**Ceeja’s Fundraising Tips and Challenges**

Fundraising can be overwhelming, but it is such a necessity for what we do in ministry. I am going to give you weekly tips and fun challenges to help you make the most of your fundraising experience and hopefully have a little fun.

**Step 1**: Whatever fundraisers, community activities, or anything else you may need your community’s help with, utilize social media! Find out if your community has a Facebook group (these usually get specifically down to the neighborhood name.) This is such a valuable tool for you to have instant access to the real people in YOUR neighborhood. Join the page and engage with the people. Be a neighbor. Be helpful. Be kind. As you find yourself doing fundraisers and community events at church, post and share them to the neighborhood page. If you’ve been lovingly interacting in the group, they will already be fond of you and will more than likely participate in your event or fundraiser.

**Step 1 Challenge:** Find your community/neighborhood’s Facebook Page and join it. Can’t find one? Great! Time to start one! It’s easy to do and make sure you are starting it as a yourself, not as the church. Then, invite anyone you know who lives in the neighborhood. Church members, friends, co-workers, anyone! The more people that join, the more they will be able to invite the neighbors that they know! You’ll be amazed at how fast it grows! You typically want to name the page something to fit the neighborhood/community of your church. Example: I live in Yukon, Oklahoma but we our church serves the neighborhood area of Surrey Hills. Therefore, it’s called the “Surrey Hills Neighbors” page.

**Step 2:** By now, you’ve joined or created a Community/Neighborhood Facebook Page! Congrats! It seems like something small, but my hope is that you will find this to be one of the greatest blessings to your ministry.

Let’s dive into our first fundraiser! Did you know you can raise money without asking people to give you money? WHAAAAT?!? Yes, it’s true. Many chains of Fast-Food restaurants have a fund-raising program for non-profits! You simply get ahold of them and set up an evening for your fundraiser. All you do is ask everyone you know to go eat there on that evening (everybody’s got to eat, right?) and mention your fundraiser and the restaurant donates a portion of those sales back to you! Different places donate different amounts, but they are out there!

The great thing about this type of fundraiser is that it’s a great starter. If you are more of an introverted person, or are just terrified of fundraising, this type of fundraiser does not require you to ask one person for money! It’s a great fundraiser for any church or intern!

**Step 2 Challenge:** This week, research and find a local restaurant that will do this type of fundraiser. Contact them and find out how to set it up. If they ask when you want to do the fundraiser, give yourself at least a couple of weeks to get the word out and create a Facebook Event. 😊 You can do this!

Hint: This is the most up-do-date list that I have. Make sure you tell them you are with your church (a non-profit) and want to do a fundraiser. 😊 I can’t guarantee all these places still participate, but you can do your own research. This is a great starting point! Enjoy!

* [Arby's](http://www.usbeefcorp.com/giving-back/#benefit)  
  US Beef Corp gives back 15% and owns many Arby's restaurants across the western part of the country from Illinois, Missouri, and Kansas to Idaho, Wyoming, and Colorado.
* [BD's Mongolian Grill](http://www.gomongo.com/community/fundraising/)  
  Great way to fundraise for churches, PTA, and other non-profit organizations.
* [Bertucci's](http://www.bertuccis.com/dining-dollars-fundraising)  
  Bertucci's DINING FOR DOLLARS allows your organization to enjoy a great meal and raise money for a great cause. Bertucci's is located in the northeast of the United States and gives back 15%.
* [BJ's Restaurant and Brewhouse Fundraisers](http://www.bjsbrewhouse.com/kids-and-families/fundraisers)  
  BJ's Restaurant and Brewhouse will host a fundraising event for your school, organization or charity. The standard fundraiser donates 15% of the total food and soft beverage purchase from guests who bring in flyers for your event.
* [Blaze Pizza](http://blazepizza.com/fundraising/)  
  Blaze pizza is located across the United States and provides 20% back to the organization.
* [Boston Market](http://www.bostonmarket.com/community/fundraising/)  
  Boston Market provides a 15% donation on sales. They provide you with a flyer and event tickets. Restaurants are located throughout the United States.
* [Bruster's Real Ice Cream](http://brusters.com/fundraising/)  
  Every Bruster’s Real Ice Cream store offers fundraising options. Find a local store in most states east of the Mississippi.
* [Buffalo Wild Wings](https://www.buffalowildwings.com/en/company/giving/)  
  BWW has their Eat Wings, Raise Funds initiative that helps out local organizations near BWW restaurants. In the Community Connections sections click on the Apply Now button for their form.
* [Buca di Beppo](http://www.bucadibeppo.com/fundraising/)  
  A Buca Fundraising Event will earn 15% for your non-profit organization. These Italian restaurants offer family-style dishes great for sharing with all the participants in your fundraiser.
* [Buona Beef](http://buona.com/fundraising/)  
  Chicago area Buona Beef restaurants have a Buona Benefits Night program, with 15% going back to the non-profit. If you like Italian Beef sandwiches that rival Portillos, this is your fundraiser.
* [Burger King stores operated by Tri-City Foods](http://www.heartlandfoodcorp.com/benefit_nights.aspx)  
  Tri-City Foods operates Burger King restaurants in six Midwestern states. They donate 20% of event sales (from a limited menu) to your not-for-profit organization.
* [California Pizza Kitchen](https://www.cpk.com/Company/Fundraisers)  
  CPK advertises 20% back through their fundraisers. CPK also has a great Scout program, where Scouts can make their own pizzas.
* [Cheeburger Cheeburger](http://cheeburger.com/fundraising.asp)  
  Cheeburger Cheeburger helps you every step of the way, from creating flyers to making the night fun.
* [Chick-Fil-A](http://www.chick-fil-a.com/Kids/Local)  
  Chick-Fil-A offers four types of fundraisers; check with your local store.
* [Chili's Give Back Events](http://www.qdi.com/chilis/Chilis.htm)  
  Chili's give back events provide a 15% return for all vouchers presented on the night of the fundraiser.
* [Chipotle](http://chipotle.com/email-us#philanthropy)  
  Chipotle offers in-restaurant fundraisers to certain types of nonprofits including K-12 school groups. An online application is required.
* [Chuck E. Cheese School Fundraisers](http://www.chuckecheese.com/events/fundraising)  
  Chuck E. Cheese School Fundraisers receive 15% on sales. This is a great fundraiser for early grade school students.
* [CiCi's Pizza Buffet](http://www.cicis.com/faq)  
  Cici's says to contact individual stores about fundraisers.
* [Culver's](http://www.culvers.com/)  
  Culver's restaurants are usually locally owned and the owners are usually kid friendly.
* [Elmer's Restaurants](http://eatatelmers.com/category/in-the-community/)  
  Not all Elmer's Restaurants participate in Restaurant Nights, so be sure to call your local Elmer's in the states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, and California.
* [54th Street](http://www.54thstreetgrill.com/fundraisers.html)  
  54th Street restaurants are located in St Louis and Kansas City, Missouri, and San Antonio and Dallas / Fort Worth, Texas. A fundraising event for your school, organization or charity can earn 15% of the sales.
* [Foster's Grille: Home of The Charburger](https://www.fostersgrille.com/community/)  
  Foster's "Dining for Dollars" program will give back 10% to your non-profit organization. Foster's Grille has family restaurants in Virginia, Florida, Maryland, and North Carolina.
* [Friendly's FUNraising](https://www.friendlysrestaurants.com/business/funraising/)  
  Friendly's typically run their in-restaurant fundraisers on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday.
* [Fuddruckers](http://www.fuddruckers.com/)  
  Another restaurant where I have seen advertisements for Fundraisers.
* [Go Roma](http://www.goroma.net/content/pdf/goroma_community.pdf)  
  Go Roma Community Partners, their fundraising program, makes it simple for organizations to raise money by planning an event and eating at Go Roma restaurants.
* [Greene Turtle Sports Bar & Grille](http://thegreeneturtle.com/fundraising-community-support)  
  The Greene Turtle Sports Bar & Grille helps local organizations through its Funds for Friends program on selected Tuesdays. This restaurant is in Virginia and Maryland.
* [Isaac's Famous Grilled Sandwiches](http://www.isaacsdeli.com/fundraising.asp)  
  A community night at Isaac's will earn your organization 25%. Isaac’s are located in south-central Pennsylvania.
* [Jamba Juice](http://www.jambajuice.com/partnerships/fundraising)  
  Jamba Juice offers beverages, smoothies, juices, and snacks. They offer discount cards and catering for fundraising events.
* [Jersey Mike's Subs](http://www.jerseymikes.com/news/giving.php)  
  Jersey Mike's recently opened a shop in our neighborhood and did a great job partnering with all the local schools.
* [Kona Ice](http://www.kona-ice.com/giveback-programs/)  
  All across the country, Kona Ice LOVES to give back to schools, sports teams and organizations. Since 2007, Kona has raised over $3 million for local communities. This is a little different in that Kona comes to your event.
* [Lone Star Steakhouse](http://www.lonestarsteakhouse.com/DineDonate)  
  Lone Star's Dine & Donate is an easy way to raise money for your charity. They will donate 15% of your guests' checks back to you.
* [Lou Malnati's Pizzeria](http://www.loumalnatis.com/fundraising)  
  Another favorite Chicagoland pizzeria offering a fundraiser night with 20% going back to the non-profit.
* [Maggie Moo's](http://www.maggiemoos.com/)  
  Call your local Maggie Moo's ice cream place to see if they participate in an event you can host that's called Celebrity Scoop Night.
* [Marie Callender's Restaurant & Bakery](http://www.mariecallenders.com/community-fundraising)  
  Marie Callender's offers two types of fundraisers: pie sales and dining-in (percentage policy for the latter not explicit on the website).
* [Margaritas Mexican Restaurant](https://www.margs.com/)  
  Margaritas Mexican Restaurant offers a unique and authentic Mexican dining experience featuring traditional Mexican recipes and decor.
* [Max & Erma's](https://www.maxandermas.com/donations-%e2%80%a2-fundraising/)  
  Max & Erma's advertise 20% return on their website and give some great tips for a successful fundraiser. Restaurants are located throughout the United States.
* [McDonald's](http://www.mcdonalds.com/)  
  Some local McDonald's have local nights. Check with yours, as this is always a kids' favorite.
* [Moe's Southwest Grill](http://www.moes.com/about-moes/community/)  
  Moe's makes fundraising for your non-profit organization fun and easy.
* [Ninety-Nine Restaurants](http://www.99restaurants.com/community/)  
  Ninety-Nine Restaurants' "Dining for a Cause" nights are great across the New England area.
* [Noodles & Company Fundraisers](http://www.noodles.com/)  
  Noodles & Company offers fundraising events yielding a percentage of sales. Contact a local manager for details.
* [Panda Express](http://www.pandaexpress.com/Fundraising)  
  Let Panda Express help you raise money for your school, organization, club or team. Tell friends and family to dine in or take-out at Panda Express and 20% of the event sales will be donated to your organization.
* [Panera Bread: Fundraising Nights](https://www.panerabread.com/en-us/company/fundraising-night.html)  
  Panera has a sliding scale for payouts with the top payout at 20%. On the minus side is that if you don't get at least 20 orders, then you don't get a dime.
* [Pei Wei Asian Diner](https://www.peiwei.com/local)  
  Pei Wei will donate 20% of proceeds to your non-profit organization that supports culture, art, and diversity. You can choose lunch or dinner fundraisers.
* [Pizzeria Uno Chicago Grill: Dough Raisers](http://www.unos.com/raisers.php)  
  Dough Raisers earn up to 20% of sales.
* [Portillo's](http://www.portillos.com/good/)  
  Chicagoland has been waiting a long time for this one. 20% return on a Portillo's hotdogs restaurant fundraiser.
* [Potbelly Sandwich Shop](http://www.potbelly.com/Company/FundraisingAndDonations.aspx)  
  Raise 25% for your not-for-profit organization by hosting a Restaurant Night. Or for smaller organizations, run a Shake Fundraiser.
* [Raising Canes](https://www.raisingcanes.com/canes-and-your-community)  
  Great chicken and 15% back for your event.
* [Red Robin Gourmet Burgers](https://www.redrobin.com/about)  
  An in-restaurant fundraiser is available for schools.
* [Rubio's School and Church Fundraisers](https://www.rubios.com/fundraisers/)  
  Rubio's offers fundraisers for schools, church groups, sports groups, philanthropic causes or other non-profit initiatives.
* [Sonic](https://www.sonicdrivein.com/)  
  Contact your local Sonic drive-in about whether they offer fundraising events.
* [Souplantation and Sweet Tomatoes](http://www.sweettomatoes.com/funraisers/)  
  Souplantation and Sweet Tomatoes advertise their Fun-Raisers. Give it a try if you have one in your neighborhood. 15% is returned to the organization.
* [Wendy's](http://www.wendys.com/)  
  Each local Wendy's is different. We always get a great crowd when going to our local Wendy's on a school night.
* [Yogurtini Fundraisers](http://www.yogurtini.com/fundraising/)  
  Yogurtini offers a delicious and fun way to raise money for your non-profit group. Located in Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska.

**Step 3:** Summer is right around the corner! Chances are, your entire community is excited for the season. Why not start thinking about an "end of school bash" for your community! Start planning now and you'll be surprised at how many people will come.

Here's some ideas for a community event that will get everyone excited!

Idea #1: have a cookout and host a talent show. Example: "Surrey's Got Talent"

Ask some community leaders to be judges and get locally donated prizes.

You can have a small entry fee to raise funds for your church or camp and sell concessions or have food trucks (which will donate 10-15% of their sales back to your church.

Idea #2: community softball game and cookout! Find local businesses to sponsor your fundraiser and your teams. They get their business names on the back of the t-shirts and you'll be amazed at how many adults out there love a good game of softball!

Idea #3: Have a Hawaiian luau and epic water balloon fight for the community. You would need the outdoor space for the water balloon fight, but what a fun way to start the summer!

Sell tickets to this themed community event and roast a 🐖. :)

Have hula dancing classes, games, and plenty of beach music for people to dance to. This is the perfect event to sell raffle tickets for donated prizes as well! By the way keep it BYOWB (bring your own water balloons). Because the only way to win a water balloon fight is to be the last team standing with ammo! :)

So much fun!! And think of all the relationships we can build while we are having fun with our neighbors!

**Step 3 challenge:** sit down with your Pastor and decide what a good event would be for your church to serve the community and raise funds at the same time. Keep it FUN for everyone. If it's fun, people will want to come!!

Make sure you name the event after your community, and NOT your church. Your church is SPONSORING the event for the community to enjoy!

Step 4, now that there you are in the groove of things, build a team, get creative, and get ready to raise funds while having FUN!

Here are a few ideas on fundraising for each month:

January: Host a “Soup or Bowl Sunday” at your church or local venue like a community center. Invite all of your church members to make huge crockpots of their favorite soups, corn bread, etc. Sell tickets for $5/piece to the local community and reach out to your local businesses to find raffle prizes!

February: Get together a group of 3 or 4 people who do not get embarrassed easily. Sell “Singing Valentines” or should I say “howling valentines” because these suckers sell for the embarrassment factor alone. 😊

March: Egg your home fundraiser! Offer to hide treat filled eggs in your neighbors’ front or back yards the night before Easter! This has been a great fundraiser for us!

April: Sell candy bars or bed sheets! There are some great fundraising companies out there that support non-profits and have great products! I am going to be selling the bed sheets very soon! They are amazing!

May: Host a “neighborhood” 5k event to your target neighborhood. Invite food trucks (who will donate a percentage of their sales IF ASKED and invite local business to help sponsor (provide a banner to advertise for them).

June: this is a big one….DO A NEIGHBORHOOD CAMP. This is not a typical fundraiser, but the relationships you will build in your community are invaluable to your future fundraising efforts! Trust me, just do it.

July: Host a 4th of July Celebration free to the public! Sell concession, glow sticks, etc. and have a blast!

August: School supply drive. Host a school supply drive in your neighborhood. Invite local business’s and neighbors to join you! Build a relationship with the principal of your local school. This is an invaluable event that will bring the neighborhood into your church as they notice the authentic love you have to serve your neighborhood.

September: Have a back to school Bash! Do any event you want. Give it a theme, invite food trucks, set up a raffle, and get creative!

October: This is one of my favorite months to do a fundraiser. Do a chili cook off event and pumpkin carving competition. For example, try to host a “chili chili bang bang” event open to the community. Make it free for people to enter their chili, and charge $3 a ticket for the community to come enjoy all the different chilis. The same day, you can have raffles or a silent auction. In addition, have a bunch of pumpkins. Have an epic real-time pumpkin carving competition that is free to enter (as long as they buy the pumpkin from you). 😊

Another October fundraiser would be a neighborhood trunk or treat. You can serve your neighborhood while raising funds at the same time. Have a load of inflatables and sell wrist bands to kids for $5-$10 each to give them unlimited access to all the inflatables throughout the day. Give each child so many FREE tickets to play carnival games, but then sell additional tickets. Have a concession stand, etc.

November: This is a great month to sell poinsettias or pies. There are fundraising companies that help non-profits sell these things for the holiday season (just google holiday fundraisers).

December: Go Christmas caroling, set up a live nativity, and set up a donation jar. You will be amazed how many people want to help. 😊