

SOWING THE SEED: GOSPEL DISTRIBUTION

Evangelistic Events Step-by-Step

For the evangelistic event coordinator

Thank you for committing to coordinate an evangelistic event so that your congregation has a platform for sharing the Gospel with individuals and families in your community. Over the course of one week, September 11-18, **we are sharing the simple plan of salvation and inviting individuals and families to worship with a Southern Baptist church on Sunday, September 19.**

- 1. Consider a variety of types of evangelistic events and choose the one that is right for your church and your community.** As God leads, He may inspire a particular type of event or several different possible events that your church can do to reach out to your community. Choose the one that will (a) best match the demographics of your community, (b) be realistic, given the resources available to your church, and (c) take your church into the community.

Ideas for evangelistic events include:

- block parties, targeting the children (and their families) of your community,
- movie nights featuring films that present a Gospel-message response to a need felt by members of your community,
- open-air concerts in the local park that will appeal to music lovers, and
- wild game dinners hosted and served by the men of the church for the hunters of the community.

You may also take advantage of local community events such as cook-outs, fairs, play-off games, rodeos and the like. Capitalize on any event where people will be gathered.

- 2. Secure necessary permissions, space, and resources for a successful event.** Depending upon the location and type of event you host, you may need to register your event with community leaders. Certainly, the type of event will dictate space requirements and particular items needed to pull it off. Be sure that you secure and organize all resources well in advance of the date of the event.
- 3. Create a brochure about your church, if you don't have one already.** With this brochure, you are introducing your church to the community. Therefore, it should be attractive as well as informative. Grammar and style are important! Use language that non-churched people will understand.
- 4. Create an invitation to the Harvest Sunday service.** The invitation for Harvest Sunday, September 19, should also look as nice as you can make it. Be sure to announce the date and time that your service begins.

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5. Secure a simple Gospel presentation. Prepare to give a simple presentation of the Good News of Jesus in a format that non-churched people can understand it. Your pastor may write a letter that outlines the plan of salvation. Other good ideas include a Gospel tract, a pocket-size copy of The Book of John, or the Jesus film. (See Gospel Distribution Resources in the Pastor's Preparation Guide for information regarding these products.) Also, plastic bags and drop-in Gospel tracts, entitled "Find It Here," are available at the Montana Southern Baptist Convention office. Contact the MTSBC by calling 800-497-7537 or 406-252-7537. Also, go to www.AcrossMontana.org.

6. Prepare packets for each non-churched family who comes to the event.

In bags, designed to be handed out at the event, place the brochure about your church, the invitation to Harvest Sunday, September 19, and the simple Gospel presentation.

Also, be sure to include a follow-up card that each individual or family can complete and give to you on-site. The card should have spaces for the person's or family's name and contact information, as well as the questions: "Do you attend a local church? If yes, church name, pastor's name and contact information." And, "Are you interested in learning more about Jesus Christ and/or discovering more about the Bible?"

7. Enlist helpers for particular tasks related to the event. Church members—from the youngest to the oldest—can be part of your evangelistic event. Have a sign-up sheet for people to commit to help. Match interests and abilities to tasks. Plan an organizational meeting to make assignments and answer questions. Provide additional training, if necessary.

Note: The purpose of the event is actually two-fold: (1) to get contact information for non-churched community members with whom you can follow up afterward, so be sure to collect the follow-up cards on-site; and (2) to share the Gospel with those who have yet to place their faith in Jesus, so be sure that everyone who works the event is trained, equipped, and prepared to give a verbal witness!

8. Advertise. Get the word out in the community that your church is hosting an event or is participating at a local community event. Use every medium available to you: local newspaper ads, TV ads, radio spots, billboards, flyers, and posters at key businesses around town, as well as E-mail, Facebook and Twitter. Make the graphics attractive, the content appealing, and the language easy for non-churched people to understand.

9. Implement the evangelistic event plan. As church members gather on the given day(s) at the given time(s), spend time as a group praying over the event. Encourage them to continue praying for each individual and family they meet throughout the day.

Be diligent about getting follow-up cards from non-churched community members. Every individual and/or family should complete and return a follow-up card to you while at the event. Later, it is critical that you follow up with those who returned cards.

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Evangelistic Events Conversation Starters

For the evangelistic event coordinator

Church members working an evangelistic event can be caught up in specific tasks that keep the event running. However, the event is actually a platform for a greater purpose: sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is critical that everyone be alert to opportunities to interact, with a Gospel witness, with individuals and families with whom they come in contact.

A Block Party

Equally important, when planning your event, build in at least one specific way you will share the Gospel. For example, at a block party targeting children and their families, have an entry table at which those who are arriving complete a follow-up card and return it to the greeters, receive from them your church's packet of materials (that includes a simple Gospel presentation), and get "tickets" for various block party activities.

In that setting, the greeters may have only 30 seconds to share the Gospel verbally before the children and their families run off for their fun. A simple conversation starter may be: "We want you to know that Jesus loves you and so do we."

A Movie Night, Concert or Dinner

At a movie night, a concert, or a dinner hosted by your church, schedule time during the event for a brief but more formal presentation of the Gospel. Yes, attendees will have completed follow-up cards and received the church's packet of materials, but at a key point have someone whom they respect give his or her personal testimony along with a simple plan of salvation.

The conversation starter is the personal testimony, which includes three parts: (1) My life before receiving Jesus, (2) How I met and received Him, and (3) How Jesus makes my life more meaningful. Once the personal story is shared, hearers are ready to learn how they can have a meaningful relationship with Jesus, too.

A Local Community Event

At a local community event in which your church sponsors one of many booths, have a drawing for an amazing prize (such as state-of-the-art tack at a rodeo). However, set the rule that to place one's name in the drawing, he or she must agree to complete a follow-up card, receive the church's packet of materials, and listen to a three-minute presentation of the Gospel.

Church members who give testimonies have just three minutes to share, so the conversation starter is simply, "I want to tell you about the most important relationship I have—with Jesus Christ—and share how you can have a meaningful relationship with Him, too."

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Plan of Salvation

For the evangelistic event coordinator

A plan of salvation is a summary of the Gospel story, told in God's own words from the Bible. It explains why, how, and what happens when we place our faith in Jesus. One simple plan* reads and speaks like a narrative:

- **God loves you.** The Bible says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). You are a part of the world that God loves. God loves you very much and He wants to have a relationship with you. You are an important person to God.
- **But, you have sinned.** The Bible says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Breaking a rule is an example of sin. Another example is getting angry at someone or thinking ill of him. Sin is an action or thought that God does not like. How have you sinned?
- **Your sin separates you from God.** The Bible says, "But your iniquities [sins] have separated you from God; your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2). Because of sin, you cannot be with God and He cannot be with you. You cannot have a relationship with Him.
- **But, Jesus died for your sin.** The Bible says, "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ [Jesus] died for us" (Romans 5:8). God sent Jesus into the world so He could die for our sins. Because Jesus died, your sins can be forgiven. Because of Jesus, you can have a relationship with God.
- **Though, now, Jesus lives again.** The Bible says, "Christ died for our sins, was buried, and was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). Jesus died for our sins, was buried and, three days later, God raised Him back to life. The Bible also tells us that because Jesus is alive, "He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him" (Hebrews 7:25).
- **Jesus can be with you.** The Bible says to have a relationship with God, you must:
 1. **Repent.** That means you understand that you are a sinner and that you turn away from your sin. To repent, you simply tell God that you know you have sinned, ask Him to forgive you, and ask Him to help you obey Him. The Bible says, "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out" (Acts 3:19).
 2. **Believe.** You must believe that Jesus died for you and that He is alive today. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but by Me" (John 14:6). You must believe that Jesus is the only way for you to get to heaven.
 3. **Receive.** You must invite Jesus to come into your life to be your Savior and the Lord over your life. By inviting Him into your life, you are promising to obey Him in all areas of your life. The Bible says, "Yet to all who received Him [Jesus], to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become the children of God" (John 1:12).
- **The important question for you now is, Do you want to receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord?** You can do so by praying from your heart. Tell God what's on your heart.

* Other salvation plans are found in this packet, with the Door-to-Door Gospel Distribution and Harvest Sunday information.