



FELLOWSHIP IDEAS

'And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.'
Acts 2:42

These are ideas to promote fellowship and relationship within the church family but also in such a way as to help people on the margins feel like they belong too. Modern society has a loneliness epidemic and churches should be places that counteract isolation.

FELLOWSHIP IDEAS

1 5TH SUNDAY BREAKFAST



PURPOSE: To use the 5th Sunday months, or other dates to have a parish breakfast.

IDEA: To host the parish for a breakfast together in the hall before church. The food could be a mixture of continental style food through to bacon butties! The point is to promote fellowship together and to use the breakfast as an excuse to ask new people along to church that day.

2 CHURCH FELLOWSHIP CALENDAR



PURPOSE: To put a series of fellowship events into a calendar for the year ahead to encourage relationships.

IDEA: A calendar of fellowship events 6-12 months ahead will help people to plan better for both organising and attending events. It also helps to ensure that more areas of fellowship ministry get covered. A typical calendar could have anything from 10-20 events per year and cover all the age and interest groups in the church. It also means that events can be advertised well in advance and allow parishioners to think about asking new people along to events that may well promote relationship and act as a gateway to further involvement in church. The calendar could be laminated or put on card and attached to a small magnet to be displayed on fridges or made into a bookmark.

3 LEADERS' ENCOURAGEMENT NIGHT



PURPOSE: To encourage and thank the hard working volunteers in your church.

IDEA: To thank all your church volunteers for their hard work and dedication over the past year. The evening could take the form of a dinner in the hall followed by a reminder of the importance of their work and how valued they are in the church. It could allow an opportunity to share the church's vision for the upcoming year as well as make practical announcements to leaders for the year ahead, usage of halls and so on. This may also be a good time to give out a card or small gift to thank leaders and even do a fun 'awards' night!

4 ALL CHURCH BIRTHDAY PARTY



PURPOSE: To help different generations in the parish get to know each other.

IDEA: Split the groups by which month their birthday is, depending on numbers you could pair months together so there are enough people in each group. Each person with a birthday in that month could be invited to a fellowship event such as a light supper/lunch. People there will tend not to know each other as well and will need encouraged to talk round tables at the supper. During the event you could interview different people there (with different ages/backgrounds) about their life and likes.

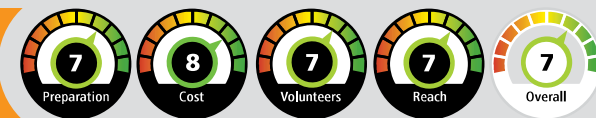
5 PARISH BIRTHDAY PRESENTS AT FAMILY SERVICES



PURPOSE: To celebrate each person's birthday during the Family Service.

IDEA: To use the Family Service as a time to ask every person there that had a birthday in the previous month to come up and receive a free gift. The gifts could be a bookmark or chocolate or be a mystery gift that they pick from a bag or tub. They could all be sung happy birthday.

6 POT LUCK/BRING AND SHARE SUPPERS



PURPOSE: To have fun and build up fellowship and relationship with the wider church and community.

IDEA: To organize an all ages evening meal for everyone around tables to encourage chat and relationship. This could be run by asking people to sign up to bring a staple (rice, potatoes, etc), main (Bolognese, stew, salad, etc) or dessert. Then it's 'pot luck' to see what people get! People should be encouraged to bring enough for themselves and a little bit more to be able to feed those that might show up that haven't signed up. Alternatively you could ask people to show up with a full dinner and then put it on the serving table to share with others. Meals like this are a great way to get to meet others without having to organize a group of people to cook for everyone else. Those invited as guests from the local community should not be expected to bring anything. The supper could be finished with a fun table quiz, interviews or a talk. Another way to do this could be as a 'Pudding Party' where people are encouraged to just bring desserts and traybakes.

7 LENT SUPPERS



PURPOSE: To encourage fellowship and a focus on the meaning of Lent.

IDEA: This could combine your Lent midweek service with a supper and fellowship afterwards. After each service is over the parish could gather in the hall afterwards for a 'bring and share' type dinner together around tables. Afterwards the tables could be cleared away and some time could be spent in worship and fellowship and perhaps some interviews with different people involved in parish life. A crêche or movie for kids could be shown in another room to encourage families. It might also be an idea to encourage people to fast for the day before the midweek service.

8 ON THE SOFA WITH...



PURPOSE: To promote fellowship and hear about people's testimonies within church life.

IDEA: This event could be combined with another but the basic focus would be to have an informal time together as a church with worship, word and food together and then spend around 30-45 minutes interviewing 2-3 people (or couples) involved in church about their background, interests and story of how they came to faith and why they are still living their faith. This can be a great opportunity for witness to others and a time for those being interviewed to also reflect on their faith.

9 TEDDY BEAR PICNIC



PURPOSE: To promote fellowship and an invite to the local community.

IDEA: To ask children to come to a special family service with their favourite teddy bear or soft toy but also to ask adults and older young people to bring theirs as well. Then to run a service along the theme of 'comfort' and for everyone to have a 'picnic' together in the church grounds or hall straight after the service.

10 MEN'S EVENTS



PURPOSE: To gather men in the parish and local area together for fellowship events and to build relationships.

IDEA: To organise various events through the year that provide the opportunity for men (and teenage boys) to get to know each other and also to invite new people along to. Events could include: Dinner out and a table quiz, go-karting, laser quest, fishing, clay pigeon shooting, cinema, a football/rugby match, indoor bowls, pub quizzes, an event to watch a big football/rugby game and so on.



11 LADS AND DADS OR MUMS AND SONS NIGHT



PURPOSE: To encourage dads/mums and sons to spend some time together with others and promote the churches support for them.

IDEA: To run a yearly or bi-annual event just for dads and son's that would be a mixture of fun and fellowship. The group could go out for a day or evening trip to paintball, laser quest, a rugby match, indoor climbing, activity centres and so on and finish with a meal out or by ordering food in. An element of team challenges can also take place with groups of dads and sons together and also with dads' verses sons. The same format could be used for mums and sons but you could add in different activities like a 'Great British Bake off' competition between the sons and mums.

12 GIRLS AND MUMS OR DADS AND DAUGHTERS NIGHT



PURPOSE: To encourage mums/dads and daughters to spend some time together with others and promote the churches support for them.

IDEA: To run a yearly or bi-annual event just for mum and girls that would be a mixture of fun and fellowship. The group could go out or stay in for an evening and do various crafts such as scrap booking, cake making, sugar craft and Christmas crafts or else go out to the cinema, ice-skating, bowling or a show/pantomime. The dad's and daughters could also do some of the more outdoors activities mentioned above. In fact any of the activities could be used depending on the group that you have.

13 MEN'S BREAKFAST



PURPOSE: To encourage fellowship and Bible teaching among men involved in the parish.

IDEA: To invite men in the parish and local community to attend a breakfast once a month, usually a fry up! The breakfast could be paid by donations from those attending and a good time to start is around 8am –to leave time for people to be able to leave for other Saturday activities. The breakfast could be followed by a short Bible study or reflection but alternatively a longer breakfast with invited speaker could take place.

14 WOMEN'S EVENTS



PURPOSE: To gather together women in the parish for fellowship events to build relationships – either to visit other places or to host within the church.

IDEA: *Scrap-booking:* Suitable for all ages this event helps you to build your own book and then fill it with photos and mementos. It allows people to talk about their life and background with others sitting around them. *Dress a girl around the world:* This is a sewing event that aims to take a number of pillow cases and turn them into simple dresses to give to young girls in developing countries. *Christmas crafts:* An event to put together some Christmas crafts such as decoration, presents and so on. They could be Christmas wreaths, candles, decorations etc and the event could include a light supper. *Cooking demonstrations:* Organise 1 or 2 people to demonstrate various meals, baking and so on and eat the results as part of the supper.



15 EASTER DAWN SERVICE



PURPOSE: Celebrate the resurrection with a sunrise service for the whole community.

IDEA: The church hosts a service in a local park or beauty spot at sunrise on Easter day –especially somewhere where the sun can be seen to rise! Parishioners are encouraged to invite friends to the service where some tea and coffee in flasks could be served –and even some ‘bacon butties’ if you have a good camp stove!

16 READ THE BIBLE IN 72 HOURS



PURPOSE: To speak out the word of God as the entire Bible is read out over three days.

IDEA: Challenge your church to read the entire Bible in just 3 days. Host a public reading of the Bible and invite every organization in church to supply readers. Refreshments could be served to visitors during the readings and the event should be well publicized with local people from outside the church asked to come and do guest readings. Finish with a service of celebration on Sunday where Revelations 22 is read.

17 FOOD PREPARATION AND HYGIENE



PURPOSE: To train volunteers in basic standards for handling food and running kitchens.

IDEA: Some churches can be reluctant to serve food at community events, as they are wary of the possibility of not meeting food preparation and hygiene standards. The standards for serving & preparing food in a church context are at a basic level and advice on this can usually be sourced from your local Council (some will produce it online). There are also accredited food safety and hygiene courses available –including online qualifications that parishioners can complete in their own time.