

# Developing Church Partnerships

When you hear the phrase, “the least of these,” what comes to mind?

Caring for “the least of these” is a strong and unmistakable biblical mandate and historically, Christians have responded to it with compassionate action. Whole churches have outreach centered around this responsibility. So churches feel blessed – not burdened – when offered an opportunity to serve the poor.

And that’s good news for your ministry!

Local congregations and youth groups can become some of your most dedicated partners and donors and, in turn, consider your organization an arm of their churches. But many will need YOU to reach out to them first – and your encouragement, cultivation and financial stewardship to get started.

An easy and effective way to begin is by choosing the churches of your current donors. Build a relationship by calling the pastor to introduce yourself, your connection through your donors to the church – and position your nonprofit as the mission field in your community.

Then explore possibilities for how the church can work together with your organization to reach shared goals. Use the strategies below to grow strong and meaningful partnerships that serve your community’s poor, hungry and homeless in answer to Christ’s call.



RELEASING GENEROSITY





# Church Strategy Ideas

- Develop collateral materials including brochures, videos and display boards that can be used to inform churches of your vision, programs and services.
- Make sure your volunteer coordinator works closely with a church's relations coordinator.
- Invite church members to become ambassadors for your ministry by sharing information about your current needs and events with others in the congregation.

## ✓ TIP!

*Consider adding a church ambassador page to your website – or sending periodic emails – to keep them up-to-date and plan recognition events for the ambassadors and their congregations.*

- Offer to have a well-spoken organization representative speak for 10 minutes on your ministry – or even fill the pulpit if needed during the pastor's vacation.

## ✓ TIP!

*In advance of the service, encourage the congregation to hold a drive for specific items needed by your organization and have your speaker pick them up after the service. Be sure to have "leave-behind" information prepared to inform churches of other ways they can help. Don't forget to gather the names and contact info of congregation members for your mailing list.*

- Ask churches to provide a link from their websites to yours and regularly add your ministry's current needs to their bulletin insert.

## ✓ TIP!

*Brewer Direct can help you create downloadable bulletin inserts with news of drive needs, current events and volunteer opportunities.*



- Send invitations to specific church groups asking for their help with volunteer opportunities and urgent needs in preparation for your Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas activities.
- Provide materials church classes and youth groups can use to teach their members about the plight of the homeless and your community – for example, “loaves and fishes” coin cards, which can help youngsters experience the joy of giving.

 **TIP!**

*Ask Brewer Direct about helping you with this opportunity!*

- Consider utilizing Brewer Direct’s church curriculum, *A Case for Compassion*. This three-part study series is a great way to get small groups and Sunday School classes involved in understanding the plight of the homeless, what God tells us about caring for those in need and how we should biblically respond.

 **TIP!**

*Check out the information for [A Case for Compassion](#) in the Brewer Library or ask your strategist for more information.*

- Offer to send a representative to talk with VBS youngsters about the plight of the homeless and how they can help them through your organization.
- Ask churches to provide their congregation with prayer partner sign-up cards.

 **TIP!**

*Ask Brewer Direct for samples of this idea.*

- Host a “Lunch & Learn” tour with your nonprofit’s Executive Director specifically for one church’s members.



- Invite churches to host events for your guests.

### ✓ IDEAS!

*Birthday parties, a Barbeque blitz, a Games & Grub night or a Christmas sing-along, to name just a few.*

- Volunteers from the church can help with programs like Make a Bed, Keep them Fed; Let's Sack Hunger; Share a Meal or Summer Rescue Paks.

### ✓ TIP!

*Ask Brewer Direct for information on these or other fun ideas.*

- Put together a pastor's advisory committee that meets quarterly. Invite pastors from different denominations and various areas of your city to come together and discuss ways to connect churches with your organization.

### ✓ TIP!

*The church, small group or Sunday school class could adopt a bedroom, living area or even help redo a kitchen!*

### Here's the bottom line on church partnerships:

Build them to cultivate more support for your cause. It doesn't mean your ministry becomes part of the church's outreach or annual budget; it simply means keeping church members aware and involved with your work. When they feel connected, they're more likely to feel called to support your organization financially on an individual basis.

This strategy sheet is provided to you by Brewer Direct's Academy and can be located in the Library. If you'd like to discuss the ideas found here or want to know more about the Academy, contact Shellie Speer, Senior VP, Academy at [sspeer@brewerdirect.com](mailto:sspeer@brewerdirect.com) or (719) 210-6207.

