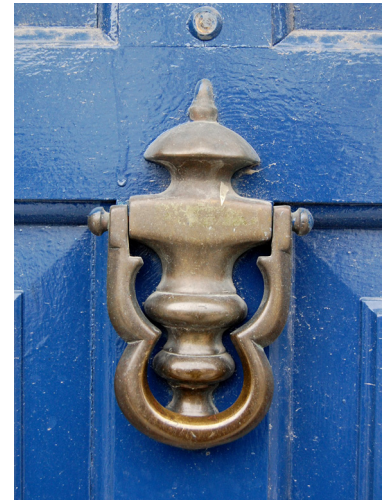


Top tips

ideas for community outreach



New home: Keep a stock of new home cards and write in them a simple blessing: "May the Lord bless you in your new home." When someone new moves in, bake them a cake and take it round after the removal van has gone with a card. Welcome them, introduce yourselves and invite them to knock on your door when they can't find something vital. Then get out of their hair and wait for them to knock.

Prayer walk: Do a prayer walk around your area. In small groups simply go for a walk and ask the Holy Spirit to draw your attention to anything that he wishes to highlight. Try to become more aware of the environment around you – the sounds, smells and textures as well as the sights. While you walk, talk out loud to God about what you notice. Greet people you meet, and stop for a chat where it seems appropriate. At the end, bring all the groups back together and talk and pray about your thoughts and experiences.

Door-to-door: Terrified of door-to-door visiting? Drop a leaflet around a few days before to say you will be calling and be positive. Look for one person God has appointed you to meet and don't be deterred by those he hasn't. Do a community survey to find out what needs you might meet, or ask people if there is anything they would like prayer for. Be ready to be the answer to prayers yourself – can you offer a lift to hospital, help in a garden or visit someone lonely?



Street Pastors: People don't expect Christians to hang out on the streets – how can you reach those who do? Street Pastor schemes are normally set up in consultation with the police and local community, with proper training and safety monitoring. Street Pastors wear a high-profile vest; they talk to people, pray for them, offer basic first aid, help people to get home safely, offer a reassuring presence and generally serve those on the streets. For more information, visit www.streetpastors.co.uk

Street party: How can you love your neighbours if you hardly know them? Why not organise a barbecue for your street. If possible, hold it in the open or with different hosts for each course. Chat through the idea with the people you know best, and knock on the doors to invite people personally. If people ask what they can bring, ask them to help with something, or to bring a neighbour – get them involved in feeling that it is their event as much as yours.

Fitness for the soul: If you are a member of a local leisure centre or sports club ask the management if you can act as chaplain. Explain the concerns about fitness for the soul as well as the body and wear a suitable T-shirt with chaplain or mind body and spirit emblazoned on it. Make this a unique selling point for the sports centre as part of the health and well-being agenda. Try to get the centre manager to set aside a quiet area where you can offer prayer support and leave cards with times when you are at the gym and available. Leave a box for prayers.



Love is in the air... Valentine's Day is all about hearts, chocolates and flowers. In the run up to February 14th ask your church to club together and buy enough chocolates to deliver to the local community with your own style of valentine's card saying something like: "This card and small gift is brought to you by your local church because like Jesus, we want each and everyone of you to know you are loved." Give a contact phone number or email address for local residents to ask more questions and perhaps include 10 reasons why you are loved by God.

Back to school: There are lots of ways to get involved in local schools both as a church and individually. You could offer to help listen to the children read, run a lunch time or after school club, lead regular assemblies or become a governor.

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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