



SUCCESS STORIES

# 5 Factors That Drove San Diego Church of Christ's Giving to Grow by 23.8% in 18 Months using Tithe.ly

With humble beginnings, San Diego Church of Christ (SDCOC) was once a small church in Poway, Calif. Now averaging more than 1,700 in attendance on the weekend, this multigenerational church has four locations throughout San Diego.

by Tithe.ly Staff

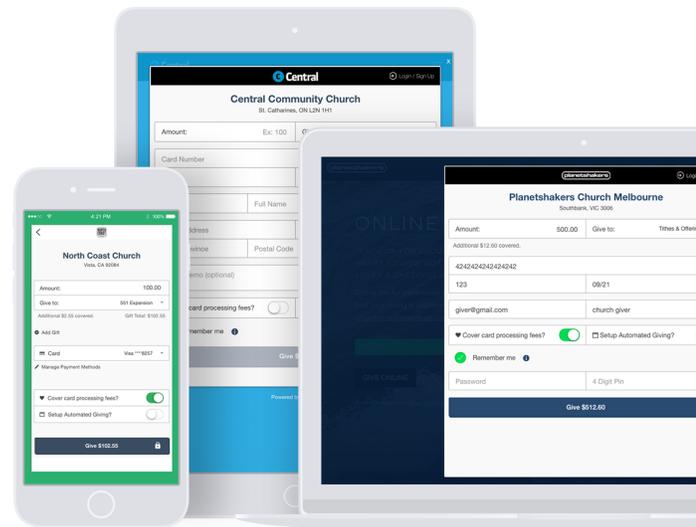
Lead Administrator Ray Schalk recalls a recent change that has helped SDCOC not only meet its monthly budget for 2017, but exceed it.

In late 2015, leaders at SDCOC decided it was time to revamp the church's online giving. Until that point, the church offered an online giving solution that was cumbersome to use and wasn't designed with a mobile-first giving experience in mind — something that's expected by members these days due to the influence of Amazon, Apple, Starbucks, Facebook, Uber and many others.

After due diligence, the SDCOC team chose Tithe.ly as their new digital giving provider.

According to Schalk, the ease of giving via mobile devices, direct ChMS integration, simple admin tools, and no setup/monthly costs were all key to the decision.

Next, SDCOC leaders designed a launch plan that showcased the new capabilities during their yearly kickoff workshop in January 2016.



## The path to better giving

Since upgrading to a mobile-first, modern giving solution more than a year and a half ago, here are a few of the key metrics the church has been tracking:

- **23.8%** growth in overall giving (dollars)
- **100.2%** growth in online giving (dollars)
- **51%** of all giving now comes in online — up **61.7%** from the previous system
- **23%** growth in the total number of givers (i.e., engaging new givers)
- **55%** of online giving is now set up as automated recurring giving
- **\$175** average gift size through online sources

Though a big improvement, these results didn't just "happen" by implementing a new technology solution; SDCOC leaders did five very important things:

### 1 They created a thorough roll-out plan.

A launch date was picked and a plan put in place to inform and educate the entire church. Starting with the yearly kickoff workshop, the leadership team put together a detailed video announcing Tithe.ly as the new giving platform.

Next, each campus assured the leadership team that an announcement would be placed for the next few weeks to remind members of the new giving options and encourage their use.

Finally, during the giving moment in the worship service, a slide was shown that presented the different ways people could give. From cash and checks in the plate, to mobile giving and text giving, members were reminded of their options in the moment of giving.

## **2 They kept the communications rolling.**

Once the big push was done, SDCOC leaders continued to inform the church about the new ways to give via email, weekly print bulletins and the website. Each communication channel kept the messaging in front of the church for a prolonged period of time. This ensured that regardless of attendance or if people “heard it the first time,” eventually every member of the church would know their options to give.

## **3 They gave it a personal touch.**

The transition from one digital giving system to another brings about unique challenges, one of which is transitioning individuals who set up recurring giving on the old system, to the new system.

The leadership team at SDCOC took a very personal approach to this by sending individualized emails, making phone calls, and even walking up to people on Sunday to let them know about the switch and what it meant for them to convert to the new giving system.

It took some time, but the effort was well worth it — they converted nearly every person to the new system. Now, more than 55% of the church’s online giving comes in through automated recurring gifts.

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## They reported out on financials.

Although not a new practice, the leadership team continued in full financial transparency by reporting weekly giving in the bulletin. Doing this helps everyone in the church stay current on where the church stands financially.

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## They continued teaching on sacrificial, joyful giving.

Again, this is not a new practice; it has been a vital part of the church's growth in giving. Continuing to teach the heart of Jesus to give sacrificially has been at the heart and core of it all. SDCOC has been teaching on generosity and sacrificial giving for years. Most recently, they taught a series based on The Treasure Principle by Randy Alcorn.

## Increased giving = increased ministry

Now, SDCOC is able to bring on more full-time and intern youth and campus ministry staff, which helps them maintain a focus on these important ministries. The church can also participate in supporting church plants around the Southwest and in new areas of San Diego. SDCOC has big dreams for reaching San Diego for Christ and making an impact in its community. Finally, the church has a huge heart for missions. The increase in funds gives leaders and members the ability to do more work in nearby Mexico.

Since implementing a more robust online giving solution, there's definitely excitement about the consistent increase in giving SDCOC has seen. There's even more excitement and faithfulness about how God intends to use the funds for His glory.



Learn how **Tithe.ly** can modernize and increase tithing in your church, just like San Diego Church of Christ did.

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