

FUNDRAISING: THREE QUESTIONS TO ANSWER!

After churches, schools, and organizations have substantially developed their vision/ plans, and as they then prepare to pitch it to major donors and the general membership in a feasibility study, there are three questions that they must answer for all members.

All that stakeholders and donors ask is that whatever is being proposed fulfills the mission, is bold and compelling, and makes sense. The making sense part of the answer again aligns with the organization's mission and attempts to further that mission.

Answer these three questions for your major donors and committed members, and you are well on your way to a successful fundraising campaign!

WHAT are we going to be doing? – What is the organization's vision or plan, what are we attempting to do? Build a new church, renovate the campus, increase school size, increase the number of programs and impact, complete a series of projects, repay loans, etc.? This is the easiest question to answer. After a formal or informal planning process, the organization's leaders have foreseen certain **needs** and **opportunities**, and they have a plan to address them! Does the basic plan make sense to most of the stakeholders?

HOW are we going to get it done? – The answer to this question is the simple financial plan. If an organization is proposing to build a new \$20 million church that seats 1,000 people, then the basic question is, "How will we finance this?" The basic answer may include:

- Money in the bank
- Land to sell
- A loan from the bank or synod or diocese
- One, two, or three capital campaigns
- The planned increase in parish roster and Sunday giving

Does the basic financial plan make sense to most of the stakeholders? The plan will probably involve some complexity but make it as simple as possible for the ordinary member to understand.

WHY are we doing this? – This question is the most critical to answer. It is the question and answer that will inspire people to larger gifts! So, this is the question to get right.

A church's mission is to build the Kingdom of God through community, worship, word, and service/outreach. The vision will ultimately be furthering the Kingdom and God's work on earth. The fundraising campaign and the completed projects will ultimately help the faith community keep growing and expanding the Kingdom of God. Focus on the big picture and connect the dots when you have to!