
Myth vs. Reality

The Surprising Truth About Church Capital Campaigns

Capital Campaign Impact: Church Health and Momentum

Church capital campaigns can generate a wide range of emotions. On one hand, campaign consultants talk glowingly about their recent success story. On the other hand, Pastors are worried that a campaign will actually be detrimental to the overall health of their church. So what is the reality?

Here at CGS, we decided it was time to bust the myths and find reality. To do so, we commissioned an independent agency (Arbor Research) to conduct a rigorous research project. Their study encompassed churches representing 17 different denominations.

The findings from the study were surprising. Many myths got busted. Here is one of the more significant discoveries:

Myth: *a capital campaign may harm church health by creating disunity which in turn may slow ministry momentum*

Reality: *73.9% of churches that conduct a capital campaign said that their congregational health improved as a result of the capital campaign.*

Church Health and Momentum - Something to Be Treasured!

A church family experiencing God's blessing of spiritual health and ministry momentum is a thing to be treasured. It is hard to achieve, and wonderful to experience when it exists, however it can also be easy to lose. Ministry impact is usually at its apex for churches in good health, and genuine spiritual and numerical growth is happening on a regular basis.

Why would a church that is experiencing health and momentum ever consider a capital campaign with its reputation as a possible "momentum killer"? Perhaps because the negative reputation is undeserved. What if a capital campaign is actually a catalyst to enhance spiritual health and ministry momentum?

The Reality

Our research found that the vast majority (73.9%) of churches that conduct a capital campaign say that their congregational health improved as a result of it. Our observation is that this unexpected positive outcome is a result of important “best practices” used in capital campaigns:

- Creating a compelling ministry vision – congregations tend to rally around and support projects with a clear vision to change lives.
- Providing bold leadership – the magnitude of the goal inspires church leaders to “step up their game”.
- Articulating specific goals – a clear goal helps galvanize the church family into action.

When the above elements are present in a capital campaign, it creates an amazing synergy. The capital campaign is not seen as interfering with ministry but rather propelling it forward.

The reality is that a capital campaign is a very positive "intervention" in the normal life cycle of church ministry. It can be the catalyst to improve church health and increase ministry momentum.