

GIFT CARD FUNDRAISING

I'm sure it isn't hard to believe that there are a lot of expenses in the church, some of which can be substantial (e.g., new heating system). Recently we have been struggling with a way to fund raise for the church that can bring in substantial and sustainable amounts of money.

Well, it has taken some time and effort, but we think we might have found just that type of program. It has the potential to raise thousands of dollars for the church, is easy to administer and it is easy for everyone to participate.

The program is simple in its concept. Just about everyone shops, whether it be for groceries, gas or bigger purchases like TVs or furniture. I also assume that at one time or another you given someone a gift card to their favorite restaurant or coffee shop as a birthday or Christmas gift. If you fit into either of these categories then this fundraiser is right up your alley.

The fundraiser involves buying gift cards from the church. The church gets the gift cards at a discount from a supplier and is able to keep the discount as a sort of "donation." You get a full face value gift card that can be used at the local grocery store or gas stations or given as a gift to that special someone.

EXAMPLE

While the amount each of us spends might vary, everyone has to go grocery shopping (in my case several times a week). In the below example of a family that spends \$100 a week on groceries the church could get a "donation" of \$208. This "donation" doesn't require a material change in your buying behavior and is a great way for our church to earn some extra money.

Average Grocery Bill	\$100
Weeks	52
Annual Spending	\$5,200
Discount	4%
"Donation"	\$208
Church Families	30
Total "Donation"	\$6,240

This example is just for groceries, imagine how much we could get in extra "donations" if everyone were to use this program for the majority of their spending.

We are very excited about this new fundraiser and hope that everyone is able to participate in one way or another. Every little bit helps and the list of participating stores has something for everyone and every taste.

JOHN BOCIANOWSKI

RUNNING THE PROGRAM

- 1) Take a packet with all of the participating retailers.
- 2) Complete the Gift Card Order form included in the packet
- 3) Add up the total of your purchases and make out a check to the “Poughquag United Methodist Church”
- 4) Drop your order (along with your check or cash) in the offering plate or mail (with check enclosed) it to:

Poughquag United Methodist Church
Attn: Gift Card Fundraiser
21 Church Street
Poughquag, NY 12570

5) We will consolidate all the orders for the month and on the Monday following the last Sunday of the month will order the gift cards. Since there is a shipping charge for the order we don't want to be putting in orders every week, so plan accordingly with your purchases.

6) The following Sunday we should have the gift cards available for distribution

Also, we will have a limited supply of Grocery Store gift cards available for purchase on Sundays. Initially, we won't order too many so don't be frustrated if we run out. As the program starts to take hold and we understand our demand better we will have better availability on Sundays. As with any new program it will take some time for us to hit our stride so bare with us during these initial growing stages.