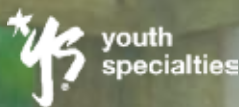


101 FUNDRAISING IDEAS

By Youth Leaders Everywhere

Compiled by Meredith MacKinnon & Sam Townsend

Donations



ABOUT

101 FUNDRAISING IDEAS

If you asked 101 youth leaders for their best fundraising ideas, you'd get a hodgepodge of events, auctions, creative asks and even pranks... plus a little repetition!

We know, because at the National Youth Workers Convention in San Diego and Dallas this year, we asked.

If you're planning for your next great mission trip, we hope these ideas inspire your fundraising efforts!



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P R A N K S

1

PROTECTION MONEY

You offer protection from an item, such as a purple toilet. If members of your church don't buy protection, then the toilet gets delivered to their front lawn, and the only way to have it removed is to pay the toilet removal fee. Fun stuff... but clean the toilet first.

Jeff – Escondido, CA

THE FLAMINGO PROJECT

This is where the youth group is paid to "flamingo" a house (put little plastic flamingos all over the house) and then paid to have removed. The victims can also buy insurance which would allow them to be flamingo free for 6 months.

Bailey – Flagstaff, AZ

FLAMINGO PICKETING

Suggest \$1 per Flamingo to picket at your friend/neighbor/stranger's yard as a prank. When they wake up in the morning, they'll see 200 plastic flamingos stuck in their yard.

Derek – Manahawkin, NJ

Placing flamingos in your yard. Church members have to pay to remove them and also can buy insurance to protect themselves. Made us a lot of money.

Jennifer – Turlock, CA

FLOCKING

We go "flocking" every other summer. We take small groups out after dark to the chosen target of the flock and place 2–3 dozen plastic pink flamingos in that person's yard, along with a sign that says, "You've been flocked by the Oasis Youth Ministry" and contact info. A donation of \$5 or more gets the flock picked up, and they get to choose where it goes next.

Mike – Godfrey, IL

FLAMINGOS

Pink flamingo peoples yard with several plastic flamingos and have a card on it that has options for giving money. Like \$25 to have the youth remove the birds and put them in someone else's yard, or any amount of money to have them removed... or anything you want. It is fun to see how people get one another and how much money is raised.

Ellen – Hastings, NE

FLAMINGOS

Buy yard ornament pink flamingos and plant them in someone in your church's yard. Charge a set amount to those people to move them on, and they tell you where to take the flamingos. You can also sell flamingo insurance policies for those in your church who do not wish to participate.

Alan – Oklahoma City, OK





CHURCH EVENTS

2

Noodles & Doodles (Pasta Dinner & Art Auction)

We have students create their own original artwork (painting, sculptures, poems, anything). We usually have them create around their favorite Bible verse or story. The more the better. Have your students sell tickets in advance. (We do \$10 each.) At the event, we have all the art displayed so everyone can see. We then serve a pasta dinner. Students act as servers and are dressed in black and white. After dinner we do either a silent auction or live auction. To increase your profits, have parents or adults donate pasta, sauce and tableware. Donations from Italian diners can help too. If you do a silent auction and have artwork leftover, simply do a fast live auction. This will cause excitement and these pieces will usually go for more than the others.

Nathan – Lemon Grove, CA

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Marty – Greenville, OH

Mystery Dinner Theater

Teens are the actors. We sold the tickets for \$25 each and got the food donated.

Gretchen – Tucson, AZ

Dessert Café Play

Every year our church puts on a play. Primarily youth, but also some adults, practice on Sunday afternoons for four months. We then host shows over a couple weekends in January. We've done this for over 10 years now and have grown to about eight shows, hosting over 75 people each. We have brought on people in the congregation who love theater, and they have helped significantly. Attendees pay around \$5 each to attend and receive a light dessert beforehand. The money brought in goes completely to youth missions. There is a significant investment of time and some money (from the general youth budget) into putting on the play, but it has become an incredible multigenerational ministry that allows youth to take the lead and interact with the adults involved and the congregation as they attend. Even without the fundraising aspect, it is a worthwhile endeavor, and I think those make the best fundraisers.

Sam – St. Paul, MN

A PLAY WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY YOUTH

Kim – Kansas City, MO

Lock-in

I will have a lock-in centered around what we are raising money for (such as hunger, trafficking, nets, wells, etc.) I charge a fee such as \$40 to attend the event and give prizes to those that raise MORE than the fee.

Margie – Fort Mill, SC

Pancake supper, Christmas play with dinner, Polar Express Party

Michelle – Millsboro, DE

Dodge Ball Tourney

\$10 or so per person. You can sell snacks and stuff on the side. We took a bowling trophy and cut and reapplied the arm so it looked like it was throwing a dodge ball for a low-cost prize.

Brandon – Bricelyn, MN

Desserts competition

We did a competition around the best chocolate desserts a couple years ago that raised our mission trip \$3,000+. We had people at church sign up and make their best chocolate-infused treat. We also sent a letter out and had a couple adult leaders follow up with the community (businesses) on prize donations for the winners. We charged people at the door (\$5) for the privilege of tasting all the cocoa-inspired goodness while they listened to a local jazz band play. Lastly, we ran a 50/50 raffle at the same event and gave away a few of the free prizes as door prizes. Oh, and our local Starbucks donated the coffee too! We placed the event the Friday before Valentines, and it was a smash success.

Scott – Minden, NV

WE HOLD A SOUP COOKOUT

Doug – McMinville, OR

We do a talent show each year called “Immanuel’s Got Talent” where our students and other adults from the church showcase their talents for the community. The families of our students provide desserts, and we take a freewill offering during the night. For all of our fundraisers throughout the year, we try to do something that not only raises money but also promotes community within our church.

Bret – Ripon, CA

As a youth staff we have a desire to see our students pursue their passions. Our plan is to sell tickets to people in our church community and local community where we prepare a gourmet meal, planned and led by Anissa, a senior who has a desire to be a chef. It is an amazing opportunity to open up fundraising options to students based on their talents and support them in that, while working as a team to raise funds.

Marissa – Redding, CA

Run-a-thon

Organize an easy run-a-thon at the local middle school. Kids get sponsors to run laps toward camp costs. It raises exposure in the neighborhood and school and kids take responsibility to raise some of their own camp funds.

Michelle – Solana Beach, CA

Get an old broken down car and have students and adults pay to get a swing at the car with a sledgehammer.

Grady – Rancho Cucamonga, CA

HOLD A CHURCH-WIDE DINNER.

Victoria – McMinnville, OR

BBQ at church that's free but with a freewill donation.

Daniel – Los Angeles, CA

Youth events involving the families – that means involving the whole church, really. Sell tickets for the event. During the event, take a “love offering.”

Scott – Palm Bay, FL

Hold a Valentine's Day dinner with a game, like the Newlyweds Game, but with older married couples.

Chad – Apache Junction, AZ

Charge admission to a talent show featuring your youth group.

Tyler – Lakewood, CO



YOUTH PASTOR'S WIFE KISSING BOOTH.

Jason – Lakewood, CO

Run a golf tournament. It will usually bring in over a thousand dollars or more. Solicit gifts from the community and have a silent auction as well. You can get as creative as your church will allow.

Tony – Medina, NY

Congregation Spaghetti Dinner

Area stores donate food so the youth group can offer the entire congregation a free spaghetti dinner. During the dinner, there is also a pie or dessert auction (silent or the traditional way, depending on if you have a good auctioneer handy). If a pie auction, you have youth, or the youths' parents bake a pie/dessert to have auctioned off. A huge seller is a "Pies for a Year" (one pie a month – have congregation members sign up to help with this). This also acts as a great intergenerational ministry as the youth and "older members" get to interact with each other more intentionally.

Julie – Bozeman, MT

Spaghetti feed or other type of food. Also put on a free concert with a volunteer. People always enjoy donating more when there is a good organization it is going to.

Leslie – Brentwood, CA

Sunday Afternoon at the Movies

Purchase the viewing license for Christian movies and offer a Sunday afternoon matinee targeting the adult population with a suggested donation for the youth ministry for the mission trip fund.

Donna – Flagstaff, AZ

CHILI COOK-OFF WITH TALENT SHOW

Chad – Apache Junction, AZ

SERVICE

Create an account in the church budget called “Service-Based Scholarships.” Parishioners give to the account. The youth staff finds non-profits or special needs projects where we can line up work. The money from the account then goes into the students’ personal youth account. (1) The gift from parishioners is then tax deductible. (2) The work at the non-profit or the special needs project is free to the organization/person. (3) The students are able to get money. That’s a win-win-win.

Derru – Nappanee, IN

We pair up our youth with members from the church who need chores/work done (lawn mowed, house cleaned, etc.). It gives the youth personal time with adults at church while giving the youth a chance to raise money for activities.

Tom – Garland, TX

RECYCLING

Ryan – Lathrop, CA

Pre-sell sub sandwiches for Super Bowl Sunday, get the produce donated, and have the kids make them. We sell 15-inch sandwiches for \$12 each.

Noel – Kansas City, MO

WE HOLD A
BABYSITTING DAY IN
EARLY DECEMBER SO
PARENTS CAN GET
SOME CHRISTMAS
SHOPPING DONE!

Sarah – San Diego, CA

SERVICE BOARD

Church members post on a bulletin board odd jobs or service projects for around their home and a price they would pay for the service. Youth take the postings and sign up to do the task for the donation.

Sean – Cochran, PA

FREE CAR WASH: Students get people to pledge a donation amount per car – or people can offer a set amount donation. Students then wash cars in the community for free. They get sponsored per car they raise; therefore, if a person sponsors \$1 per car and the students wash 100 cars, that person will donate \$100.

Mitchel – Kapolei, HI

We had people check in their keys before church, and we washed their cars during the service and returned their keys after church. We raised almost \$800 in one day! (two services) and the kids got to skip worship and Sunday School for a week, which they kinda liked. :) I've also heard of churches having people sign up for car-detailing during worship services – cleaner cars, more money, but potentially a longer-running fundraiser to get everyone served.

Karen – Mission, KS



CREATIVE ASKS

3

144 ENVELOPES

Put 144 envelopes in the narthex or back of the church, numbered from 1–144 (with \$ in front). So \$1, \$2, etc. Ask church members to make a donation with that amount of money in it. If every envelope got filled, it = \$10,800

Janet – West Covina, CA

NOISY SUNDAY

Have students walk through church after a service and collect spare change, jingling the cans through the church. Our church does this once a month.

Laura – LaVerne, CA

THE MONEY WALL

Put 200 envelopes on a wall with dollar amounts written on the outside (starting at \$1 and going to \$200) and place the wall outside church and invite church members to take an envelope and place the amount written on the front of the envelope in the envelope and return it to the youth minister. Place needs and prayer requests inside the envelope. The person becomes a prayer partner with the student and it's an easy way to raise a ton of money.

Ricc – Brandon, FL

ENVELOPES

Take 100 envelopes (or as many as you want) and number them “1” to [however many envelopes you have]. Someone takes an envelope with a number on it. That number is how much they donate.

Jaymes – San Juan Capistrano, CA

THE NEWLYWED GAME

Invite your mature ministry group to come to a free night of a game show of The Newlyweds Game and serve free desserts. Invite well-known couples to build more people coming. Have a straight freewill offering afterward. Put some \$10 or \$20 bills in the *bottom of the baskets to inspire people.*

Jim – Ann Arbor, MI

SHAREHOLDERS

We sell shares in the mission project for \$25–\$30 per share. Each share also provides the shareholder with one ticket to the shareholders' banquet which is held about 2 weeks after the completion of the project. One member of the team from the project is the "host" at each table to share personal stories and the program is filled with video & pictures. So each shareholder gets both a personal connection with a team member and a visual understanding of what the project accomplished.

Dave – Grand Prairie, TX

1–50 ENVELOPES

Labeled 1 dollar through 50 dollars. The most anyone pays is 50 bucks. Also, our youth group name is 212 Student Ministries, so we ask our church members to give \$2.12 per week. If 100 sponsor, it totals \$12,000.

Mark – Kings Mountain, NC

ARRESTED FOR A CAUSE

Host invites friends and family to a BBQ/dinner to be "arrested" for the cause of stopping child sex trafficking. Guests set their own bail target, then phone their contacts for donations towards their "bail."

Barbara – Syracuse, IN

In “big church,” put index cards numbering 1–50 and then go by 5’s after that (e.g. 55, 60, 65) all the way to 100. Ask congregation to take a card and match the number on the card with a dollar amount of donations. You’ll end up with a good amount of donations after that.

Scott – Foster City, CA

ADOPT-A-MILE

Figure out the mileage for the mission-trip and how much each mile should cost. Have donors pay for the trip by the mile.

Greg – Chattanooga, TN

THE BLACK TIE UN-FUNDRAISER

People buy a ticket for \$50 to stay home. Put it on a busy night and let them simply make a donation without having to actually “do” anything.

David – Visalia, CA

How about a rocking chair fundraiser where the youth have to sit in a rocking chair and keep it rocking for a period of time. I did one as a youth and we had teams of three keeping a rocking chair rocking for 24 hours. So much fun.

Julee – Fort Irwin, CA

COIN CHANGE BOTTLES

You can get cheap reusable plastic water bottles and have your congregation fill them up and drop off their change throughout the year. It works well and the water bottles can be a church fundraiser by themselves.

Sean – Yuba City, CA



SALES AND AUCTIONS

4

SALES

CHRISTMAS TREE LOT

We presell tickets for the trees, then we actually have a lot where the parents can pick out their tree.

Kyle – Temecula, CA

People from our church donate any items (except for clothes!) and we hold a yard sale. The proceeds go to missions.

Rebekah – Los Angeles, CA

SELLING TICKETS TO RAFFLE OFF AN IPAD.

Heidi – Lakewood, CO

Have a youth night where you make Duct-Tape wallets. Be sure to make popular color combinations. Then, have each student sell them for \$3–\$5 after school, before school, at events, etc.

AJ – Galt, CA

COINS FOR YOUTH

Fill M&M Minis tubes with quarters to raise money. Buy a box of M&M Minis from Smart & Final (or similar store). A box of 25 is \$24.99, or \$1/

tube. Print your own label explaining the event and process of filling the tube (standard 4x3" mailing labels work great!). Sell the tubes for \$1 (leave the candy in there) to make your money back and eliminate any loss. People eat the candy and put their change in the tube. Bring it back when it's full. If they fill it with quarters, it should hold about \$21.75. At a small church of 300 people, we raised about \$2,000 (net, gross was more like \$2,500).

Brian – Minden, NV

We are a small Christian company that is advancing our mission of changing our culture to spending the first moments of the day with our Lord... And His Coffee. We have a special fundraising program that is done online and is easy for youth groups to raise funds for mission projects and other efforts. 10 youth selling 10 bags of coffee each – 4 times a year = \$2000 profit. Each fundraiser has a special representative assigned to it to guide each step. We recommend Coffee Tastings and then take orders. We have many other suggestions as well. We are a creative, out-of-the-box-thinking company. Turn around time on orders is about two weeks. Please visit our website at: www.hiscoffeeco.com/155.html

Mary Jo – Escondido, CA

PUMPKIN PATCH:

Our church holds a pumpkin patch every October. This year we raised 20,000 for our youth group. We sold \$50,000 worth of pumpkins to our community.

Jay – Ft. Meyers, FL

180 FUNDRAISER CARDS

The cards are \$10 each; when the kid sells the card they get \$5 plus prizes.

Brittany – Tempe, AZ

CRAWFISH BOIL

What has worked best for us in Louisiana is CRAWFISH BOILS! We boil about 800 pounds and always run out! Good Luck!

Steven – Crowville, LA

Have the young people do projects / craft ideas they are good at and auction or sell their creation for their youth group.

Brenda – Nassau, Bahamas

MixedBagdesigns.com sells go-green, reusable bags. You get 50% of the profit... a great fundraiser.

Jaime – Tamoia, FL

OPPORTUNITY DRAWING BASKET

Create several baskets and sell tickets for people to win the baskets.

E. Jones – Dallas, TX

RUMMAGE/GARAGE SALE

Take donations, sell booth space and run a concession. Maximize your earning potential in a single event.

Nik – Temple, TX

TRIVIA TABLE NIGHT

(loosely based on a group Trivial Pursuit game)

People may purchase individual admission or whole tables. There may also be an opportunity to donate at the end. This is not original from me. This idea came from a fellow YM in town.

John – Fort Payne, AL

CINNAMON ROLL FUNDRAISER

We always have a cinnamon roll fundraiser – homemade old church recipe – made by the teens and volunteers, preordered by members of the congregation and sold by the dozen for \$8. Raised enough for the whole group (25) to get over half their trips to Belize paid for.

Sarah – Alexandria, MN

**PRODUCTS
FROM EMERGING
COUNTRIES THAT
CONNECT KIDS WITH
A CAUSE AND RAISE
FUNDS AT SAME TIME.**

Glennis – McDonough, GA

Sell PartyLite candles as a fundraiser. For details, visit <http://www.partylite.com/en-us/Pages/fundraisers/fundraisers.aspx>

Julie – McMinnville, OR

Selling students for service to elderly in church. Rent a student per hour. Make sure to have a lot of adult supervision (youth pastor, parent or adult volunteer) when students conduct the job. Also make sure to let the parents know the student will be working and make sure to negotiate the hourly rate beforehand.

Jeremy – Cumming, GA

LEMONADE STANDS ON WEEKDAYS.

Sarah – Ft Irwin, CA

AUCTIONS

We do a “Chocolate Buffet” each year. We fancy up a room in our church and have a crepe station and three or four fancy chocolate desserts. People pay \$25, but it’s a pretty big experience. We include valets, live entertainment, a coat check and childcare. It’s lots of work, but is a great payoff and a ton of fun!

Tim – Surrey, British Columbia

BAKED GOODS AUCTION

The youth each bake 3–4 homemade cakes, pies or other scrumptious goodies. The Sunday before Thanksgiving, we have a live auction. All the desserts are auctioned off. The church members love it, because they have a selection of desserts, already made for them, to serve

with their Turkey feast! We have never made less than \$4,000. One stipulation that helps get a higher price for the most-desired item: We only have 2–3 available, made by the best youth/parent cooking team, so people bid very high for a chance to take one of these coveted items home! (It should be noted that we raise a large amount of \$ for such a small church.)

Sheri – Lamesa, TX

COMEDY NIGHT

We have great success with doing a Comedy Night with the adults and then doing a Student Auction that night as well. We serve a dinner during the comedy portion and then dessert during the Student Auction. So far, no one has choked on their food laughing too hard. :)

Brian – Chuluota, FL

SOUP & SANDWICH LUNCHEON

We do a yearly soup and sandwich luncheon, partnered with a dessert auction. All of the homemade soups and desserts are donated by church members; we just provide the sandwiches. One of our youth parents is an actual auctioneer and helps make this event a lot of fun for everyone involved. Desserts are auctioned off while church members eat lunch.

Mike – Godfrey, IL

BASKET AUCTION

Go get different products from businesses in the area such as paint, makeup, gift cards, Y membership, etc. Put a mixture of things in baskets and then auction each basket mixture.

Marty – Greenville, OH

YOUTH AUCTION

Get the youth to auction off themselves to church members to do yard work, pet sitting, babysitting. Or, have the congregation bring items to auction, such as gift cards, gift baskets, baked goods, etc. Then have a silent auction with a meal to peak the interest of the congregation.

Jamie – Waco, TX

MEN'S BAKE-OFF

Youth get MEN of the church to bake an item for them. Then, the entire church gets together, and auctions off the items. It's very funny to see what the men will come up with. We actually take all of the money raised and split it up evenly among the students who participate.

Tim – Childress, TX

SOUP COOK-OFF AND SERVANT AUCTION.

Ashley– Ripon, CA

DINNER AND DESSERT AUCTION

The youth group serves lunch after church on Sunday. We charge \$5 per person or \$20 per family. We ask volunteers from the congregation to donate homemade desserts to be auctioned off. We have had a professional auctioneer for some because he makes it even more fun.

The bidders get into battles with each other and sometimes pay \$300 dollars for a pie.

Suzie – Heath, TX

RENT-A-YOUTH AUCTION

Auction off your youth to members of the congregation for whatever timeframe you designate. The youth are then, in turn, helping with the fundraiser and the congregation is getting something in return. This works great if you pair it with a dinner or something like that. Make it fun!

Andrea – Naples, FL

SERVANT SALE

Students are “auctioned” off to church members to perform various tasks of service for them – work on their homes/yards, car washing, repairs, etc.

Andrew – La Verne, CA

A THEMED YOUTH AUCTION!!!

Scooter – Kenner, LA

PIE AUCTION

Have members of the congregation bake pies and bring them to church on a set Sunday. Have a silent auction for them. This is easy to plan for. (Just put up signs and include them in the bulletin, etc.) Have the

auction following worship. It can be a lot of fun. Have bid sheets next to each pie. It's a little work and a big return. (You'd be surprised how much some people will pay for a pie to help the youth!)

Dean – Cannon Falls, MN

Have a Silent Auction where students donate things they've made or things that have a monetary value to them (like an X-Box 360) that they sacrifice for the cause you're raising money for. You can include a bake sale, student groups who will work for donation, etc.

Chris – Nappanee, IN

We host an all-church potluck to encourage the entire community to come to something, then we host a dessert auction where each student prepares their best dessert and we auction them off. Then, we auction off "pastor pies." That means we auction off pies to pie each of the pastors in the face.

Ryan – Redding, CA

We go around to different organizations (such as sporting goods stores, small businesses, etc.), and we ask for donated items and auction those things off.

Garret – Akron, OH

YOUTH AUCTIONS

The public donates items, and we auction them off!

Fred – San Diego, CA

AUCTION OFF YOUTH TO DO WORK PROJECTS FOR A GIVEN AMOUNT OF TIME.

Thad – McMinnville, OR

MORE IDEAS

This is not a fundraising idea, just an idea to improve your overall funds while fundraising. You can make a lot of fundraisers into “a-thons”! For example, doing your typical car wash for donation might earn you \$300–\$500, but if you also have students take challenge sheets around their social circles earning anywhere from a nickel to a quarter per car, you can increase that take to \$2,000 after they collect. At a nickel a car times 100 cars, that’s \$5 more toward that student’s camp or mission trip. Multiply that by 10 people who agreed to a nickel per car and

now it's \$50! If you have 20 students participating, that's \$1,000! And remember, that's the low end! If you average a dime per car, your 20 students each got \$100 and your fundraiser was more fun and raised more funds!

Scott – Minden, NV

The idea is calling a local goodwill and seeing if they will pay per truck of items. The local Goodwill by us will pay per truck of stuff.

Grady – Rancho Cucamonga, CA

Sell chocolate bars, or maybe a sponsored marathon run? CAR WASHES all summer long!

Will – Brentwood, CA

Do a fundraiser using Starving-2-Serve. Half the proceeds go to feed the hungry overseas and half goes to feed the hungry in your own community. Get more info at <http://outsidethebowl.org/?p=581>

Lanikai – Oceanside, CA

PAINTBALL FUNDRAISER

Students and volunteers become targets in a makeshift paintball course (i.e. ducks to shoot) 50 feet to 100 feet away from a table where people can pay \$5 for 50 shots from a paintball gun. All volunteers wear protective masks and taunt the shooters like crazy.

Roger – Tulsa, OK

CHURCH PHONEBOOK

We are in a church that is pretty well known in the area. We recently did a Churchwide “Yellow Pages”. We had tons of people within the church purchase ads, as well as people calling in from the community to advertise in it. We raised about \$8,000.

Bill – Mobile, AL

AMERICAN IDOL CONTEST, DANCING WITH THE STARS CONTEST

Lyndsay – Millsboro, DE

Use Crowdrise.com to set up viral online fundraising for your mission teams.

Carl – Detroit, MI

DODGEBALL TOURNAMENT!!!

Shane – Bartlesville, OK

Charging to hit a car with a sledgehammer

Mack – Oke, OK

ABOUT YOUTHWORKS MISSION TRIPS

YouthWorks believes short term youth mission trips can bring life change to youth, a community and the Church. Within a relatively short period of time, your own life and a stranger's life can be powerfully changed through the desire to give to a community. Your presence during a mission trip speaks more than a thousand words through your simple love and willingness to serve. YouthWorks believes in stories – in telling Jesus' story, in listening to other's life stories and in bringing our stories together to transform hearts; a mission trip is the perfect time to tell those stories.

There are countless physical and spiritual needs in communities today – in your own backyard, across the country, in big cities, on Reservations, in small towns and across borders. Short term missions are a means to visualize needs in other communities and bring that recognition back to serve in your own home. After week spent in service, you will leave transformed from the love, strength and resilience you find in those you meet. Short term missions are often more life changing and impacting for participants than those you came to serve!