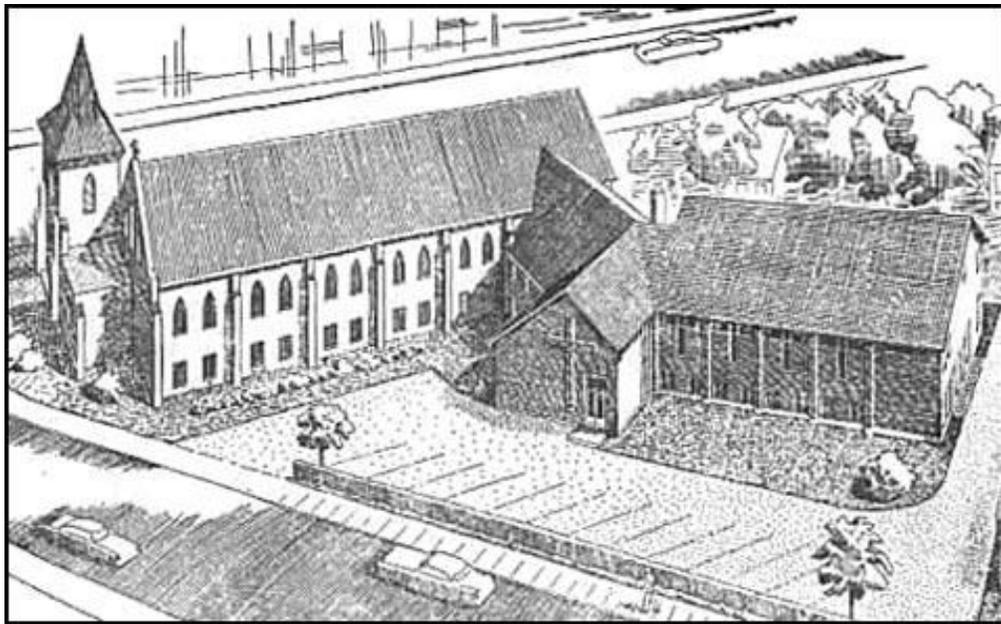


# Before You Begin

## Guidelines for capital campaign fundraising in your parish



Stewardship Development  
Diocese of Toronto  
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## CONSIDERATIONS FOR A CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

“So then, anyone who hears these words of mine and obeys them is like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain poured down, the rivers flooded over, and the wind blew hard against the house. But it did not fail, because it was built on rock”

Matthew 7:24-25

### Setting the Scene

A capital campaign is an intensive, organised fundraising effort to secure philanthropic gifts for a specific capital need or projects, executed within a specific time, and is usually no more than one year in length. If it is conducted in a thoughtful manner, considering the broad needs of a parish – ministry, bricks and mortar, staffing and long-term objectives – the campaign need only happen once.

A capital campaign cannot stand on its own; it must be won on paper before all the segments are put into place. The “case for support” – or reason for the campaign – must speak to building a vibrant ministry within your parish. It should be captivating, engrossing and moving, thus encouraging the whole congregation to participate.

Most of the groundwork should be completed before you begin to think seriously about raising the money needed for your project. The campaign strategy requires the solicitation of gifts that are much larger than those generally sought during any other type of fundraising initiative. Parish leaders must be cognisant that gifts are generally pledged over a 3–5-year period. This timeframe is helpful in the solicitation of gifts. However, parishes need to build the pledge period into their timelines so that immediate needs are not compromised.

As you begin to think about conducting a capital campaign here are some points to consider:

- **You are a faith community.**

Do you have a long-range strategic plan for the pastoral care of the people? Have you consulted with the Congregational Development team in Ministry Resources to map out the key issues and priorities of your parish? A strategic plan will include timelines, people responsible, implementation suggestions and areas of importance and should involve all possible people who can positively influence your vision and mission.

Some reasons to have such a plan are:

- to ensure that the pastoral needs of the people are secured before other activities become a distraction
- to stimulate forward thinking and clarify future direction
- to ensure that the fundraising is based upon Christian values
- to build teamwork
- to influence the future rather than be influenced by events as they occur
- to involve as many people as possible
- to build a sense of ownership

- **Give parishioners a voice.**  
 Everyone in the parish must feel they have an opportunity to have a “say” before decisions are made. This should not be done second to last in the planning process. God blessed everyone with a little wisdom, draw frequently upon His gift.
- **Be sure the incumbent and the lay leadership are “up to” the challenge.**  
 When you ask for input, you will also get criticism. Do not mistake this for opposition. Previous activities will be critiqued, and tough questions will be asked concerning the future. Openness and understanding will ensure support.
- **People have limited time, be organised.**  
 Good communication is the key. All meetings should have an agenda, minutes, and worksheets. Frequent reports to the congregation about “what’s going on” in the parish will keep people interested and add to the sense of ownership.
- **You cannot expect different results from doing things the same way.**  
 Be willing to involve new people. Be ready to approach things in a new light and in a new way. Some of those who have been traditional leaders in the parish might not be involved in this project – be open to that. Take extra care to keep key stakeholders abreast of progress and affirm them in the roles they play to keep other parish activities alive.
- **Consider hiring a professional consultant to do the grunt work for you.**  
 Professional fundraisers with specific experience doing capital campaigns can be very helpful in supporting the campaign leadership by providing advice, a disciplined process, and staff to direct the campaign itself. They should also provide the necessary follow-up mechanisms to collect pledges when the campaign moves to that point.
- **Do not hire the first firm with whom you come in contact.**  
 Interview widely and contact other parishes about their successes and shortcomings with various consultants. Contact the Stewardship Development Department (416-363-6021 x-246) if you need assistance in identifying outside help. The Diocese has a list of several firms that are familiar with raising money within a faith-based environment. Be sure you meet with the project manager. Remember you must feel both comfortable with and challenged by the consultant who will work with you, your organizing committee, and your parishioners, on a day-to-day basis. It is important to realise that even with a professional firm, parish volunteers and staff will do most of the work.
- **Do the math.**  
 What can a parish reasonably expect to generate from a capital campaign? The rule of thumb is three times your offertory. If your annual offertory is \$140,000, then it is realistic to expect that \$420,000 can be raised. You also need to factor in the cost of hiring the consultant. The industry standard is that consultants are paid 5% - 7% of the campaign goal. **DO NOT PAY THE FULL FEE UP FRONT.** Normally consultants are paid one-third of their fee at the onset of the campaign, one-third mid-way through the campaign and the final third at the end. **BE FIRM.**

## Questions to be considered

Before a parish considers launching a capital campaign or a major fundraising drive of any kind there are some basic issues that need to be considered. The wardens, stewardship committee and the incumbent need to evaluate these points, as they are the ones that will likely steer the direction of the campaign. Consider the following:

1. What is the goal in \$?
2. Are you absolutely clear about what you want to do with the money that will be raised? People will not give because the parish leadership thinks it needs a new building. Giving is always done in the context of ministry. As an example, how will expanded seating assist in ministry? The case must be stronger, more compelling, more exciting, and more inviting to persuade parishioners to give at the level required by capital fundraising.
3. Who decided that the project was necessary? Did it originate out of a long-range planning process or is it the dream of one or two people?
4. Is there widespread “buy-in” to the need for such an initiative?
5. How many parishioners know about the campaign?
6. Is the parish leadership looked upon with confidence?
7. How intrusive will this campaign be to other parish activities?

8. Does the parish have a mission statement and do the parishioners live by it?
  
9. Have you completed an internal audit? Is the congregation database up to date? Do you know who your giving leaders are? Is there enough office space to set-up a campaign area? Does the parish team see themselves as donors?
  
10. Do you have one prospect capable of giving 10% of the goal and two others worth 5% each? All told, your top 5-10 prospects should be able to make gifts equal to the first 25% of the campaign goal.
  
11. If your church is of historical significance, will the local business community support the campaign? Will government ordinances impede your work?
  
12. What percentage of your parishioners are identifiable givers? How many give to FaithWorks or other outreach projects? This is a good barometre for what to expect for your capital campaign because giving to operational expenses is indicative of one's commitment to the overall health of the parish – both immediate and long-term.
  
13. Does your parish have a debt? If yes, it should not be more than 10% of your campaign goal unless the reason for the campaign is to reduce or pay off the debt.
  
14. Have you conducted a previous capital campaign? How successful was it?
  
15. What is your parish doing to identify new leaders, so the “old guard” is not the only group responsible for this campaign?

16. Are you prepared to spend 5-7 cents on the dollar to hire a professional capital campaign fundraiser?
  
17. Have you ensured that the campaign is thematically structured around prayer and worship?
  
18. Are you committed to investing the time that is required to ensure that this campaign is successful?
  
19. Are you committed to a personal visitation process to ensure maximum participation in the campaign?
  
20. Have you contacted the Stewardship Development Department at the Synod Office for guidance?

## Phases of a Capital Campaign

### A. Planning Phase

- Case for support development
- Planning/feasibility study
- Pre-campaign planning
- Leadership enlistment

### B. Cultivation Phase

- Marketing the case among key constituencies
- Testing reaction of prospective donors and volunteers
- Responding to questions in advance of solicitation
- Permitting constituents to assume ownership of the plan
- Developing print and audio-visual materials
- Positioning and/or securing early leadership gifts

### C. Solicitation Phase (Actually 2 phases)

#### Quiet Solicitation phase

- Solicitation of those closest to the organisation
- Period during which lead gifts are identified

#### Active Solicitation phase

- Initial campaign results announced (usually after 50% has been pledged)
- Volunteers solicit the wider community
- Celebrate success

### D. Fulfillment Phase

- Generally, a three-to-five-year period is planned for the payment of pledges obtained during the active solicitation phase.

## Attributes of a Capital Campaign

- Intensive
- One-time event
- Time specific and goal specific
- Not to raise funds for annual operations – meets capital needs of parish
- Large gifts are sought beyond normal offertory amounts
- Usually in two parts – major gift campaign first; then general parish campaign
- Requires high profile, sustained support from incumbent and lay leadership
- Usually, a consultant is hired to organise and implement the campaign and work closely with incumbent and lay leadership
- Parish visitations are a must with teams of volunteers each visiting five to ten families
- Must be rooted in the principles of good stewardship – never talk about money except in the context of doing ministry
- A capital campaign can be expected to push overall giving (time, talent, and treasure) to new levels as the congregation accepts greater ownership of the ministries within the parish
- Opens the potential to add alternative revenue generating possibilities including planned gifts and parish endowments

## **A Successful Capital Campaign depends upon:**

- excellent planning and organisation
- a vision of what the parish wants itself to become
- committed volunteers
- good communications
- parish-wide “buy-in” for the case for support
- commitment on behalf of incumbent and lay leadership to support one another
- elevated levels of giving
- a comprehensive schedule of goals and objectives
- face-to-face solicitation
- a variety of gift giving opportunities (out-right gifts, pledges, planned gifts)
- commemorative gift opportunities (recognition of donors, if appropriate)
- maintaining a faith perspective
- celebrating successes