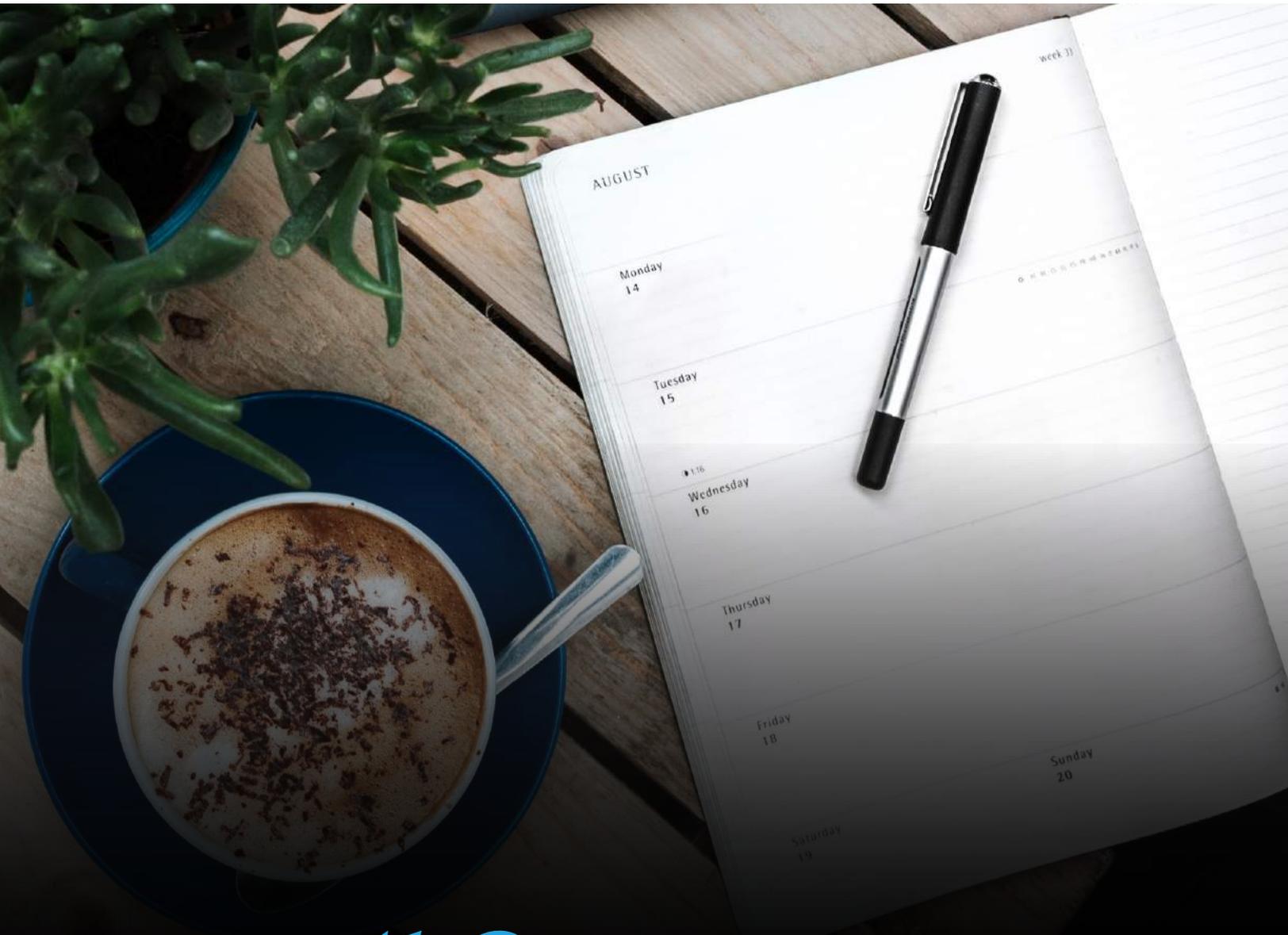


stuff you wish they taught in seminary



4 Sundays

**EVERY CHURCH LEADER SHOULD
WORK ON EVERY WEEK OF THE YEAR**

RICH BIRCH



Doesn't it feel like Sunday is always coming at your church? Every seven days, it just keeps showing up! ;) This relentless rhythm can lull us into a situation where we see every Sunday as the same in a never-ending line of weekends. But this just isn't the case! **There are some Sundays every year that are frankly just more valuable to you and your church as you attempt to grow and make an impact in your community.** You need to focus your leadership disproportionately on these four weekends to leverage them for church.

2 Reasons "Big Days" Are Critical to Your Church

Not all Sundays present the same opportunity for making an impact in your community. Some weekends present a better opportunity for having more people attend your church and therefore, church leaders are required to pay more attention to such weekends. These "Big Days" are unique opportunities because of two factors:

- **Your People are More Likely To Invite Their Friends** // There are certain Sundays during the year that people who attend church are more likely to invite their friends and family to their church. We want to make sure that we are doing everything

we can, so as to equip our people who do the inviting as it's a change in their normal behavior.

- **The People they Ask Are More Likely to Attend** // When your people do the inviting, their friends and family are more likely to say "yes" on these weekends. If your people have the positive experience of inviting a friend to visit their church and they come, your people will be more likely to invite people in the future!

Most of our communities are more "unchurched" than they were a generation ago. We find that across the country, in various regions, the above mentioned two dynamics still hold place. There are just a few weekends that your church is going to see more guests attend than others and hence, you need to apply a different strategy to those weekends than any other.

"Big days" are a categorically big deal when you are making an effort to see your church grow.



The 4 Sundays You Need to Pay Extra Special Attention to:

- **Christmas Eve** // (I know this only falls on a Sunday once every 7 years, but you know what I mean!) Christmas is possibly the single biggest opportunity for your church to connect with unchurched people.
- **Easter** // This day is driven not only by a strong “return to church” undercurrent where people who haven’t attended church in a while come back, but also by the curiosity factor around the “Easter story” that still resonates in our culture.
- **Mother’s Day** // Everybody loves their mom. Who wouldn’t go to church if their mom asked them? (The same is not true of Father’s day!) Many churches are finding this “Hallmark Sunday” is a strong time to connect with the community and build lots of momentum around it.
- **“Back to Church” Sunday** // This Sunday varies from church to church but most churches have a Sunday when it seems like their region is hard wired to try visiting the church again for the first time. You can figure out which is that Sunday at your place by observing your attendance patterns and seeing which Sunday that isn’t one of the above three; but has the next largest attendance. I’ve seen it on one of the following Sundays, on a regular basis:
 - 2nd Sunday in January // Connected with “New Year’s Resolutions” and getting life back in order.

- Weekend After Labor Day // Related to kids being back in school and life getting back to “normal” after summer time.
- Daylight savings time Sunday // People have an extra hour to sleep in on this fall Sunday and are more likely to attend.

5 Elements to Every “Big Day” Weekend at Your Church

The reason why church leaders at prevailing churches are always working on one or two of these “big days” is that they require extra effort to put together. They represent the opportunity to build bridges to reach new people in your community and to see those people get connected to the life of your church. Here are five aspects of the “big day” that you’ll need to focus your time and energy on:

- **Robust Communications Plan** // Ensuring that your people are not only informed about what is happening during the special Sunday, but are also motivated to reach out to invite their friends this weekend. In my book, [Church Growth Flywheel](#), I outline in detail an effective communication plan that you can just “copy and paste” into your church. The key here is to ensure that the right people are getting the right message, at the right time.
- **Clear & Compelling Preaching** // At the core of a fantastic “big day” is an effective message that connects with your audience. Three out of four people who attend churches say sermons are a major factor of why they go to the church. [ref] The message is core to what happens in your church; it needs to take center stage in the planning for these big days. The “cyclical” nature of these days can present a challenge to some communicators because it can be difficult to come up with a “fresh spin” on the content. Special attention and focus should be given to ensure that the message doesn’t get overlooked.

• **Obvious Next Steps** // The goal of these weekends isn't to get a large attendance for the sake of filling our rooms. We're hopefully having larger attendance at these weekends and then encouraging those people to return to our church in the future. Prevailing churches use these weekends as the front door to the church but then, have obvious and simple "next steps" for people to take into the community and life of the church. These can include clear invites to the next series at your church or digital follow up processes that are designed to help you stay connected with your guests. How you are asking your guests to return after your next "big day" at your church needs to be central to how the Sunday is constructed.

• **Something For Kids** // Churches that are growing are centered around attracting and keeping families. These "big days" need to have something extra special for kids. It doesn't need to be complex or expensive but should have a little extra "zing" to make it great for your youngest guests. Gather your team together and empower them to come up with a special programming element or maybe a fun gift to give to every kid who comes to this Sunday.

• **Prepared Teams** // These Sundays aren't like any other Sundays during the year and so your volunteers need extra levels of support and care to make it great for them. Your music teams will probably need to do an extra rehearsal or two. The guest services team will need to get together and work out what happens when you have 2x the normal crowd size. Your kids' ministry will require extra team members ready to ensure that you can register more "first time families" through your check-in process. These weekends need to be treated with love and care so that your people come away from them being happy about them. If you fail to prepare your volunteer teams for these "big days", they will just feel like a giant hassle having all these guests rather than appreciating the privilege and honor it is!



Help for Church Leaders Looking to Leverage "Big Days"

Are you ready to see your church impact more people than it has ever before? Are you tired of church leadership books that are long on theory but short on practical help? **Have you wanted to reach more people in your community but you weren't sure where to start?** Are you worried that your church isn't reaching its full potential? "[Church Growth Flywheel: 5 Practical Systems To Drive Growth at Your Church](#)" is full of practical insights to help your church reach more people, starting today!

In this book, I pulled together a discussion about "big days" and how they can make a difference in the life of your church. I've attempted to provide a blueprint for leveraging these four Sundays, from my own experience, from leading within one of the fastest growing churches in the country as well as from over 200+ interviews with leaders from prevailing churches. In the part of the book on "Big days" we discuss:

- The cultural underpinning driving why these days represent such a big opportunity for your church.
- I confess how my mindset about "big days" has shifted over the years after seeing results from these in our own ministry.
- A robust communication plan including 10 channels to leverage, to ensure that people are aware of what's happening at your "big day" and inviting their friends!

- We discuss 6 questions I think every church leader should process with their teams as you get ready for the next “big day” at your church.
- Finally, we walk through an intentional follow-up plan that we’ve seen as an “industry standard” approach from growing churches to see “raving returners” after these special Sundays.

The book launches in February 2018. However, you can read Chapter 1 now by visiting ChurchGrowthFlywheel.com and joining the interest list. You’ll get front of the line access about the launch and a few other freebies along the way.

Visit unSeminary.com for more free resources!



UNLIMITED
GRAPHIC DESIGN HELP
for only **\$370** per month.

Can someone say Amen?

LEARN MORE @
designpickle.com

 **DESIGN
PICKLE**

The advertisement features a black and white grid pattern in the bottom left corner. A large black shape, resembling a stylized letter 'D' or a graphic element, is positioned on the right side. A green diagonal bar cuts across the top left of this black shape. The text is arranged in a clean, modern layout with varying font weights and colors (green, black, white).