10 THINGS GROWING CHURCHES WILL DO IN 2022

This list has been compiled by analyzing the experiences and practices of growing churches. While it's true that other things could also be added to this list, we've observed that these **10 things** are the most important activities growing churches will pursue in 2022.

1 GET PAST THE SURFACE

Putting on a show that doesn't hit home with real-life issues transparently is no longer desirable to the average church-goer. With an ongoing global pandemic creating uncertainty and loss, people seek a church that addresses these issues and provides them with solace and fellowship.

Authenticity will attract and keep more people - especially millennials and Gen Z - than any surface-level ploys to entertain.

Growing churches are finding ways to share real testimonies, tackle tough issues, and speak plainly about societal woes. The Church, of all institutions, must weigh in on what matters most and not shy away from engaging in discussions that are shaping our everyday lives.

Ideas to Implement:

- Speak plainly about real issues from the pulpit
- Ask and answer tough questions in groups
- Don't shy away from addressing the concerns of your team
- Avoid only asking questions you know the answers to
- Show how Scripture addresses all of the above

2 STAY IN PURSUIT

People come to church to find God, to find meaning, and to find community. If visitors discover that the church has lost its passion for mission, then it loses its appeal. People who come to your church are looking for something. They want to be taken on a journey of new life in Christ. This means churches have to be headed passionately in a well-defined direction.

A clear vision that pursues a meaningful mission is the most appealing thing to be part of.

Growing churches clearly articulate their mission and create a variety of ways for their people - both new and old - to get on board and stay in pursuit of what really matters. When your church is passionate about purpose, people will participate and stay committed to the journey.

Ideas to Implement:

- **Clearly–and often–articulate your mission from the podium**
- **Rework your website with your mission front and center**
- **Incorporate special services for spiritual pursuit**
- **Involve people in activities that display your vision**
- **Organize your calendar around your priorities**

3 RETHINK GROUP STRUCTURE

If church growth has taught us anything, it's that what worked in the past may not be productive in the future. Groups are no exception to this rule. COVID-19 and its effects on communication have changed the way people interact, the frequency they meet, and even the places they feel comfortable gathering. Whether it's a shift from home groups to virtual meetings, a change from weekly group studies to periodic collaborative advocacy, or even mid-week for something that maximizes the margins of a person's schedule, group structures need to change to keep up with a shifting societal culture.

Groups must move beyond weekly studies that enhance knowledge toward integral gatherings that incorporate a member's needs and life goals.

Growing churches are assessing the context in which they minister and adapting their groups program to meet people where they are, not where they want them to be. This might mean leveraging technology and adapting long-held ideas about the purpose of mid-week groups.

Ideas to Implement:

- **Move house groups to comfy church digs**
- **Don't require people to meet every single week**
- **Offer groups on weekends and mornings**
- **Use lessons that don't build on each other**
- **Support in-person groups with online communication**

4 THINK BEYOND THEMSELVES

People are aware that world needs can't be met by a single local ministry. As that awareness increases, so does the desire to seek answers and opportunities outside the walls of your church. What's more, when people see your church supporting other ministries, it does two beneficial things: 1) it improves your standing for being selfless, and 2) it allows people to engage outside your church without leaving your church.

Partnerships and collaborative ministry efforts give visitors and members an opportunity to be holistic disciples rather than isolated sycophants.

Growing churches are going above and beyond not only to partner with ministries that provide mutual benefit but also to support other churches and ministries with nothing in return. They understand the principle of sowing and reaping in spiritual wealth and influence. The shift is being made from church-building to Kingdom expansion, which in turn, also builds your church and expands your influence and impact!

Ideas to Implement:

- Support nearby schools with ongoing assistance and projects
- Pray for other area churches - even really close ones - during public services
- Have special offerings and donate it all to a ministry partner
- Share testimonies of how your help has aided ministry partners
- Allow leaders of other organizations to speak at your church

5 FULLY LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY

As we mentioned, people are looking for what's real and authentic. Sometimes it can seem that technology puts a barrier between people. But the truth is when technology is utilized fully, it actually provides incredible opportunities to make connections, inform, instruct, and communicate.

Technology exists to support and enhance - not detract from - real-life fellowship, worship, and growth.

Growing churches are harnessing every bit of technology available to create accessibility to all the things they offer and do. More than that, powerful management and communication tools are readily available to maximize the time of volunteers and staff, keep people in the loop, increase giving, and create pathways for discipleship and follow-up, plus more. Technology fills the gaps and connects people like never before.

Ideas to Implement:

- **Use church management software (ChMS) as much as possible**
- **Develop online belonging and discipleship pathways for people to follow**
- **Use online groups discussion tools for team collaboration**
- **Plan and post events in a shared calendar**
- **Obtain a church app that lets people engage with church life**
- **Stream worship services, events, and small groups**

6 REORGANIZE THEIR TEAMS

The Church has adopted some of the best practices that help teams do more with less. Decentralized offices, part-time roles, contact services, and role-based job descriptions are helping churches empower volunteers and staff.

A sound team structure should alleviate pressure, provide focus, and tie every role or function with the mission of the ministry.

Growing churches have been rethinking what it means to integrate volunteers and paid staff in a way that grows the team while centralizing leadership. Creating clear channels of communication and pairing them with well-defined expectations and desired outcomes have been giving teams what they need to function better and get more fulfillment from their work.

Ideas to Implement:

- Create role descriptions for every function, even volunteer roles
- Treat volunteers like staff, with expectations and resources
- Organize your teams around your vision and priorities
- Share your org chart with as many people as possible
- Find positions for people, not people for positions

7 FUNDRAISE DIFFERENTLY

Generational views on giving to churches - or any institution - have been ever-shifting. Younger generations give more to movements and causes, while older generations give more to trusted institutions. The Church is both but isn't always seen as such. New fundraising methods must include a narrative that explains the "why" and displays the outcomes.

Fundraising of the future incorporates a strong narrative to capture hearts and new giving tools to capture dollars.

Growing churches do two things related to fundraising incredibly well: 1) they always tie the giving to the story and why it matters, and 2) they provide every available option for making donations and make it very clear how to do so. It's important to provide inspiration and remove every barrier that stands in the way of giving. It's no longer okay to expect people to give to your church without telling them why, for what, and how.

Ideas to Implement:

- **Use a giving app for mobile giving**
- **Let donors manage their giving profiles**
- **Make recurring giving a high priority and promote it**
- **Create giving campaigns and pledges for specific initiatives**
- **Create videos and stories that show the impact of the church**
- **Teach on giving so people will give to teaching**

8 DEVELOP CREATIVE OUTREACH

Remember when Christians used to hand out Gospel tracts? It seems antiquated, right? Well, not so much anymore. It's just one example of how churches are using creative, and recycled, approaches to reaching their community. With the advent of digital communication comes the increased value perception of printed materials. Not only that, but also younger generations are okay to admit they are searching and that they need answers.

Churches that stand by in a world of searching people will be passed by for churches that find new ways to reach them.

Growing churches are dusting off and inventing new ways to get the Gospel front and center in people's minds. Whether it's service projects, handouts, social gatherings, or online media, it's important to provide answers to questions that people have - both stated and suspected. Your church will reach more people if you try something old again or do something new for the first time. The key is to think of whom you're reaching and to what they are responding.

Ideas to Implement:

- **Leverage a community analytics tool to identify evangelization and outreach opportunities**

- **Create handouts for your people to have ready**

- **Have an "invitation station" with reasons to invite friends to church**

- **Offer more information about the person's growth than your church's activities**

- **Invite non-church members to community service projects**

- **Leverage social media to reach an entirely new audience**

- **Update your website to include information for visitors and events and outreach opportunities**

9 CULTIVATE THEIR COMMUNITY

It used to be that you had your church friends and your non-church friends. Thankfully, those walls are being torn down and "community" is not as isolated as it once was. This means that ministries must accommodate a holistic community with people of faith and unchurched people.

Churches are responsible for cultivating and combining the communities inside and outside their organizational reach.

Growing churches see the opportunity in hosting events, activities, and gatherings that might have a spiritual component but are also welcoming to those who are far from faith. It's not about making things "attractional" as much as it is about fostering real relationships. Bonus: you will start doing things that your church people will be happy to invite their non-church friends to, leading to growth!

Ideas to Implement:

- **Resurrect a version of the potluck - a cheap, fun gathering around food**
- **Plan events after weekend services that anyone could attend**
- **Employ a group model that's inclusive and open**
- **Do more activities outside where everyone can see you**
- **Ask your people what their friends like, and then do that**

10 PRAY

Let's not forget that this whole thing you're embarking on is a spiritual endeavor. Our methods for establishing and growing His Church are all subordinate to God's will. As we pray and seek what He wants for His Church, we unlock the full potential of the work He's called us to.

So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.
- I Corinthians 3:7

Growing churches understand that they didn't get to where they are on their own. It was God who built their ministry. That's why they make time for prayer in leadership meetings, personal time, corporately, and in groups. What's more, they engage their people in prayer, which has the tendency not only to move things in the spiritual realm but also to align and empower their people to be fully committed to the vision God has given them. If you want your church to grow, start with prayer.

Ideas to Implement:

- Host a 24-hour churchwide prayer event
- Create an online private prayer group for sensitive requests
- Follow up with prayer requests and post answered prayers publically
- Incorporate prayer in as many gatherings as possible
- Teach, preach, and model a strong personal prayer life

What you do with this information is ultimately up to you. Chances are, you're probably already doing much of this. But hopefully, these ideas will help you rethink your approach to ministry and position your church as one of the fastest-growing churches in 2022.

And remember, we're here when you need us with more ministry resources and software to help move ministry forward.

Choosing the Right Ministry Partner

The know-how you need from experts you trust.

ACS Technologies is the original pioneer of Church Management Software (ChMS). We are firmly dedicated to serving local churches all over North America by providing the best-in-class ministry software and service solutions that help you fulfill Christ's mission for your Church.

Tools and support to strengthen churches.

We build great software, but we don't stop there. We have a "service-first" approach that truly sets us apart. With hundreds of dedicated support and consulting personnel, your staff can reach our team 24/7. We're in your corner to help you with the ministry challenges you face every day.

Ideas and solutions powered by integrity.

Integrity is real for us, and it means consistently being faithful stewards by doing the right thing for church success. We have earned the trust of pastors, church staff, congregants, our employees, and colleagues for over 40 years.

A plan to meet your needs and move your ministry.

We're not just interested in satisfied customers. We see ourselves as your real ministry partner and will work with you to make disciples that will last for an eternity. We're excited to talk about your goals, create a plan together, and set you up with the software, service, and resources you need.

We believe in YOU!

ACS Technologies believes in the local church. Over 75% of our team has experience serving in their local churches. We know firsthand that serving the Church means serving people, and we take seriously our commitment to helping ministries like yours achieve their God-given mandate - to make disciples in their communities, states, and across the world.

Let's Talk

We know the challenges of switching or implementing new technology and how that can be intimidating. But we also know the unbelievable changes that have happened within churches that have partnered with us for their ministry needs. Let's connect and see how we can assist you in the greatest thing you do - grow God's Kingdom.

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