# Event Management Easy, Collaborative & Successful

- **1** Involve Partner Organizations
  - 2 Unite All Partners Seamlessly
    - **3** Manage All Logistics and Volunteers Online
      - **A** Make Sure Everyone Is Where They Need to Be
        - **5** Track All Event Activities & Data for Future Use



## Easy, Collaborative & Successful

In every large event that I have had a part in planning, the day of the event (the day it ended) was the best day of the entire process. At the end comes a huge sense of **relief** – er, I mean "accomplishment." Planning and executing a big event can be challenging. But it doesn't need to be – technology brings with it the potential to get more people involved, automate labor-intensive steps, and ensure success.

As we work to rally people, pull together resources, coordinate with partners and manage logistics – we can lose sight of the mission and miss the joy of serving. But imagine how much easier it could be if all the collaboration, communication and logistics were handled automatically. You could focus on the mission and find ways to maximize the impact of the event for everyone involved!

Working with partner organizations or internal teams through endless emails, phone calls, meetings and paperwork is exhausting. Traditional methods of volunteer and resource management, communicating needs, taking sign-ups, handling cancellations, determining who-did-what and gathering testimonials after the event are far too labor intensive. There is now a much easier way to handle all collaboration and administration and actually enjoy much better results.



We've put together an easy to follow guide that unveils how new technologies can help churches and ministries pull off a large outreach or benevolence event with relative ease. Let's examine the traditional methods for 5 key aspects of Event Management compare that to the brand new methods that are now (finally!) available for each of those 5 areas:

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## Easy, Collaborative & Successful

# Involve Partner Organizations

Don't go it alone! Entice local churches and ministries to join your event by allowing them to plug in and benefit with little extra effort.

All churches want to mobilize members to serve. All ministries want to create awareness and momentum around their cause. Yet few have the staff and time to plan large events. So we see most churches planning occasional small outreach activities, like feeding some families at Thanksgiving, taking up a collection to give to a local charity, participating in a drive to collect toys, food, etc., or pulling together a group of volunteers to work at a local ministry.

How can the church make a big impact with so little time? How can small ministries pull off large events? By partnering! Other churches and ministries face the same staff and time constraints, yet share your heart to help those in need. So work together with them!

Right now you're likely thinking, "We've tried, but getting all of the other leaders on the same page and keeping them there was like herding cats." No doubt, involving more parties complicates any endeavor. But bringing help and hope to a hurting world is no typical endeavor – it's our God-given calling and mission. Only by working collaboratively can we make a significant dent in alleviating the issues facing so many struggling families.



## Easy, Collaborative & Successful

For the first time, solutions finally exist to make it far easier to partner with other organizations and run a large event that has a substantial and lasting impact in your community.

The three biggest time drains in running a multi-organization compassion event are:

- Coordination. Between the organizations, it must be decided who will post needs, communicate needs, track sign ups, handle reminders.
- Communication. The potential volunteer base must be made aware of needs and given clear direction on how to respond.
- Administration. Volunteer commitments and follow-up efforts must be monitored.

Until now, ministries used newsletters, emails and phone calls to recruit volunteers and communicate with their church partners about events. Hopefully, amid many competing events and needs, yours will eventually make it to the church's bulletin or into announcements from the pulpit to possibly be noticed by the members.



## Easy, Collaborative & Successful

Churches are reluctant to get involved in events that will take more time, sap more energy, and likely have only a minimal impact on local needs, church growth, or leading people to Christ. But what if coordination, communication and administration suddenly became very simple for each church and ministry?

- What if far more could be done with far less effort?
- What if needs for the event could be instantly communicated to church members?
- What if all signups were done online through the web sites of the church and ministry?
- What if each need was posted only 1 time by 1 ministry or event coordinator and could then be seen on all partner churches' and ministries' web sites?
- What if confirmations, logistics, reminders and cancellations were handled automatically?
- What if we could see testimonials and reports about all participating individuals and organizations and the contributions of each toward the event?
- What if this integrated system showed identical information on each church or ministry web site but maintained the branding and identity of the individual organization?

Would more churches and ministries be inclined to get involved and work more effectively together?



# Easy, Collaborative & Successful

Note: Even if you're running an event just for your ministry or church without involving any other organizations, these new solutions are incredibly useful in resolving age-old event questions like:

- How do I find qualified needs and projects?
- How can a single staff person or a lay leader fully manage the event, including all the logistics and follow-ups?
- How can we measure the success of the event?



Meet The Need provides tools for managing single-church or organization events, coordinating events among many participating organizations, even managing multiple simultaneous events effectively and easily.





# **2** Unite All Partners Seamlessly

# Show a wide variety of opportunities, take registrations through the web sites of all partners!

Traditionally, churches and ministries have taken registrations for events using a sign-up sheet or maybe an online form. Sign-ups have to be manually entered and tracked. More and more organizations now use online software designed to alleviate most of that manual effort by allowing for:

- potential volunteers searching and sorting event opportunities that fit their skills and interests on a web site accessible at their convenience, day or night;
- accepting online registrations for one-time or recurring needs for the event; and
- providing contact information, in a usable database, for all those who signed up for each need to the event coordinator.



# Ways to Make Event Management Easy, Collaborative & Successful

Among online event management services, only Meet The Need puts the volunteer and resource needs for the event on the web sites of all organizations participating in the event. Having the same needs on multiple sites simultaneously means:

- More people see the needs,
- More people sign up,
- More needs are filled more quickly, and
- More people, from a wider variety of organizations and walks of life, get involved in the event.

Most importantly, it means unity. Running a single-church event doesn't unite the body of Christ. But frankly, given traditional communication methods, even multi-organization events do not really create unity.

Before Feed The Bay began using Meet The Need to work with churches and coordinate their annual event in Tampa Bay, each church chose a food bank or grocery store near their church to send their members. So members from one church ended up at one location and members of others volunteered at another. Even working for the same great event, churches were not brought together or unified in any way.



# Easy, Collaborative & Successful

Today, through Meet The Need, the volunteer opportunities across various locations appear on the web sites of each participating church and ministry. Two families who attend different churches but live in the same neighborhood will be directed to the same food bank or grocery store closest to where they live. Church members see and feel that they are working together as the body of Christ, beyond even just as one church family. In addition to meeting needs, this builds unity in the local Christian community. Sign up sheets in the church foyer simply "divide and conquer" the needs without building unity.

It is important to note that "unity" doesn't mean that every church must have the same priorities and preferences. Each one may want to direct its members to certain projects - Meet The Need respects and accommodates that.

- Each organization completely controls what needs show up its web site, even if that organization didn't post the need.
- Each organization completely controls whether the needs it posts for the event appears only on its web site or on other sites as well.

Meet The Need even provides enough flexibility to adjust who can see the posted needs. For example, if there are not enough volunteers for a project a few days before the event, the church can open up that opportunity to be seen by members of other churches or on the event web site.





## Easy, Collaborative & Successful

"Not only does Meet The Need release the bottle neck at the church staff level on getting serve opportunities to your congregants, but it empowers individuals to put their faith into action. The load has finally been lifted from outreach church staff, who feels the heavy burden of trying to connect gifted servants to needs in the community. Now, at a touch of a button people can match their own personal gifts and promptings directly to a person, ministry or even a non-profit."

Van Dyke Church, Kim Crosby, Missions & Outreach



Churches like Van Dyke Church can partner with other churches and ministry organizations to present local needs on their own web site. The same needs can be posted on partner churches' and organizations' web sites and, when needs are met, the outstanding needs automatically adjust on all the sites and everyone stays updated.



# **3** Reminding: Manage All Logistics and Volunteers Online

# See all your teams, leaders, shifts, volunteers and supplies on one access-controlled Dashboard!

With an online solution like Meet The Need, event coordinators get a complete view of everyone who is participating in the event, what they promised to do, cancellations, etc. Coordinators can automatically email anyone who registered for a particular opportunity. Coordinators can also view reports and data, make manual cancellations and adjustments, track volunteer hours, and more. We'll look more closely at some of these features later in the next two sections.

Each church and ministry participating in the event can see all contact details and commitments for every volunteer who signed up for any shift or project they posted for the event. Churches can even see who from their church has signed up and what their members did at the event regardless of whether the member (or small group) signed up on the church's web site, through the event web site, or on another participating ministry's site. Organizations that take part in the event even see testimonials, volunteer hours, items provided, etc.



# 5

## Easy, Collaborative & Successful

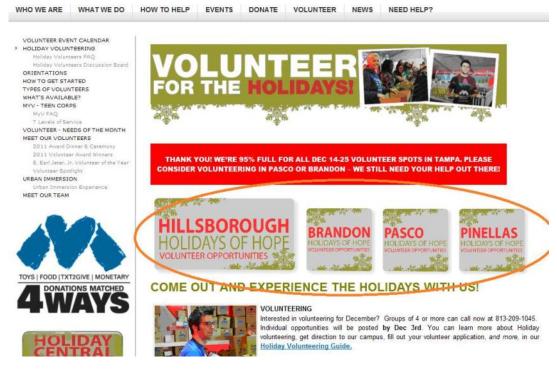
Managing the logistics of an event, having too few volunteers or items is a challenge—but so is having too many. Relying on emails, word of mouth and sign-up sheets, there's always a good chance you will have either not enough or way more than you need. With Meet The Need, you get what you need because the needs are being shared and updated instantly with the whole base of your participants. You can easily see if you don't yet have enough but you'll never get too many because no one can "oversubscribe."

When a need is filled (e.g. for 30 people or 100 backpacks), it disappears instantly from ALL web sites where it was shown. If someone from one church or ministry cancels or reduces the number of items or volunteers they've committed to bring, that need instantly reappears on the web sites of every organization that allowed the need to be shown.

Meet The Need's system allows users to decide if the best approach for posting shifts or projects is centralized or decentralized. Many multi-organization events decide that the event coordinator should post all needs. Others believe it is better for each church and ministry to post their own needs, with many posted as "public" so they can be seen on the web sites of other organizations. Most events do some combination: (1) event leaders post needs that will be collaborative across all participating organizations and (2) churches and ministries post some projects that they'd like to "own." Responsibility can be delegated to team leaders for posting and managing specific projects for the event using Meet The Need.



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When a First United Methodist Church member commits to meet one of Metropolitan Ministries' needs on their church's web site, their needs listing and all other partner church web sites are automatically updated to only show the needs that remain unmet.

Metropolitan Ministries always has a real-time, up to date, picture of the needs met, those outstanding, and whether the donations or volunteers come from First United Methodist of Brandon or another partner church.

When a community outreach ministry like Tampa's Metropolitan Ministries partners with several local churches, each church can post the needs on their website for their members.





# 4

# Revising: Make Sure Everyone is Where They Need to Be

Make changes, communicate updates, handle reminders and cancellations automatically!

Feel confident that the number of volunteers you and your ministry partners expect is the number you actually get!

#### Traditional Methods

#### **Approach**

#### **Frequent Result**

	7.PP. 04.61.	
Reminders	Phone calls and emails	Labor intensive
		Can't reach people
Cancellations	Take last-minute calls and emails	Too few show up
		<ul> <li>Adjust quantities needed on spreadsheet</li> </ul>
Adjustments	Groups may call or email (or may not!) as they grow and shrink	Too many or too few show up





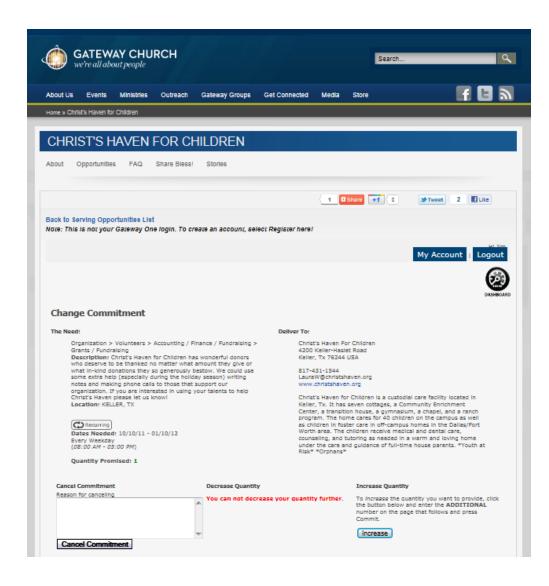
#### **New Method**

	Approach	Result
Reminders	Automatic emails 21 days, 7 days and 1 day before their volunteer date(s)	Decrease no-show rates and save time emailing all volunteers
Cancellations	Your volunteers cancel through your church's web site	When someone cancels a need that was previously filled, that need instantly reappears on your web site and every other site showing a need for 1 more person!
Adjustments	Your groups of volunteers can increase or decrease the number of people in their group through your church web site	Actually get the number of volunteers that you expected!





## Easy, Collaborative & Successful



Church members and volunteers can easily increase, decrease, or cancel their commitments.



# Share changes to the number of volunteers needed and logistical details with prospective and current volunteers!

#### Traditional Methods

#### Result **Approach Make Revisions** Static, not instantly shared with others Paper and pen or spreadsheets **Communicate to** Emails and phone calls Labor intensive **Prospective** Not certain that key individuals will/can **Volunteers** easily share the updates **Communicate to** Emails and phone calls Labor intensive **Current** Can't reach some so can't be sure all re-**Volunteers** ceived message Some people show up and wrong times and/or places





#### **New Method**

	Approach	Result
Make Revisions	On Meet The Need Dashboard	Instantly communicated to all cur- rent and prospective volunteers
Communicate to Prospective Volunteers	Updates on Dashboard instantly adjust quantities shown and details on your site	Notification in seconds when a change is made with no extra effort
Communicate to Current Volunteers	Content of reminder emails automatically changes. You can also auto email all volunteers in each shift that has changed.	Volunteers show up at the right place and the right time





## Easy, Collaborative & Successful

pdate Need (	for Christ's Haven For Children
Catagony	Organization > Volunteers > Accounting / Finance / Fundraising > Grants / Fundraising
	USA Zip: 78244 (Keller, TX) [Change Zipcode]
	Christ's Haven for Children has wonderful donors who deserve to be thanked no matter what amount they give or what in-kind donations they so generously bestow. We could use some extra help (especially during the holiday season) writing notes and making phone calls to those that support our organization. If you are interested in using your talents to help Christ's Haven please let us know!
f Volunteers Needed:	3 total, and 1 remain unfilled
r User Volunteer Limit:	
Resources/Materials:	
mele Recurrence	
e've determined that you a	are using the simple recurrence feature.
	a logacy data associated with it and is not eligable for upgrade. If you wish to use the new recurring feature please create a new need.
Start Date:	
Interval:	Every Weekday Examples: "Every Saturday", "Every second Tuesday of the month".
End Date:	01/10/2012 (MM/DD/YYYY) *This need will not appear in Search Results after the date you enter here.
iming and Recurrence	
Time	08:00 AM
Display Status:	
	● Adive
View Status:	Inadive
	Public - Viaible on the websites of other organizations.
	Members Only - Only approved members of your organization may meet this need.
	Semi-Private - Only visible on your website but visitors may meet this need.
	State Fire Compression on your records one visiting meeting meeting meeting.

Volunteer opportunities are quickly posted and can be edited at any time by event coordinators. Churches and ministries can change the number of volunteers needed, start times, make needs "public" or "private," and email those who have committed to serve with ease.



# Recording: Track all Event Activities & Data for Future Use

# Track outstanding needs, audit, calculate volunteer hours and retain all info for future events.

With Meet The Need, you will see all the details of the event on your private, access-controlled Dashboard. Regardless of which web site a volunteer used to register, the event coordinator will see all contact information for each volunteer, the needs they committed to meet, and even their testimonials after the event is over.

When it's time for the same event next year, the event coordinator simply changes the date of the event, duplicates last year's needs (using MTN's "Duplicate" feature) and/or posts the new needs. Those who volunteered in prior years will receive automatic emails for the needs you just posted for this year's event! If you use the same event Dashboard for the next event, you will still be able to see the history of all those who volunteered at that event during prior years, including testimonials about their experience that day. (Note: Alternatively, you can register a new event on <a href="https://www.meettheneed.org">www.meettheneed.org</a> and start with a clean Dashboard for the new event.)



## Easy, Collaborative & Successful

When it comes time to report event progress or the final results, all of the statistics are available on your Dashboard. Without MTN, tracking outstanding needs, auditing volunteers or items actually received, and calculating volunteer hours and units can be challenging. Here's a comparison of traditional methods for handling those tasks versus doing so with MTN:

# Traditional Methods

#### Approach

#### Result

Track Outstanding Needs	Add up volunteer registrations across paper forms and spread- sheets to see whether you have enough volunteers	•	Inaccuracies  Difficult to reconcile and quickly determine totals
Audit Hours Volunteered	Do your best to take notes on paper forms and spreadsheets as volunteers come and go	•	Hard to maintain records in the short term and to retain in long term
Calculate Volunteer Hours	Enter paper notes into spread- sheets or use calculator		Time consuming Inaccuracies Difficult to pull historical numbers



#### **New Method**

	Approach	Result
Track Outstanding Needs	See at any time how many volunteers have signed up and how many are still needed for each shift	<ul> <li>No need for data entry or calculations</li> </ul>
Audit Hours Volunteered	Use your Dashboard to record how many came and how long they stayed	<ul> <li>Convenient one-stop place to record volunteer attendance</li> <li>Instant updates to volunteer hour and count reports</li> </ul>
Calculate Volunteer Hours	Click a button to run and export reports, produce graphs, etc. showing volunteer hours and volunteer or item counts for any time period and/or any shift or project	<ul> <li>Information your staff needs in seconds</li> <li>Easy access to historical data for years to come</li> <li>View testimonials to share with your congregation!</li> </ul>





## Easy, Collaborative & Successful



Event coordinators can record how many volunteers came and how long they stayed, or easily cancel volunteer commitments.



When the event is over, it is easy to generate reports showing volunteer hours and volunteer or item counts. And, data is archived for next year.



You strive every day to be a good steward, making the most of the resources and donated time and funds available to your church.

To learn more about how to run community service events more collaboratively and effortlessly than ever before, contact Meet The Need.

Call 813/527-0222 or email <a href="mailto:Info@MeetTheNeed.org">Info@MeetTheNeed.org</a>.



