



OUTREACH IDEAS

'And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation'

Mark 16:15

These are some ideas aimed primarily for those outside of, or on the margins, of church life. Often this will mean taking church outside the doors or adapting church based activities to orientate towards those normally on the margins of church life.

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OUTREACH IDEAS

1 NEW CHRISTIAN PACKS



PURPOSE: To provide a ready-made gift pack for those that have just made a decision to follow or recommit to Christ.

IDEA: To put together an encouraging gift for new Christians that will support their faith and help to immediately celebrate their decision. This pack could include a number of things such as:

- A Bible or New Testament
- A devotional for new Christians.
- A specialist book or DVD for new Christians.
- A contact card for the minister.
- A small gift that could remind them of their faith such as a cross or printed verse.

2 CONSIDERING FAITH PACKS



PURPOSE: To provide a ready made pack for any people who are thinking about their faith.

IDEA: That packs are made available that can be used by parishioners and others to give to people who are thinking about faith. The packs could include a tract, Gideon Bible, specialist book on becoming a Christian, Alpha booklet and so on.

3 OUTREACH COURSES



PURPOSE: To run a discovering faith course with an invite to the local community.

IDEA: To organise an Alpha or similar type of course that can be held in the church hall or even local coffee shop or restaurant. The course would be advertised extensively to the local community and involve a free meal each evening followed by talks, group work, discussion and so on. Each course may also involve people in attendance from your parish.

4 COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS GIVEAWAY



PURPOSE: To bless the local community with a free gift at Christmas.

IDEA: Many parishes will have a local public gathering place such as a shopping area or place for community events. Use these places at Christmas time to give people a small blessing such as a cup of hot chocolate and a mince pie to shoppers or some hot punch at a Christmas event. The blessing could be done with no other information except to answer questions from people, or it could be done with a verse or something advertising your church.

5 COMMUTER GIVEAWAYS



PURPOSE: To bless local commuters with a small gift as they wait to go to work/home.

IDEA: If your parish has a busy commuter bus stop or train station then it may be possible to occasionally bless those about to travel with a cup of tea and a small snack for the journey. It will only be a small blessing and may be viewed suspiciously at first but it may help to change perceptions on what the role of the church is. A similar idea could be done at a local village/town centre or at local community events – giving out free drinks and snacks from the church.

6 NIGHT LIGHT



PURPOSE: To provide a point of blessing and support for those leaving pubs and clubs at weekends.

IDEA: To work in partnership with other churches, police and the wider community to bless and support those leaving pubs late at night. It could involve handing out cups of tea/coffee, bottles of water and some biscuits. This type of ministry needs a lot of work and partnership to set up but is very valuable in witnessing to those in the pub/club culture.

7 LEAVE THE LIGHTS ON WEEKEND



PURPOSE: To raise awareness in the local community around issues of loneliness, depression, worry and mental health.

IDEA: To leave the lights on in the church and halls over the course of a winter weekend to serve as a visible reminder about each person being a light to the others around them. The church could be lit up by extra lighting and local press informed. The weekend could include a special service, free coffee morning, all night prayer, drop-in, an extra focus on visiting people on the margins of church life and so on.

8 MUSIC AND ARTS



PURPOSE: To make connections with local artists, musicians, drama groups and the wider community.

IDEA: To talk with local art groups about providing the church halls for an art exhibition – either by itself or as part of a bigger event such as a fair or sale day. The exhibition could be advertised through local churches and involve an opening event with a light supper and so on. There could be an accompanying art competition that includes schools. Local crafts and fair trade crafts could also be invited. In addition you could also talk with local choirs, musicians, drama groups and so on to see if the church could work with them to use the halls for community events to help people from outside church make small connections with the ministry of your church.

9 GOOD NEWS GIVEAWAY FAMILY SERVICE



PURPOSE: To attract local children and families to a monthly service.

IDEA: To base each family service around a simple theme that also involves giving a gift at the end of each service to remind the congregation of the theme –either to everyone or just the children. Each service would be strongly advertised to the local community with an emphasis on welcoming new people. Themes for the services could include: “The Light of the World” – with key ring torches given to kids and tea lights to adults. “The Lost Coin” – with chocolate coins given to everyone. “God’s Community” – With Lego packs given to kids & plastic Lego piece fridge magnets to adults. “Jesus the missing piece” – Kids get a small jigsaw and adults a jigsaw fridge magnet. “Golden ticket” – About heaven –Everyone gets a choc bar – some have golden tickets in them.

10 PARISH BIRTHDAY CARDS



PURPOSE: To encourage families and remind children and parents that they are a part of the church family.

IDEA: Collect the birthdays and addresses of children and babies that are members of the church or attend church based activities and events. Use these records to set diary reminders at the start of every fortnight for the birthdays that will be coming up in the next few weeks. Store up a supply of cards and stamps and then post out birthday cards every fortnight so that children get a card from the church each year. This will not only be appreciated by local families but will strengthen their contact with your church.

11 HOT CROSS BUN GIVEAWAY



PURPOSE: To bless the local community and remind them of the message of Good Friday,

IDEA: To organise with a local baker or supermarket to buy a large batch of hot cross buns for Good Friday morning and then pack each bun in a paper bag with a small verse and distribute the buns throughout you local area to shops, businesses, workers, commuters and so on. Perhaps to include with the bun a church invite.

12 SPORTS GROUPS



PURPOSE: To work with local young people through involvement in sports.

IDEA: To run weekly sports activities or weeklong summer programmes for young people and young adults. This could involve the weekly hire of a football pitch for an open-invite football game or a weekly training class in your halls with a recognised coach in sports. In the summer holidays it’s possible to get coaches to teach various different sports and games over the course of a week as part of an outreach to local young people.

13 COMMUNITY GARDENING



PURPOSE: To reach out to those in the community less able to tend their gardens.

IDEA: Once a fortnight over the spring and summer a team of volunteers help to tend the gardens of less able parishioners and others. They could plant flowers or set up window boxes. This is also a good pastoral opportunity and helps to keep the church updated on the more housebound and elderly people it is connected with.

14 PUB QUIZ & MEAL



PURPOSE: To run a pub quiz and subsidised meal at a local pub/golf club to engage with those in that community.

IDEA: To work alongside a local pub or golf club to run a table quiz evening and meal or hot buffet. This event would be used as a simple way of getting initial engagement with the local community and so concentrate on the social element of the evening with perhaps a small amount of time at the start or finish for a presentation about faith. It could be advertised both in the pub, community and church and would also serve as a good opportunity for some church members there to be out of their normal environment. Some promotional material about the church could be left on tables but the aim would be mostly to promote relationships between church and wider community.