

# Preventing Embezzlement

## How embezzlement happens

One person counts church offerings. That person can easily remove cash, especially what's not in an offering envelope.

---

The same two people count offerings each week for years. Over time, they agree to divide cash between them.

---

People who count the offerings give a total to a person who will deposit the money. That person takes out cash and deposits a lesser amount.

---

One person has authority to write checks for the church. That person pays personal bills out of the church's account.

---

Contribution receipts aren't regularly issued to church members. When they are, members aren't encouraged to report discrepancies. A volunteer takes cash, knowing the risk of discovery is remote.

---

Offerings aren't deposited immediately. People dip into the cash, claiming they're using it for unauthorized expenses.

---

## Preventive action

Assign more than one person to count each offering.

---

Appoint a pool of counters. Each week two people are randomly chosen to count the offerings.

---

Assign one person who neither counts nor deposits to reconcile offerings with bank deposits.

---

Make at least two signatures mandatory for every check above a certain amount.

---

Issue regular receipts and encourage immediate reporting of errors to someone other than the one who issues receipts.

---

Deposit offerings immediately into the bank.