

Top tips

Evangelism ideas for community events



Community action: Mobilise your church for a day of community action. Identify needs in the community, for example: elderly people who need help with their gardens or companionship, schools, community centres or old people's homes with decorating needs, public areas that need cleaning up. Then challenge your church to get involved to show God's loving sacrifice and commitment to people. Include activities that the elderly and young can do. Repeat the event annually to show it is not just a one-off.

Car boot sales: Many people who never come to church are at car boot sales on Sunday mornings. If they won't come to you, why not go to them? A stall that provides a focus for prayer and reflection can be a helpful contrast to displays of bargains. And our experience is that people will ask for prayer, healing or just to be heard, if you make it clear that these things are on offer. If you are there regularly, people will come back. You will be amazed at how open people will be about discussing the important issues of life if you meet them in a context where they are comfortable.

Fun Day: Why not host a totally free fun day as a gift to the community from the church? Welcome them with jugglers and clowns and think about a band or street theatre. Have energetic and quieter activities for various ages - a bouncy castle, inflatable slide, karaoke, face-painting and candyfloss. Lay on tea and cakes with plenty of seating, plus a barbecue and prayer room. During the event take the opportunity to advertise outreach activities such as parent and toddler groups or faith exploration courses.



Film night: Invite friends and neighbours round to your house to watch a film and to discuss the faith issues that it raises over a drink and refreshments. Films tell stories and touch on the big questions of life, so go for a popular film rather than one with obvious relevance to faith.

Pampering parties: Everyone loves to be pampered! Beauty therapists and hairdressers find people pouring out their hearts to them when they relax. Gather a few friends and give each other a facial and a manicure. Pray that God would guide the conversation and provide you with opportunities to share your faith.

Wedding fairs: If you know that your town is hosting a wedding fair - see if it provides the chance for local churches to have a stall to promote the spiritual side of marriage and encourage couples to understand more about the services and opportunities offered to them by their local churches.

Reading groups: Join or set up a reading group or book club. Gather a group of friends or neighbours, mostly non-Christians, and choose a book to read over an agreed period. Then get together in a home, a coffee shop or a pub, to discuss it - how you feel about the main characters, how they handle crises, life issues that arise, matters to which you can relate. Other people's choice of books will open your eyes and broaden your horizons. Perhaps once a term select a book with a low-key Christian theme such as grace or love.



Discussion on destiny: Millions are interested in life after death issues. Host an event billed as *Life after death... is this all there is?* and run it at a community centre rather than the church. You will be amazed at the response you will get - especially if you offer refreshments. Make sure you have the help of a church leader or theologian who is able to communicate the issues clearly and in a way non-churchgoers can connect to.

Eating together: Our ultimate aim is to feed people spiritually, but there is an old saying that the way to a person's heart is through their stomach. So why not get cooking? Think of every opportunity to invite people to eat - summer barbecues, bonfire potatoes, Murder Mystery dinners, Christmas dinners, mince pies, pizza parties, hot cross buns and more.

Creative craft: In recent times, there has been increased interest in traditional crafts. If you are excited by things like knitting, crochet, embroidery, quilting or card-making, why not gather a group of like-minded people to meet regularly? Chatting while working on crafts together is a great way of sharing faith and building friendships. Meetings can easily be held in your own home, but maybe you could consider setting up a session in a residential home and involving the elderly residents. If you are interested in doing this, ask at your local home. They will almost certainly give you a warm welcome.

Small print:

- Please be safe! Church Army is not responsible for organising, supervising or hosting your community evangelism activities. All activities, and participation in them, are at the organisers' and participants' own risk, and Church Army is not responsible for any outcome arising from your activities.
- If you plan to hold an event using pre-recorded film or music, broadcast TV, or live music and entertainment, please make sure the venue and organisers have the appropriate licences and permissions (where appropriate) from the copyright holders. These might include a TV licence, a Church Video Licence, a Performing Rights Society (PRS) Licence, and a local authority Premises Licence or Temporary Event Notice. For more details see www.ccli.co.uk/fact-files and your local authority website.

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