



6 REASONS PEOPLE ARE LEAVING YOUR CHURCH



SOLUTION GUIDE

The ministry ideas, how to's, tips and advice you need to keep people at your church. PLUS... how our software, Realm®, can help you achieve this ministry goal.

You just had another amazing service, the sermon was on point, the worship was uplifting, no kids were injured or lost during the entire service, and giving was up! Can you say, "Winning!"?

Do you remember that one family that came for Easter? They were young, friendly, had a couple cute kids, and all systems were a "go" the Sunday they came. Then they came back in the fall. After that, where in the world did they go? Everyone on your team talked to them; most people said they made a great connection with them, and yet, they never returned. Do you know where they went?

You know that feeling you get when a church member asks you about so-and-so who was attending for a few months but who hasn't been around in a while? Come on, you know. Your stomach drops, you gear up to act like it's no big deal, and your mind races for an excuse; but on the inside, you're feeling defeated, dejected, and down.

No matter how great your church is, people will always leave. When they have poor reasons for leaving, you're left to simply assume that your church, your message, your worship, and your connections just aren't good enough. But that's not entirely true. There is something you can do!

We want to reveal to you the areas of your assimilation process and overall ministry that might need some attention. We don't want anyone else unknowingly falling through the cracks at your church.

These might not be all the reasons, but chances are that a few people you've met have never made a return voyage to your church because...

**PEOPLE ARE
LEAVING YOUR
CHURCH, AND
YOU DON'T
KNOW WHY.**

THE FIRST IMPRESSION WAS A BUST

Statistics reveal that people know whether or not they will join your church or be a part of anything within the first 30 seconds; sometimes even before they walk through the door. Most likely, people evaluate your signage from the moment they drive on to your campus. If newcomers are not easily directed where to turn in or park, they will gain a negative opinion of your church, without even giving it a chance.



FIRST IMPRESSIONS:

Do you have adequate signage to direct people where to park? When people get out of their cars will they know where to find your church's visitor center? Children's ministry? Bathrooms? Where worship service will be held? How about where to receive prayer? Does your church have an area near your foyer designated for guests?

If you just serve up to visitors a good message and decent worship - and if their kids have a good time in children's ministry - that's all that matters, right? You wish.

Although it is true we desire people to encounter God through their worship experience, there are practical ways we can create a more inviting atmosphere.

First impressions are everything. It is said, "You only get one time to make a first impression." However, every once in awhile, people may be forgiving and extend grace for a poor presentation of your campus. In those first few moments where we may have fallen short in the first impressions department, it all can be redeemed with a warm, kind, and friendly greeting. You want the best people on your welcome team. These are the people who are social butterflies, who love to smile and can strike up a conversation with just about anyone. It may be good to allow people to serve in different ministries in your church who are just getting their start, but make sure they are ready. The most important thing everyone in your church can do is make people feel welcome.

Realm can assist with creating a great first impression by allowing you to map out greeting and follow-up processes. With it, you can create a step-by-step journey for every person at your church. You'll be able to clearly communicate with your team and help your leaders put the right people in place to make a great first impression.

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IT WAS THE KIDS

Your children's ministry can be that straw that broke the camel's back in regards to a family's decision to stay at your church. Most of the time it's not even what we think. You may have great Bible study curriculum, great teachers and volunteers, but if you do not have a modern and safe child check-in system, it's no wonder that family decided to jet and never return. When parents see that their children are safe, secure, and protected through your children's ministry, a great Sunday school lesson just adds value to what they already value the most - their kids.

Realm offers your church the ability to centrally manage the child check-in process that tells the parents you care about their kids just as much as they do.

THEY NEVER HAD A CHANCE

It happens time and time again. You offer these amazing resources, classes, small groups, services, and outreach opportunities to the members and newcomers through your church. You, your pastor, and your lay leaders are excited about what God has given you as His church to help meet people's holistic needs to serve your local community. Unfortunately they can just fall through the cracks simply because they couldn't find information and didn't know how to plug into serving.

There were a number of studies that came out in the 80's that highlighted three different types of learning styles. You have every type of learner in your church! You have the person who can't function without the worship lyrics on the screen or sermon slides as the pastor preaches (visual), the person who loves hearing announcements or the sermon multiple times (audio), and the person who loves when the pastor does illustrations and loves to serve (hands-on).

No matter how accommodating you are as a church, people are just never satisfied and someone usually falls by the wayside. One of the main resources the church is responsible for providing is information. At its core, that information should be about how to know God and enter into personal relationship with Him through His Son, Jesus Christ. When it comes to initiatives, outreaches, events, and churchwide campaigns both information and people can get lost in the shuffle. Whether the people you serve are audio, visual, kinesthetic learners, or a combination of styles, you need to find ways to get them the information they need to make a decision to return.

**HARD AS
YOU TRY,
YOU CAN'T
PLEASE
EVERYONE.**

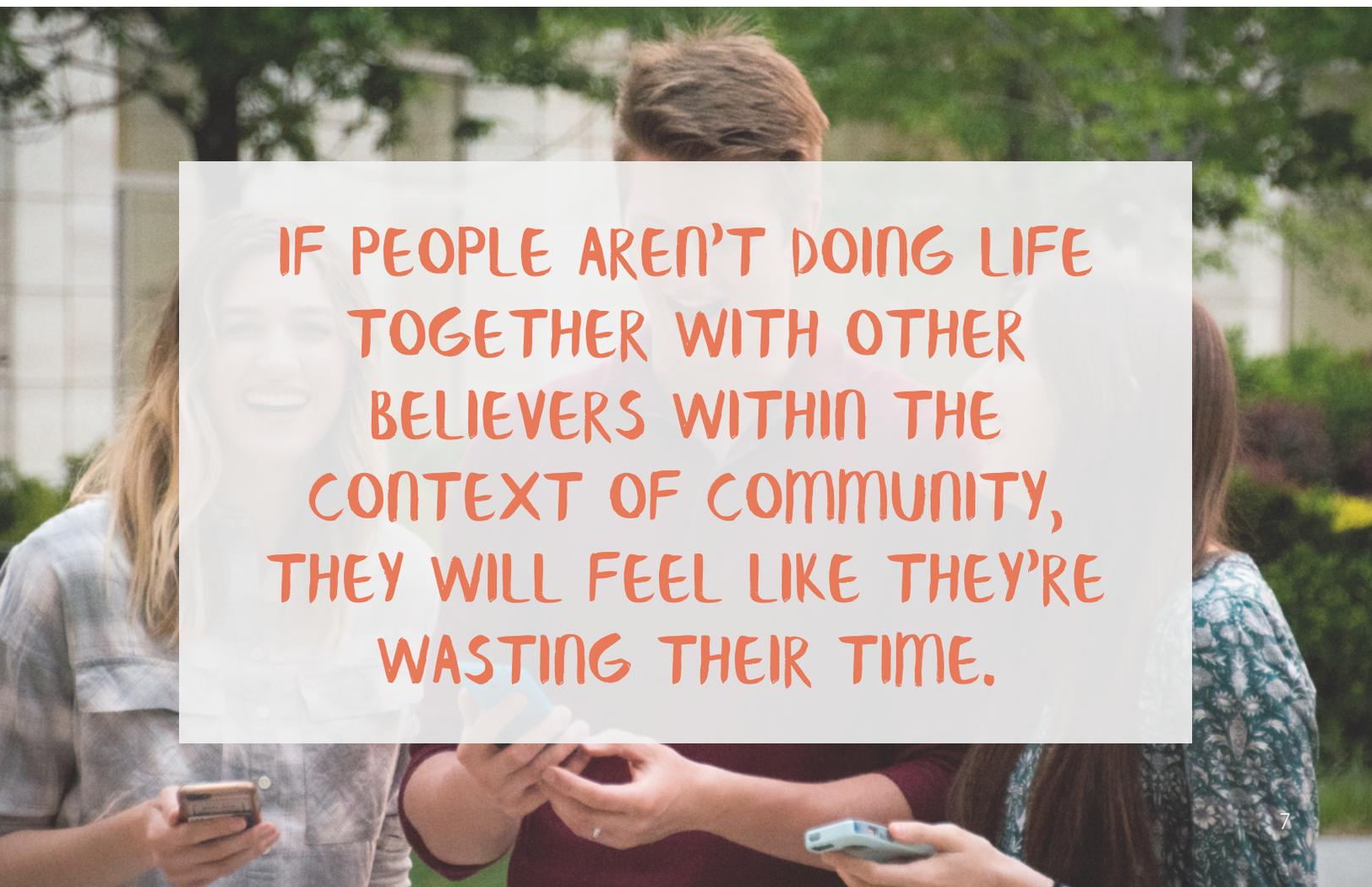
Realm can help with this by helping you and your ministry with its communications tools.

Communicate more efficiently by posting your announcements, sending targeted emails, or leaving messages on group walls.

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GROUPS DIDN'T STICK

A church with small groups may thrive in community but that doesn't mean community magically happens. Building community has to become a part of your church's culture. Christianity was never meant to be lived out alone. Even if you're good at community, some people may feel isolated. When their sense of community is not being fulfilled through their local church, they may go elsewhere to find it.

A photograph of a group of young people outdoors. In the center, a young man with brown hair is looking down at a smartphone. To his left, a young woman with long blonde hair is smiling and looking towards the camera. To his right, another young woman is partially visible, also looking at a phone. The background shows green trees and a building. A semi-transparent white box with orange text is overlaid on the center of the image.

IF PEOPLE AREN'T DOING LIFE TOGETHER WITH OTHER BELIEVERS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNITY, THEY WILL FEEL LIKE THEY'RE WASTING THEIR TIME.

People who feel going to church can be monotonous and mundane don't usually stick around for long. Most people desire to be connected and have the feeling they belong. Community is one of the primary reasons many people come to church, and lack of community is one of the primary reasons people are leaving your church. It is possible your church doesn't provide enough opportunities for people to engage in community through meaningful relationships. It is possible that people don't know what's going on. Your church must have a clear vision for small groups and create opportunities for people to pursue relationships with other believers. Poor communication and lack of vision can rob your church of a God-given opportunity to cultivate Christ-centered, vibrant community.

Realm's Groups feature allows leaders to define ministry areas, create small groups, build teams, and assign leaders under the oversight of a specific ministry area. In addition, Realm can also help create initiatives for outreach. Your ministry extends past your walls and reaches into your immediate community and beyond.

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THEY WERE NEVER FULLY VESTED

When people are a part of something bigger than themselves, it gives them a sense of purpose and fulfillment. It's one thing to attend church every Sunday, but when people hear what God is doing through your local church, they can't help but want to be a part of it. However, some people just continue to stay in the same cycle. They never really convert from an attendee to a member. And they may be those people who view giving as paying membership dues. Some people are under a religious yolk and give out of a wrong motivation; they give seeking to be repaid or to get things from God. If only they knew God's heart and how that mindset couldn't be further from the truth. Luke 6:38, says, "Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you." Our God is generous. He is a God of abundance, and He loves to give. "He so loved us that He gave..." We are to be imitators of God. Our generosity in giving is a demonstration of God's character

and a response to what He has done for us. Not only does our giving reflect God's character to the world, it results in increased faith for us. God doesn't want or need our money. He wants our hearts. Once He has our hearts, you and the people you lead won't hold anything back modeling supernatural generosity as God did for us by giving His one and only Son. Giving is an act of worship, and Realm can help with that by taking the limits off of your giving. Realm offers tools for all kinds of giving and accounting. Realm's Giving feature allows you to set up funds, enter batch contributions, view reports, send out statements via email or mail, and more.

WHEN PEOPLE ARE GIVING TO YOUR CAUSE, THEY'LL BE INVESTED FOR THE LONG HAUL.

6

YOU MAKE THEM UNCOMFORTABLE

How many times have you been in an uncomfortable situation? Well, church is no different. How often do people end up going to church only to feel like God, through the message, was reading their mail? Not only that, but depending on the preacher, denomination, or subject matter, a person could come to church expecting to be encouraged, enlightened, and inspired only to hear that something they've done at some point in the past qualifies them to be thrown into hell. At times the truth at church causes spectators and seekers great shame. "Hellfire" preaching is not the only reason people enter God's house and experience feeling uncomfortable. For many, even in grace-filled environments, this is the first time they've had to confront issues of faith.

We will all be challenged at some point in our lives and this is, unfortunately, another reason people leave your church. In the Bible, we read at certain points Jesus said some really hard things to people.

There are times, no matter how gentle or cautious you are in presenting the truth of the gospel to someone, that a person won't stand to be edified. They become upset you're bringing their own personal struggles or questionable beliefs to the forefront to be discussed. These are the moments you want to be able to walk alongside your people, keeping connections strong.

Faith is a journey, and we're not meant to walk through our relationship with God alone. Following up with someone who is hurt or struggling allows you and your ministry to monitor their progress and help them get connected. Realm can help by providing discipleship Pathways to help guide people through step-by-step processes in your church.

**CHANCES ARE,
YOU'RE DOING
A LOT OF
THINGS RIGHT.**

Chances are, you're doing a lot of things right, but you also have some changes to make within your church. The goal is to have newcomers, visitors, and members stick around long enough to see God transform their lives through His Son, your church, your groups, your interactions, and your prayers. Realm is in the business of equipping churches to do real ministry.



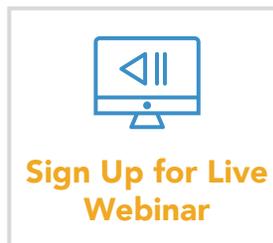
Throughout this guide, you have seen several ways that Realm helps churches reach new people and manage the life and operations of a church. We're excited to share more about our revolutionary ministry tool, Realm.

Realm provides solutions that will make your ministry and life way easier. It is cutting-edge church management software that combines administration, accounting, and community into one system. It also connects your entire church and personalizes each person's involvement in your ministry.

We'd encourage you to explore all that Realm makes possible by taking a demo, walking through a self-guided tour, or speaking with an associate today!



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