the church convenient.
- Thursday, April 17, 2020 write a personal note to the first-time digital giver to reinforce appreciation of them as a person along with gratitude for their gift. This pastoral, personal touch becomes a core step in making sure that they move forward in their intention to give consistently.

## Prior to Easter

[Todd Turner](#), Director of Digital Giving Strategies at Generis

### Recommends:

- Take a look at the landing page after the gift is made. Does the landing page thank them? Is the page branded to look like it comes from your church or does it look like a receipt straight out of your software package? Spend time making all aspects of your digital look and feel like your church.
- Make sure that your digital giving process captures the email address. There are some older platforms and processes that do not capture email.
- Does your software automatically email a receipt at the moment the gift is made and confirmed? What does that receipt say? This email will most likely be scanned by the reader at best, so use the intro paragraph well. Celebrate the giver and the gift while reminding the giver of the immediate impact of their gift in the COVID-19 season.
- A special step would be, just for this weekend, to craft the automated email to include reference to the special Easter weekend.

**Note: if you desire more information to enhance your digital giving process and strategy, [click HERE](#) to arrange a time with our Digital Giving Team.**



## Sample Tuesday Email For Initial Givers Ever

Dear Horace and Helena,

Thank you for being with us this Easter weekend!

Easter at Community was quite the experience. **Your presence and engagement made the experience even better.**

We look forward to **having you again this coming weekend** as we gather together in this unique season. We'll begin to look at a new series: Dealing with Anxiety.

And **thank you for your financial gift!** The team tells me this appears to be an initial financial gift to Community. Your financial generosity brings huge impact in this season, especially through the Food Bank and in helping people like Janice, along with her four kids. They are eating this week because of your generosity. Community and you get to be good neighbors.

Hear more stories like this on our social media channels (insert links to your preferred channels here: Facebook, Instagram, your selections). You get to see the church in action!

Many people like you have already asked how they can become part of the Community family in this season. And many others have asked to talk to a pastor to serve any needs that have arisen in this time. Please click [HERE](#) to take a step to connect with us. It would be a real honor to hear your personal story and to serve you.

**You are a vital part of the Community family!** You are appreciated and cared for!

Pastor Pat

P.S. It is such a joy to be a pastor at this church. You make a difference at Community. We get to journey together in this adventure called life!

## Sample Tuesday Hand-Written Copy For Initial Givers Ever

Dear Joe and Julie,

Thanks for being part of Community Church this Easter weekend!

The operations staff let me know of your initial financial investment to our church. Your gift is very generous and will return a big impact in the lives of many, especially in this COVID-19 season. Your part in our church really matters. It is an honor to be your pastor and to have you as part of our community!

Do let me know how I can serve you in any way!

*And, of course, sign your name*

What if you prefer that the person does not sense you know the amount of the gift? It's easy to honor that value by including one phrase:

Dear Joe and Julie,

Thanks for being part of Community Church!

The operations staff let me know of your initial financial investment to our church. While I am not aware of the amount, your gift is very generous and will return a big impact in the lives of many. Your part in our church really matters. It is an honor to be your pastor and to have you as part of our community!

*Signed name of the pastor*



## Sample Tuesday Email For Initial Givers Using The Digital Portal But Who Have Given To The Church Previously

Dear Horace and Helena,

Thank you for being with us this Easter weekend!

Easter at Community was quite the experience. **Your presence and engagement made the experience even better.**

We look forward to **having you again this coming weekend** as we gather together in this unique season. We begin to look at a new series: Dealing with Anxiety.

And **thank you for your financial gift!** The team tells me this appears to be an initial financial gift to Community using our digital platform. Thank you for making the adjustment in how you generously give since we are temporarily meeting in this new format.

Your financial generosity brings huge impact in this season especially through the Food Bank and people like Janice along with her four kids. They are eating this week because of your generosity. Community and you get to be good neighbors.

Hear more stories like this on our social media channels (insert links to your preferred channels here: Facebook, Instagram, your selections). You get to see the church in action!

Many people like you have already asked how they can continue to give by automating their gift each week or another frequency. If it would be more convenient to arrange giving to make the way to give easier, click [HERE](#) to make that happen. It's how Becca and I give, so I know personally how easy it is.

**You are a vital part of the Community family!** You are appreciated and cared for!

Pastor Pat

P.S. It is such a joy to be a pastor at this church. You make a difference at Community. We get to journey together in this adventure called life!

## Endnote Question

### **Should the business team be engaging the initial giver, not a pastor?**

Nothing wrong with the business team, treasurer or executive pastor taking the step. However, the business office signifies that this important step, especially around the grand Christian celebration of Easter, is not really spiritual but transactional. The business office response cements what is discipleship-centric into a different, and perhaps lesser, category of business office functions. If giving is pastoral at its core in spiritual development, let's signal it from the start and reinforce that reality.



## Contributors



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