

“ We rob people of the joy of giving if we don’t talk about it.”

— George Wasson, Senior pastor and founder,

Faithpoint United Methodist Church

case study

Faithpoint United Methodist Church

70% Growth in Online Giving Leads to 20% Lift in Overall Donations



About Faithpoint UMC

Faithpoint United Methodist Church was founded in 2003 with a mission to make more and stronger disciples of Jesus Christ by connecting people to God and one another.

It strives to be a community of faith, hope, and love, and to be a church where people have the opportunity to belong, to believe and to become all that God created them to be.

Senior pastor and founder George Wasson describes the church as contemporary, relevant and relational, and its worship as celebratory and upbeat.

Established in 2003 in Floyds Knobs, Indiana, Faithpoint United Methodist Church is a mere teenager. When it comes to online giving, though, the church is far more mature than many of its peers: A significant majority of the congregation uses electronic giving and overall contributions increased noticeably after its adoption, says senior pastor and founder George Wasson.

Why has online giving been so successful at Faithpoint? Three reasons, Wasson says: **culture**, **communication** and **convenience**.

Getting Started

Wasson first learned about electronic giving at Catalyst, a major church leadership conference held in a number of locations across the United States, including Atlanta. “So many people do a great amount of banking and purchasing online that this seemed like a natural thing for us,” he says.

The Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church has endorsed Vanco as a provider, and that also helped sway his decision. “I looked around at the landscape about how it’s done and decided Vanco was the way to go,” Wasson says.

He presented online giving options and benefits to his congregational leadership team of about a dozen people. “They decided we should give it a shot. There was no resistance whatsoever. We’re a young church and there’s no attitude of ‘We’ve never done it that way before.’” In fact, that attitude was key to the adoption of online giving at Faithpoint. “We’ve created a culture of change in our church. I even move chairs in the sanctuary periodically to make sure people don’t get used to sitting in the same place,” Wasson says.

Communicating by Word and Deed

Regular communication about stewardship — and online giving in particular — is also vitally important, according to Wasson. “Giving isn’t an adjunct thing we do, but what we do as a fully committed follower of Jesus. It’s up there with worship and praying. It’s part of what it means to be a Christian, to be a person of faith.”

To that end, he regularly brings up stewardship and giving from the pulpit. “We wouldn’t talk about prayer just once a year. If we look at giving and stewardship on par with those other disciplines, we’re really doing people a disservice by not talking about it regularly. We rob people of the joy of giving if we don’t talk about it.”

Faithpoint sent a letter to members to introduce online giving by electronic check and credit/debit card and started a communications campaign that continues to this day. Visual announcements displayed on screens in the sanctuary and bulletin messages on Sundays discuss the ease of electronic giving and the consistency it brings to church finances, and offer directions on where and how to set up an online giving account. The same information is available in a brochure people can pick up anytime.

To go beyond visual and written communications, Wasson makes it a point as part of the offering time during worship to mention online giving and thank those who use it. He also discusses stewardship and the availability of online giving in an “Exploring Faithpoint” class that is required for people who want to join the church.

Growing Donations and Eliminating Ups and Downs

When Faithpoint first offered online giving in 2013, about a quarter of church members took immediate advantage. That number has grown to 70 percent today, and monetary contributions have increased by 20 percent, Wasson says. In addition to boosting overall donations, electronic giving has evened out the ups and downs of the typical church budget.

“When people go on vacation, so does their money. Not many people say, ‘I need to make up for what I didn’t give,’” Wasson says. “If I can get them to sign up for online giving and have a regular transaction occur, even if they aren’t here, they’re giving. It represents both more and consistent giving. We get the best of both worlds.”

And that is a trend he expects to continue. “We have never done pledge cards in the 13 years we’ve been a church. I don’t want people giving to a budget. I want giving to be a natural part of what it means to be a follower of Jesus,” Wasson says. “We want to make it easy for our members. I appreciate all that Vanco has done and continues to do as our only online provider to offer convenient giving to our congregation.”



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About Vanco Payment Solutions

Vanco Payment Solutions is focused on addressing the unique needs of clients that count on predictable, recurring revenue. Faith-based and other relationship-oriented organizations – and the software providers and professional associations that serve them – rely on Vanco’s specialized approach to adding electronic payment options and enhancing current capabilities.

The company’s experienced team helps more than 20,000 churches conveniently, securely and efficiently accept a broad range of electronic contributions and more effectively manage their operations.