

His Heart
Our Hands



FOREWORD BY FRANKLIN GRAHAM

A Guide for Ministry Evangelism



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As a pilot, I learned a long time ago the importance of charting one's course in order to reach an intended destination. In other words, it isn't enough just to take off with good intentions and hope that, somehow, you'll end up where you want to go. Studying maps, assessing weather, calculating required fuel—these and other considerations are essential to a successful flight.

In the work of evangelism, a similar principle applies. In His Word, the Bible, Almighty God Himself has given us commands and precedents which we must heed in order to have maximum impact for His glory. Good intentions alone won't suffice.

For example, the message of Christ's death on the cross for our sins and His resurrection from the grave is "the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Rom. 1:16). Any evangelistic efforts that are not cross-centered are, from God's perspective, doomed to failure.

Prayer is also an indispensable part of evangelism. Christ said, "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me" (John 15:4, NKJV).

At Samaritan's Purse, a relief ministry built on the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:30-37, we have found that being physically present among hurting people and offering them practical assistance along with the gospel is an effective way to evangelize. When people are down in the ditch beside life's road and you come along and care for them, they're going to listen to what you have to say. Food, clothing, shelter, medicine, and other aid earn a hearing for the good news of salvation. This approach, I believe, has untapped potential for the evangelistic efforts of North American churches.

We live in an age when the world has too often witnessed us as Christians either spouting words not backed up by deeds, or engaging in charitable acts without a clear call to repentance and faith. It is time for us to let our hearts be fully broken and driven by those things which break and drive the heart of God.

God is "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9, NKJV), and He "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). Pleasing Him will most certainly involve extending our hands and giving to others in His name, even when it costs us money, time, and energy.

This resource offers guidance to local congregations about how to begin ministry-based evangelism right in their community. I'm confident that as its suggestions are put into practice, men and women will come to know the Savior. When this happens, the good intentions of many Christians will have become a reality.

Franklin Graham, Chairman and CEO
Samaritan's Purse

Section One

CHAPTER 1

Biblical Basis for Ministry-Based Evangelism

Karen and Steve Rogers drove past the Sandhills Mobile Home Park every Sunday on their way to church. They hardly ever noticed it. The community of run-down mobile homes sat off the road. It was hidden behind a rickety, unpainted privacy fence. When local police broke up a major drug ring operating out of the low-income community, suddenly everyone knew the location of Sandhills.

As for the Rogers, this community soon emerged from obscurity to the top of their prayer list. A vision for evangelism and ministry began to develop in their hearts. They prayed for the people living in Sandhills. They discovered the area was infamous for domestic violence, drugs, and crime.

Because of the Rogers' influence and passion, it wasn't long before their middle-class church shared their concern. It was then that an effort was organized to evangelize the Sandhills residents through ministry-based evangelism. With some trepidation, church members visited the community. They invited residents to Sunday School and worship. They even offered van assistance to transport interested community members to church.

After three Sundays with no response, the church abandoned the project. Fortunately, the same cannot be said for the Rogers. Little did they know that their journey was just beginning. God enlightened Karen's heart to His desire during a time of family devotions.

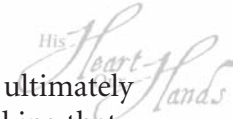
"Steve, we've got it all backwards," she said. "We've been asking the folks at Sandhills to come to church with us when the Great Commission does not say 'come' but 'go . . . make disciples!'"

The Rogers shared their insights with the church. Two other couples joined them in renting a small mobile home in the Sandhills community. This home soon became a center for ministry-based evangelism.

They wanted to expand trust and build friendships for evangelism. Their ministries included a children's club, free food and clothing for the unemployed, a young mothers' club to assist unwed teenage mothers, as well as regular jail visitation with incarcerated family members of Sandhills residents. Considering all of this, few were surprised when a congregation, the Sandhills Chapel of Faith, soon developed in the tiny living room of the mobile home ministry center.

Stories like these can be multiplied countless times across North America. A stay-at-home mother in a middle class midwestern community utilized her college degree in science to assist neighborhood children in completing difficult school projects. She provided free child care, then shared the gospel with them. Another family in an upper class community in the deep south reached out to a recently divorced mother. They organized the neighborhood to provide much needed stability for her children through assisting with daily child care when the mother was forced back into the work force. In short, ministry-based evangelism is the most effective approach available to the church for reaching into the lives of lost people.

Socioeconomic levels are of little consequence when it comes to the need for both ministry and evangelism. The predominant issues are a willingness to combine intentional personal evangelism



with a genuine spirit of servanthood as a basis for ministering to people's needs and ultimately expanding God's kingdom. As a word of caution, one must never be fooled into thinking that financial affluence is an escape from personal need. The key is being sensitive to ministry opportunities, then being available to serve others regardless of cultural challenges or personal desires.

Jesus Christ: The Model of Ministry-Based Evangelism

When Jesus met His first disciples along the shores of the Sea of Galilee, He called them to do more than simply leave their nets behind. His call was an invitation to be involved in both evangelism and discipleship. Ultimately, this same call would become an entreaty to live a radical new life. This life demanded total commitment to the kingdom of God.

The disciples' spiritual rebirth was so profound and joyful that they could not possibly keep it to themselves. As new creations, their faith overflowed into every aspect of their lives. Both their relationship with the Heavenly Father and the way they viewed lost people around them were forever transformed.

The disciples spent three years with Jesus learning what it meant to be channels of His love and grace. Christ took seriously His role as both evangelist and mentor. He modeled for them, and for us, what it meant to be His agents of hope in a lost and hurting world.

Through His witness, Jesus demonstrated that every dimension of life was included in the Father's redemptive concern. God is concerned about physical, spiritual, emotional, and social needs. His model combines both a ministry of compassion with a strong verbal witness. This is why Jesus is most commonly recorded in the Gospels proclaiming the good news of salvation and forgiveness, and then moving into the crowds to touch and to heal (see Matt. 4:23-25).

While His purpose has always been to save humanity from spiritual darkness, it is also true that Christ was concerned with sinful social structures that oppress society. He was especially concerned about the weak and vulnerable. Although this emphasis on transforming personal and social dimensions of man and society can be found throughout Scripture, the best expression is the life of Jesus. He alone is the greatest example of balancing the demands of meeting physical needs with the call of personal evangelism. The truth is, Christian obedience demands both.

With this in mind, five biblical teachings emerge from Scripture, primarily taken from the life and ministry of Jesus. These principles provide the biblical foundation for ministry-based evangelism.

1. *The Bible teaches that Christians should be the incarnation of the gospel they proclaim.*

Regardless of the audience, Jesus always communicated His saving message through both word and deed. As dedicated disciples, we are encouraged to do the same. Luke 4:18-19 (NLT) tells us, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has appointed me to preach Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the down-trodden will be freed from their oppressions, and that the time of the Lord's favor has come." (See also Matt. 4:23-25; 15:29-38; 1 John 3:17-18.)

Steven Sjogren, the author of *Conspiracy of Kindness* and the one who coined the phrase “servanthood evangelism,” deals with this challenge of incarnational ministry-based evangelism by presenting the question, “How do we see them?” He first presents the false idea of “evading” lost people, therefore trying to avoid personal responsibility. His next undesirable option is to “pervade” the lost world through an overpowering personal witness that usually results in an argumentative atmosphere. Sjogren’s final solution is to “invade” society through incarnational ministries that combine intentional personal evangelism with a genuine spirit of Christ-like servanthood.¹

The Bible makes it clear that we are to meet the physical needs of people when we are aware of them. By doing so, we are ministering to Christ.

Then the King will say to those on the right, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.”

Then these righteous ones will reply, “Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison, and visit you?” And the King will tell them, “I assure you, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me” (Matt. 25: 34-40, NLT)!

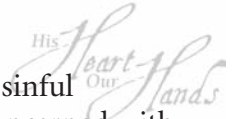
Just as Christ sent out the twelve disciples to proclaim the kingdom of God and to meet personal needs in Luke 9:1-6, Christians today are still biblically responsible to become the hands, feet, and mouthpieces of the Savior’s message.

2. The Bible teaches Christians to be agents of spiritual transformation and social justice.

God’s love for hurting humanity has both a personal and a social dimension. The Bible is explicit that Christians should confront sinful attitudes and structures that oppress human beings. Injustice in society is an affront to God. Ministry-based evangelism proclaims the gospel to oppressed and disadvantaged groups such as minorities, the disabled, migrant laborers, and the poor, and also seeks to change the social structures and attitudes that marginalize and dehumanize them.

The kind of fasting I want calls you to free those who are wrongly imprisoned and to stop oppressing those who work for you. Treat them fairly and give them what they earn. I want you to share your food with the hungry and to welcome poor wanderers into your homes. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help.

If you do these things, your salvation will come like the dawn. Yes, your healing will come quickly. Your godliness will lead you forward, and the glory of the Lord will protect you from behind. Then when you call, the Lord will answer, “Yes, I am here,” He will quickly reply (Isa. 58: 6-12, NLT).



Christians must recognize that the primary message of Christ was that of redeeming sinful humanity to a loving Savior. Genuine ministry-based evangelism should always be concerned with social justice and meeting needs, but never to the exclusion of verbalizing the gospel.

Jesus was a master at challenging the prejudiced attitudes of His day, while at the same time sharing the simple message of spiritual transformation. Just like the woman caught in adultery in John 8:1-12, Christ not only condemned the dehumanizing attitudes of the religious rulers, but through the phrase, “go and sin no more” (John 8:11, NLT), He was ultimately concerned about the eternal soul of the adulterous woman.

The Bible teaches that God is engaged in a struggle against evil in the world. It is God’s desire to rid fallen creation of all that is dehumanizing, life-destroying, and death-producing. His children are called to join His struggle against the forces of death and violence. Ministry-based evangelism focuses on sharing the gospel of peace with those who inflict violence and ministering compassionately to their victims. Pregnancy care centers, ministries with victims of domestic violence, outreach to persons affected by AIDS, and refugee resettlement ministry all are life-affirming responses to the victims of violence, death, and disease. (See also Isa. 58:5-6; Amos 1:6; 2:6-7; 5:7-15,23-24; Mic. 6:7-8; Luke 1:46-56; 4:14-21.)

3. The Bible teaches Christians to love everyone, including social outcasts.

In Chapter Nine of his book *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire*, Jim Cymbala, pastor of the Brooklyn Tabernacle in New York City, shares about an encounter he had one Easter evening with a homeless man named David. His first impression was that the man only wanted money. He would soon be surprised, Cymbala recalls.

When he came close, I saw that his two front teeth were missing. But more striking was his odor—the mixture of alcohol, sweat, urine, and garbage took my breath away. I have been around many street people, but this was the strongest stench I have ever encountered. I instinctively had to turn my head sideways to inhale, then look back in his direction while breathing out.

I asked his name.

“David,” he said softly.

“How long have you been homeless, David?”

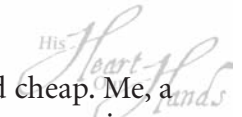
“Six years.”

“Where did you sleep last night?”

“In an abandoned truck.”

I had heard enough and wanted to get this over quickly. I reached for the money clip in my back pocket.

At that moment David put his finger in front of my face and said, “No, you don’t understand—I don’t want your money. I’m going to die out there. I just want the Jesus that red-haired girl talked about.”



I hesitated, then closed my eyes. *God, forgive me*, I begged. I felt soiled and cheap. Me, a minister of the Gospel . . . I had wanted simply to get rid of him, when he was crying out for the help of Christ I had just preached about. I swallowed hard and God's love flooded my soul

And that smell . . . I don't know how to explain it. It had almost made me sick, but now it became the most beautiful fragrance to me. . . . The Lord seemed to say to me in that instant, *Jim, if you and your wife have any value to me, if you have any purpose in my work—it has to do with this odor. This is the smell of the world I died for.*²

Jesus obviously had a special place in His heart for those shunned and rejected by society regardless of their socioeconomic level.

Then he turned to his host. “When you put on a luncheon or a dinner,” he said, “don't invite your friends, brothers, relatives, and rich neighbors. For they will repay you by inviting you back. Instead, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. Then at the resurrection of the godly, God will reward you for inviting those who could not repay you” (Luke 14:12-14, NLT).

From Zacchaeus, the wealthy tax collector in Luke 19, to the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4, Christ ministered to everyone with an equal measure of concern and love. (See Mark 1:40-42; 2:13-17; Luke 10:25-37; 14:12-23; Jas. 2:1-9.)

4. The Bible teaches that saving faith is best communicated through the avenue of genuine compassion and a spirit of Christlike servanthood.

The simple act of Jesus washing the disciples' feet in John 13 is probably the most defining expression of His ministry. After washing the disciples' feet He said,

Do you understand what I was doing? You call me “Teacher” and “Lord,” and you are right, because it is true. And since I, the Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. How true it is that a servant is not greater than the master. Nor are messengers more important than the one who sends them. You know these things—now do them! That is the path of blessing (John 13:12-17, NLT).

In a day when religious leaders were openly honored and given an exalted status in society, the common task of washing feet was considered demeaning. Nevertheless, it was Christ, the Suffering Servant of Scripture, that states in Matthew 20:28 (NKJV), “The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

It is amazing how the Father opens doors for evangelism when His children follow Christ's example of compassion. “People are more than twice as likely to allow a person to share their faith when evangelism is combined with simple acts of servanthood.”³

Whether it is raking leaves for the elderly, volunteering at a homeless shelter or a pregnancy care center, assisting AIDS patients, hospice care, or something as simple as randomly preparing meals



for busy neighbors, God is always honored when His children care. Rest assured the Holy Spirit will open countless doors for evangelism when Christians are willing to be instruments of His compassion.

When the disciples experienced new life in Christ, it changed the way they related to those in need. One of the evidences of the new birth and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a life characterized by love and compassion for hurting people. The faith that saves us is the same faith that compels us to serve the hungry, the poor, the prisoners, and the sick. Ministry-based evangelism seeks not only to help hurting people know Jesus, but to wash their feet as He did. (See Matt. 11:1-6; 25:31-40; Mark 10:41-45; Luke 22:24-27; Jas. 2:14-17.)

5. The Bible teaches that Christians should share resources, especially with those who are in need.

The story of “the widow’s offering” in Mark 12:41-44, is one of the most touching accounts in all of Scripture. As Jesus stood and watched the wealthy placing their gifts into the temple treasury, He was most impressed with a poor widow who only gave two mites (less than two cents). According to Jesus, “this poor widow has given more than all the others have given. For they gave a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she has” (Matt. 12:43-44, NLT).

The truth is, Christ requires the same from His people today. In order to support ventures into ministry-based evangelism, it is logical that Christians must be willing to share abundantly from their resources. After all, isn’t sharing with those in need an act of worship? Actually, the spirit of generosity is a reliable sign that the Holy Spirit is at work among His people.

Ministry-based evangelism involves sharing the gospel with those in need and sharing our resources of finances, time, and energy. It may mean starting a food pantry or teaching someone to read and write so they can get a better job and support their family. (See Deut. 15:7-11; Prov. 14:31; Acts 2:42-47; 1 John 3:17-18.)

The call of ministry-based evangelism is an imperative to continue Jesus’ earthly ministry of both proclamation and practice. Therefore, *His Heart, Our Hands* has been prepared as a resource with multiple approaches to meeting practical needs while sharing the personal message of the gospel. May this be the beginning of an exciting adventure as your church experiences the fulfillment of ministry-based evangelism.

Notes

- ¹ Steve Sjogren, Indiana State Evangelism Conference, May 16, 1995, held at Vineyard Community Church in Cincinnati, Ohio.
- ² Taken from *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire* by Jim Cymbala; Dean Merrill (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997), pp. 142-143. Copyright © 1997 by Jim Cymbala. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House.
- ³ Alvin Reid and David Wheeler, *Servanthood Evangelism* (Alpharetta, Ga.: North American Mission Board, 1999), p. 14.

Benefits of Ministry-Based Evangelism for Your Church

On January 18, 1997, the 11 remaining members of Lake Forest Baptist Church in South Broward County, Fla., voted to close their church. They were without a pastor and the church's unpaid bills were greater than the balance in their banking account. A large section of their educational building was unused and boarded up.

In a final effort to avoid closing the church doors, one of the members called local church strategists to see if they could do anything to help. The strategists believed the church could be salvaged.

One strategist offered to serve as interim pastor and a ministry-based evangelism specialist offered to work with the 11 members to dream how they could reach the people in their community. She began by asking, "What do you want to do in your community? What does it mean to serve God in this community?"

The population of the community around the church was racially and ethnically diverse. Many people struggled to exist just above the poverty level. A nurse in the church pointed out that the majority of the residents were without health insurance. This sparked an idea about the possibility of providing health care ministries in the neighborhood.

The congregation to conduct a community needs assessment (see Chapter 6). They contacted county officials to apply for a grant to remodel the educational building for use as a health care ministry center. They were given funds to redo the facility. In 1998 the Health Care Foundation of South Florida provided funds to help staff the medical ministry. Needless to say, with a new vision for ministry, the congregation began to grow.

The members called Jorge Aguayo as pastor. When the church began to reach out through the health care ministry, they caught the attention of the people in the community. In Aguayo's first year at the church he baptized 48 people. The church soon established Hispanic and Haitian congregations in addition to the Anglo congregation. Lake Forest Baptist Church is thriving today.

In learning about the biblical basis of ministry-based evangelism, we have seen that the reason for reaching out to others is that Christ wants us to do so. Through word and deed, He modeled ministry-based evangelism both as a lifestyle and a purpose for living. Ministry-based evangelism glorifies God and is an act of worship. It lifts up His name and makes Him known.

Christ's mandate is enough reason to do ministry-based evangelism, but other benefits come to churches that obey Christ through ministry and witness. Ministry-based evangelism should not be seen as a drain on church resources, but rather as a great channel of blessing to your congregation. Let's look at ten ways ministry-based evangelism can help your church.



1. Ministry-based evangelism will help you identify prospects.

A ministering church will never run out of prospects, because it will always be coming into contact with people in need of a church home. Most of these people will be lost. Free yourself and your congregation from the mindset that only lost people need friendship and help. Many people who receive a church's ministry are already Christians.

If that is true, why aren't they already in a church somewhere? Perhaps they have fallen away from their initial commitment to living the Christian life. Sometimes, this happens gradually as people miss one, then two, then several Sundays, until they no longer feel part of a church home. At other times, sin separates them from the fellowship of other Christians. For example, a Christian who abuses drugs or alcohol may be asked to leave his or her church or the person may leave out of a sense of failure or shame. A substance abuse ministry can help that brother or sister find the way back into a fellowship of believers. At other times, people become disillusioned with church because of some scandal or move to a new place and never reconnect with a church. Or, they may have become Christians through a broadcast ministry or Scripture portion and never followed through with their initial commitment by seeking believer's baptism and church membership.

All of these people—the lost and the Christians who have lost their way—when touched by ministry-based evangelism, may look to your church as a place where they can belong.

2. Ministry-based evangelism builds witnessing relationships with people.

Some people are led to Christ by a door-to-door evangelism presentation. Others will take a religious tract, read it, and trust Christ as Savior. Some, however, are most responsive to ministry-based evangelism. The international student spending Christmas in a Christian home, the latchkey child looking to her Christian math tutor for help every week, the senior adult chatting with his or her van driver on trips to the doctor—all these are in a relationship with the people who minister to them. That relationship, which is an incarnation of Christ's love, can help them understand a verbal witness. That ministry relationship also establishes the trust and respect that is sometimes necessary to gain a hearing for the gospel.

3. Ministry-based evangelism creates opportunities to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

When so many welfare and charitable agencies, both public and private, already exist, why should your church become involved in meeting community needs? Because those entities, while serving a good cause and doing important work, do not have as their foundational purpose the sharing of the gospel. Your church does have that purpose. A person who goes to a secular food bank will receive nutritious food, but in an evangelistic food ministry that hungry person will also be offered the Bread of life.

How does that help your church? A church should always be seeking ways to share Jesus. True, people can come through the doors at any worship service, but the New Testament does not model that as the only type of evangelism. It models Christians going out to where people live. For your church, ministry-based evangelism can create countless new ways in which to share Christ, ways that would not exist outside a ministry setting.



4. Ministry-based evangelism connects your church with the community as you serve those around you.

Brad, a minister at a local church, was speaking to an influential community leader and asked, “How do you think people in the community view my church?”

The leader’s answer stunned him: “Brad, I don’t mean to be rude, but until I met you I didn’t even know your church existed. Is it new?” (Brad’s church was over 100 years old, but had no evangelistic ministries.)

While Christians strive to remain unpolluted from the world, they must still interact with that world if they are to have any effect whatsoever for the Lord. Ministry-based evangelism will bring your church into greater contact with the community. A ministry can remain pure to its evangelistic purpose and still relate to the rest of the community (the community needs assessment is an example of this).

Marlon Longacre, Community Outreach Director at NorthStar Church in Georgia, saw a need in the local elementary school. He learned that more than 50 percent of the children who attended school there lived below the poverty level and 22 percent lived in housing authority projects. He decided to visit the principal to see what NorthStar might be able to do to make a difference in the lives of these children. As a result of that visit, Longacre began a Thursday evening ministry in the housing authority project called “Dream Builders.” Volunteers from NorthStar provide dinner for the children followed by a time of singing and games. They have a professional person present a learning experience in a subject area such as biology and then a social worker presents a program on social skills. Volunteers then present an art project and a devotional.

Longacre and the volunteers learned that many of these children are not able to participate in school activities because they don’t have a ride to get there and they don’t have the finances to pay the extra fees. They also don’t have a view of life that extends beyond welfare and the housing authority projects. He enlisted volunteers, many of them professional men and women, to mentor these students. Mentors go to the school once a week, have lunch with the student and spend half an hour with them. Some go to the library and read with them, some go for a walk and some go to the gym and shoot a basketball with them. What they do isn’t as important as the time and interest that is shown to the student. These volunteers build a relationship with the student and take them on family outings or to a ball game.

The church has collected money to provide uniforms, band instruments, field trip expenses, and other fees. They also pool their abilities to provide rides so that the children can participate fully in school activities.

Doing these things has opened doors they never thought possible. Staff at the church can now visit with counselors and social workers at the school and are called upon to help whenever there is a need with one of the children at the school. When the local middle school and high school heard about these activities, they invited NorthStar to mentor students there as well. NorthStar provided a cookout for the football team at the high school. They presented the plan of salvation and three football players gave their lives to Christ. Longacre and the pastor of NorthStar, Ike Reighard, are both serving as chaplains of the football team at the middle school and the high school. The vision for community ministries at NorthStar Church is that the church will be the



first place people will call for help, not the last. With their work in the schools, they are well on their way to meeting that goal.

5. Ministry-based evangelism increases the visibility of your church in the community as a caring place.

Connections with the community alone will not ensure that people think of your church as a refuge of love and care. Evangelistic ministries, however, will heighten community awareness of your church as a channel of God's love. Even people who spurn the outer trappings of religion are attracted to gestures of compassion.

Look at it this way, a very popular series on public television is "The Antiques Roadshow." The premise is simple: people bring in their antiques and some experts choose interesting items to appraise on camera. Part of the appeal of the show is finding out if an item is real or fake. Is it authentic? That's what the owner and the audience want to know. When a piece is authenticated, the owner is jubilant. When a piece is revealed as a reproduction, the owner is usually downcast. People are tired of fakes; they want the real thing. Yet, the desire people have for authentic material goods is nothing compared to their cravings for spiritual authenticity.

Compassion, as expressed through ministry-based evangelism, will testify to the genuineness of your church's faith and Christian commitment. A world sick of hype and the struggle for power is looking for authenticity wherever it can find it.

Not all of your ministries have to be based inside your church building, but wherever they are housed, their affiliation with your congregation will enhance your church's visibility as a place where people are loved. If you want your community to know your church is genuine, ministry-based evangelism is a powerful way to do that.

6. Ministry-based evangelism will create new opportunities of service for your members.

Ministry-based evangelism is a privilege, because serving others in Jesus' name is a privilege. It is also a Christian's obligation. Many believers want to serve, but they do not know where to begin. For a variety of reasons, they do not have the confidence to strike out on their own. Think of the members of your church who find outlets for service in community volunteer organizations or service clubs. Are they seeking these outlets because your church does not provide ministry-based evangelism opportunities for them?

There is joy in serving. Ask anyone who has seen the look on a hungry man's face when he is handed a hot meal or felt the grasp of an AIDS patient's hand during a hospital visit. Are there people in your church who are experiencing spiritual apathy, but who are searching for a spark of joy in their relationship to God? Serving the needy is a good antidote to spiritual passivity, for Jesus is near the hurting and helpless. The reality of Christ's truth is never felt so deeply as when people are desperate.

Giving your congregation opportunities to serve the weak and the troubled gives them opportunities to more fully experience the Christian life.



7. Ministry-based evangelism allows believers to grow in discipleship.

The use of spiritual gifts is a big part of Christian growth, and ministry-based evangelism allows believers to use those gifts (see Chapter 5). It also enables them to use their education, skills, and talents for the kingdom of God. Ministry-based evangelism helps believers grow and mature.

Perhaps you are wondering how ministry-based evangelism stimulates spiritual growth. Ministry-based evangelism may be the vehicle that first stirs a Christian's desire to serve. It can motivate deeper understanding of God's Word as a believer searches for biblical commands and insights into poverty, justice, treatment of the aged and alien, and other such issues. (More than one Christian has been surprised to discover that the saying, "God helps those who help themselves," is not in the Bible!)

When a believer becomes involved in ministry-based evangelism, he or she will likely feel a need for help as ministry demands stretch the Christian in every way. Ministry recipients may ask hard questions about the Bible, faith, doctrine, and suffering. They may not always be easy to love. The ones who are easy to love are not always the ones who can be helped in a material or physical way. These experiences force the Christian to learn to articulate the gospel message as well as his or her own faith journey. Such experiences can also deepen a Christian's dependence on God while helping him or her exercise his or her spiritual gifts. As with exercising physical muscles, more exercise produces greater strength.

Finally, ministry-based evangelism broadens the believer as a person. The believer gains a greater understanding of other cultures or people groups. He or she learns to care about people outside his or her immediate circle of friends and families. The believer's emotional life deepens as he or she learns to weep with the brokenhearted and celebrate with the joyful. Ministry-based evangelism hones a believer's sense of gratitude for all that God has given.

David Dykes, pastor of Green Acres Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas, encouraged the medical professionals in his church to go on a mission trip to Mexico. These men and women went on the trip thinking they would take a break from their practices to help underprivileged people in another country. When they returned home, they expected to continue just as they had before going on the mission trip. But that is not what happened. Ministering to the poor in Mexico opened their eyes to what God can do through ministry-based evangelism. When they got home they were so excited, they rearranged their practices and their lives in order to do more ministry-based evangelism at home, while still participating in trips to other countries. The most exciting thing is the way they have grown spiritually. All of them frequently share their faith and are more involved in the church than ever before. Little did they know how much difference one mission trip would make in their lives or in the life of the church.

8. Ministry-based evangelism reaches people who are unreached.

When you embark on the adventure called ministry-based evangelism, you will find yourself coming in contact with people from all walks of life. As we have already discussed, you will meet Christians who have left church life, unbelievers who are searching for answers, and community leaders. Many of these latter two categories have already heard the gospel, yet not accepted it. You will likely meet several community leaders who are Christians belonging to various denominations.



But there is another huge category of people you will encounter—those who have not heard the gospel.

It may be hard to believe that there are people in the United States who think “Jesus” is a form of swearing and that Christmas is Santa Claus’ birthday. Sadly, many such people exist. Others know who Jesus is, but do not know Him personally because no one has ever explained how they can have a relationship with Him. Many of these people will be your ministry recipients; others will be the community leaders and workers with whom you make connections.

Ministry-based evangelism offers a precious privilege to the Christian—the opportunity to present the true, full gospel to an unreached person, or to share Scripture with a person who has never heard it before. That presentation of Christ’s saving love is realized both through actions and words.

9. Ministry-based evangelism enables your people to catch a vision for local missions.

Missions is not something that is just done “over there” in the farthest jungles of the world. Missions happens anywhere people are touching the unreached with the gospel. Ministry-based evangelism brings that truth home to people in a way no audiovisual aid or printed article ever could.

Ministry opens the eyes of Christians to the needs around them, both physical and spiritual. As they experience local missions, they see more needs and the opportunities God is giving them to help people and share the gospel. They stop saying, “Somebody really ought to do something,” and begin to ask, “What are we going to do about it?”

10. Ministry-based evangelism helps your church communicate the gospel in word and deed.

What are a church’s typical avenues of communication? Worship services, television or radio broadcasts of those services, and weekly outreach are the traditional avenues of sharing the gospel. Of course, your church is made up of individual Christians who have the desire and ability to share the gospel wherever they work and live. But wouldn’t you like more avenues of communication?

Ministry-based evangelism can provide those avenues. How might it happen?

- Children could write Bible verses on grocery bags for a food ministry
- Scripture portions could be placed in welcome baskets for a neighborhood ministry
- People whose lives have been touched through your ministry would tell others
- Community leaders would see your genuine love for people
- Local media might include your ministry efforts in local coverage
- People would notice the publicity you put around the neighborhood offering this ministry

Not every one of these avenues of communication allows for a full-blown presentation of the gospel, but they are ways of communicating the gospel message of love, thus increasing the likelihood that people will listen to and accept that saving message. Remember, words and deeds are but two sides of the same coin.

Do you want your church to grow? Do you want people in your church to grow? Ministry-based evangelism is a powerful New Testament model of how that can happen.

His Heart
Our Hands

Core Values for Ministry-Based Evangelism

Many missionaries, as well as associational and church staff, concentrate their outreach efforts in the area of ministry-based evangelism. Core values shape their work and loyalty to those values fosters excellence in their endeavors. Professional ministry-based evangelism workers typically base their efforts on the core values presented in this chapter. Any ministry-based evangelism effort should consider incorporating some or all of these ten core values into the foundation of their strategy for ministry-based evangelism.

1. Individual Service

God, in His wisdom, allows uniqueness among all individuals (see Luke 15:4; Ezek. 34:11). God has entrusted His message to His children so that the lost may find the way to the Father. While Jesus is **the** way, there are many ways in which the gospel can be shared. There is no room for a standardized approach to ministry-based evangelism, whether working with an individual, family, group, church, or whole community. Every effort to help (also known as an intervention) should be characterized by individualized service that reflects an acceptance of the person's God-given uniqueness.

2. Trustworthiness

A person of God should know how to keep a professional confidence (see Prov. 11:13). The nature of ministry-based evangelism demands that workers practice the discipline of confidentiality. Whether ministering to a person with AIDS or a teenager who has been sexually assaulted, the worker may be made aware of many heartbreaking secrets and stories. Sometimes, as when it is discovered that an elderly person or child is being abused, the worker will have a legal and moral obligation to report it to the authorities, but such decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. (Remember the value of individualized attention we discussed earlier.)

The worker should not reveal any details of an intervention, even as a prayer request, sermon illustration, or case study, without first obtaining permission from the person involved unless the worker has a moral obligation to report details to authorities. Revealing details of an intervention could result in the community losing trust in the worker or the entire ministry. Respect for privacy will earn the community's trust and regard.

3. Community Involvement

Linking local churches with the community is an integral part of ministry-based evangelism. Communities are made up of people and those people have needs and problems. The successful ministry-based evangelism worker is a catalytic agent among community and church leaders who are seeking options for solving community problems. When that church/community linkage is successful, the result is a transforming network that brings glory to God.

Chapter 6 in this book explains how it is possible for a church ministry to network with community resources without jeopardizing its identity as a faith-based, evangelistic entity. As you just read in Chapter 2 on the benefits of ministry-based evangelism, the links between church and community provide some of the best opportunities for your ministry to serve others in Christ's name.



4. Professional Objectivity

Ministry must occur in spite of a worker's own needs and wants (see Acts 26:29). Those involved in ministry-based evangelism have personal issues just like other human beings. They harbor their own biases and prejudices. Their calling to minister, however, compels them to serve in Jesus' name. The basis of their ministry transcends their own personal circumstances, hurts, and wants.

For example, a woman who has gone through a divorce may be reminded of her pain when she works with women who are experiencing serious family problems. If she is to minister with integrity, however, she cannot let her own feelings about men affect how she treats the women who come to her for help. She focuses on their need, on the resources the ministry can provide, and she does this within the framework of Christian love. Her highest priority is representing Christ, not her own feelings or needs.

5. Willingness to Share

Ministry-based evangelism workers are willing to share what they know, and they are ready to teach what they have learned (see 2 Cor. 9:8-13). There is no need to reinvent the wheel when it comes to ministry-based evangelism. Rather than allowing people to make costly mistakes through trial and error, workers share their skills and knowledge with others.

Those who work in ministry-based evangelism realize that God has been preparing them for their task. Sometimes this preparation comes through classroom training. At other times, however, they learn from books, other professional and volunteer workers, and their own life experiences. This knowledge is shared with others to promote understanding of ministry-based evangelism as a way of extending Christ's love.

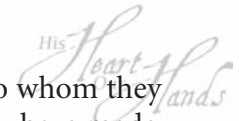
6. Respect for Human Differences

Affirmation of diversity should characterize those involved in ministry-based evangelism (see 1 Cor. 1:26-27; Gal. 3:28; Jas. 2:1-5). They recognize that Christ died for all people, not just people from their own racial, ethnic, or economic class. They also recognize that to become a believer in Jesus does not mean adopting the worker's social or economic standards. It doesn't even mean adopting English as one's primary language. Ministry-based evangelism workers want to meet needs and share God's love. They do not want to conform others into their own image.

7. Empowering Interventions

Helping people help themselves is foundational for ministry-based evangelism (see Isa. 61:1-4; Luke 4:18). To empower people is to join them in a journey of self-discovery. On this journey, people begin to understand that they are creations of God and therefore, objects of God's love. As objects of His love, they have worth.

Ministry-based evangelism workers can help people discover their worth in the eyes of God. They can do this through Scripture reading and prayer, through a verbal witness of Christ's love, and/or through linking the person with a local congregation. However, all of these efforts will be in vain unless the worker treats the person with respect, honesty, and compassion.



Does this mean workers have to like or approve of everything about the person to whom they minister? No. Some people are in need of ministry-based evangelism because they have made choices that are in direct violation of God's will. It is part of a worker's responsibility to uphold God's standards for relationships, whether that relationship is to God, others, or self. The way in which the worker does this, however, can make all the difference between empowering people and alienating them.

Regardless of the reason a person is in need of help, the worker can enable that person to be more self-sufficient. All people have some type of resources at their disposal; the worker can help them learn to identify and use those resources. The worker can guide and encourage the person to take action rather than taking every action for the person. For example, it might be quicker for the worker to call an agency to find heating oil for a family, but it would be better for the mother or father to learn how to make the phone call themselves.

Regarding planning—rather than telling a person to “do this, then do that,” the worker could say, “Let's look at some options for your circumstances.” Some people have never been taught the simple process of making a decision. By giving the person a ready-made plan, the worker may have quickly addressed one problem in the person's life. By teaching the person how to devise his or her own plan, the worker has given that person a lifelong skill.

8. Persistent Advocacy

Ministry-based evangelism workers need to persist in spite of bad experiences, ungratefulness, and unseen results (see Luke 6:32-36). One of the most difficult aspects of ministry-based evangelism is the scarcity of external rewards. Often, the desired outcome seems elusive. Self-satisfaction is threatened by frustration and gratitude is often eclipsed by ingratitude. In these situations, it helps to remember that the Master was crucified after attempting to reach the unsaved for three years. We should not expect to be treated better than Jesus was treated.

9. Transforming Strategies

Holistic ministry is committed to the spiritual, physical, mental, and social transformation of people (see Isa. 1:11-18; 1 Thess. 5:23). Ministry-based evangelism workers are serious about this commitment to life transformation.

The purpose of their ministry is to lead individuals, groups, families, churches, and communities to a transforming experience in Christ. Consequences of this experience touch the spiritual, mental, and physical lives of people. Workers know that when a person has been touched by Christ's love, nothing in life is the same.

10. Personal Renewal

A ministry-based evangelism worker must be committed to his or her own transformation and renewal (see Rom. 12:2). Ministry is jeopardized when workers show themselves no mercy, but continue driving themselves emotionally and physically. In order to assist others in transformation, workers must be transformed themselves. This goes beyond an initial faith commitment to Christ—it means continually growing spiritually, mentally, and emotionally. It means caring for

CORE VALUES FOR MINISTRY-BASED EVANGELISM

one's own physical needs and maintaining a sense of well being. Ministry-based evangelism workers should be dedicated to having healthy relationships with their Lord, their families, their churches, their communities, and the rest of God's creation.

*His Heart
Our Hands*

CHAPTER 4

How to Get Started in Ministry-Based Evangelism

When you were young, did your parents admonish you to clean your plate because “children in Africa (or India or China) are starving?” Did you struggle to understand how your leftovers could help children halfway around the globe? And did you ever wish someone would tell you how to send your leftovers to them? Believe it or not, this story has spiritual application.

Any desire to do a certain thing must be accompanied by a practical plan of action. This chapter provides ideas and resources—a practical plan of action—to help you design and implement ministry-based evangelism in your own church.

Step One: Prayer

P.T. Forsyth, Scottish scholar and theologian of the nineteenth century once said, “To begin the day with prayer is but a formality unless it goes on in prayer, unless for the rest of it we pray in deed what we began in word.”¹

It has been said that if you work hard, you get what work can do, but if you pray, you get what God can do. Even a cursory look at the history of ministry-based evangelism reveals the pivotal role of prayer.

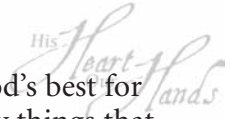
Jesus, our model in this as in all things, practiced and taught that prayer played an important role in ministry-based evangelism (see Matt. 9:35-38; Luke 10:1-11). The early church also demonstrated that prayer was vital to their evangelism efforts (see Acts 4:23-31).

From German pietist Herman Francke’s work in organizing homes for underprivileged orphans and widows, to George Mueller’s orphanage ministry, to D.L. Moody’s work with youth through the YMCA, prayer was the founding and sustaining power of their evangelistic ministries. Today, prayer is key to the evangelistic effectiveness of Franklin Graham’s ministry, Samaritan’s Purse. Likewise, prayer must be the foundation of the local church’s ministry-based evangelism efforts to be successful.

Prayer’s role in ministry-based evangelism is fourfold.

1. Prayer provides direction.

- Jesus said in John 5:19 (RSV), “The Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever he does, that the Son does likewise.” Look at any of the stories of Jesus’ life and you will see this kind of dependence upon the Father. Before Jesus called the 12 disciples, He spent the night alone with His Father praying. Later, the disciples came to Him and said, “Lord, teach us to pray.” Notice they did not ask, “Lord, teach us how to pray,” but “Lord, teach us to pray.” It seems that every time they came upon Jesus alone, He was praying. He always craved not His will, but God’s (see Luke 22:42).
- Because of the multitude of pressures and demands on the typical congregation, it is important to approach the development of ministry-based evangelism with dependence



on God's direction. It is easy to settle for something "good," yet miss God's best for your congregation. The enemy would love for us to be involved in many things that, while good, are not God's best things for our church. As you study God's Word and this guide, ask God to reveal His direction for ministry-based evangelism in your church. God will direct you to His best things.

2. Prayer spiritually prepares the way for ministry-based evangelism.

- In Matthew 9:36-38, Jesus calls His followers to pray for laborers to harvest His fields. Motivation for going as witnesses comes when believers ask the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers. It is wise for congregations to ask the Lord to send people to practice ministry-based evangelism. Often, we do not have because we do not ask (see Jas. 4:2).
- Prayer opens doors for effective ministry-based evangelism (see Col. 4:2-6). As your church studies which ministries to begin or support, consider conducting prayer journeys in certain areas or communities.
- Prayer prepares the hearts and opens the eyes of unbelievers to receive an evangelistic witness (see Rom. 10:1-2).

3. Prayer ensures powerful, appropriate, and timely witness.

- When congregations pray for believers to share Christ boldly, effective evangelism follows (see Acts 4:29-30). Compile a list of people who are already involved in ministry-based evangelism. Prayer groups and intercessory prayer room ministries can pray for these people to be bold witnesses.
- Specific prayer for proper witness enhances a Christian's ability to share the right words with unbelievers (see Eph. 6:18-20).
- It is not enough to speak the right words; you must speak the right words at the right time. Prayer for Christian witnesses allows for timely witness in divinely ordained encounters with the lost (see Col. 4:2-6).

4. Prayer allows for effective and fruitful follow-up.

- Ministry-based evangelism results in people coming to saving faith, but it does not stop there. Evangelism is incomplete unless it also ensures proper care for those new Christians. Prayer is at the heart of biblical discipleship (see Eph. 1:15-23; 1 Thess. 3:11-13).

Ministry-based evangelism efforts should be permeated with specific biblical prayer. This will take place as congregations become houses of prayer with a passion for the lost.

Jim Cymbala, pastor of the Brooklyn Tabernacle, where God is doing amazing things, correctly sums up the need for prayer in ministry-based evangelism. "We must face the fact that for our churches and ministries to be all God wants them to be, they must be saturated with prayer. No new revelation or church-growth technique will change the fact that spiritual power is always linked to communion with God. If you and I are prayerless, if our churches have no appetite for God's presence, we will never reach our full potential in him."²



Step Two: Share the Vision

You must share the vision with both church leaders and laity. Who will the people in your church follow? Involve these people of influence in developing a plan for sharing the vision of ministry-based evangelism in your church. Some possible elements of a vision communication strategy are given below.

- Preach a series of messages on ministry-based evangelism. These could be on Sunday mornings, Sunday evenings, or Wednesday evenings. A suggested series might be:

The Biblical Mandate for Ministry-Based Evangelism
 What Can Ministry-Based Evangelism Do for Our Church?
 Core Values for Ministry-Based Evangelism
 Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts for Ministry-Based Evangelism
 Sharing Your Faith

Use the appropriate chapters in this book to get information for your messages.

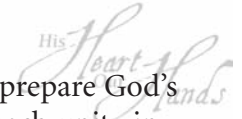
- Ask someone from another church already involved in ministry-based evangelism to come and give a testimony about what ministry-based evangelism has done for their church.
- Put ministry-based evangelism stories in your church newsletter.
- Provide bulletin inserts that tell about your church's plans to utilize ministry-based evangelism as a tool for reaching your neighborhood for Christ. Include stories.
- Give your church a taste of ministry-based evangelism to get them excited. Organize a low risk, uncomplicated project such as in Chapter 11 in this book. This project will get your congregation excited about the possibilities.

Step Three: Assess Community Needs

Conduct a community needs assessment. Chapter 6 provides detailed guidance on how to prepare for the assessment. The assessment involves interviewing community leaders and human service professionals to learn about their work and to identify unmet needs in the community. This experience allows the church to build relationships with various community leaders. The assessment will yield many specific possibilities for community outreach and will help you understand your community better.

Step Four: Determine Giftedness

After assessing community needs, determine the giftedness of church members. Chapter 5 outlines how people can discover and use their spiritual gifts. Paul said in Ephesians 4:11, "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors



and teachers . . .” Notice the purpose of those gifted people in verses 12 and 13, “to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”

Paul said to Timothy, “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2, NKJV). Timothy was part of a group of leaders Paul developed as he ministered. Paul was following the example of Jesus, the master teacher, who was not supremely interested in programs that would win the multitudes, but rather in leaders the multitudes would follow. The small band of people He mentored, when unleashed at the Day of Pentecost, turned the first century world upside down. Effective ministry-based evangelism happens when the believers in the pew discover their gifts and use them to meet the needs of others and to share Christ.

Some pastors and leaders are hesitant to do such equipping for fear they might lose control. John Ed Mathison, pastor of Frazer United Methodist Church in Montgomery, Ala., in sharing at a leadership conference, addressed this hesitation. “If you as a pastor have to know about everything that goes on in your church, then there is not enough going on in your church.”³

Look what can happen when God’s people are free to be the church:

- Eager to reach families moving into her community’s new subdivisions, Annette devised a plan of home visits to present a welcome package with information about the church and community. When she approached her pastor with the idea, he affirmed the plan and recommended that she and the church ministry-based evangelism team conduct a pilot project. Annette and three fellow church members put together the welcome bags and made visits. They focused on one subdivision for the initial visitation. In one month, making both daytime and evening visits, Annette and her coworkers made contact with every family in the community. Most visits were well received. With God’s leadership, Annette helped her church develop another outreach ministry for the community.
- David Holland is a farmer in the coastal community of Hubert, N.C. He is also an active deacon at his church, Piney Grove Baptist Church. David knew that his neighbor employed seasonal agricultural workers. David asked and was given permission by his neighbor to invite the farm workers to church. Several of the workers expressed an interest, and on the next Sunday, David picked them up for church. That simple act of inviting migrants to church blossomed into a weekly ministry with different groups in the church providing Bible study, transportation to and from church, a Sunday meal, and recreation. Several of the men accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and numerous people in the church had a positive experience through this ministry-based evangelism project.
- While completing doctoral work, Pat saw her church’s membership decline as the neighborhood underwent a transition. Her pastor was open to her ideas for new ways of reaching the community. Together, they organized a missions committee and began planning for community ministries. Outreach efforts that included a counseling ministry, an information and referral ministry, a mentoring program for teens, and ministries for the elderly invigorated the congregation and brought new members into the church.

Stories abound where leaders have caught the vision set forth in this guide and have led people to use their spiritual gifts in ministry-based evangelism.



Step Five: Match Community Needs with the Church's Gifts

Prayerfully study the needs of your community in relation to the areas of interest and giftedness of your people. Use the ministry models provided in Section Two of this guide to see if there is a ministry action plan (MAP) that would meet that need. If so, follow the instructions in that MAP, or adapt it to meet your needs. You may discover needs that are not reflected in the MAPs that are provided. In that case, encourage your people to dream and establish the ministry. You will find, in Chapter 6, a section on how to determine whether or not a dream or a passion could become a relevant ministry. This chapter teaches how to evaluate and develop ministry ideas.

Step Six: Plan the Ministry

People who do not plan will likely find themselves being carried along by the demands that happen to come their way. At the end of the day, they will have accomplished isolated pieces of ministry that, in all likelihood, did not move them toward any coherent objective. Planning is a necessary step that must take place if ministry-based evangelism is to be an effective tool for reaching your community with the gospel.

Planning is a process. In most cases, this involves some or all of the following components.

1. Determine a mission statement.

A mission statement is the broad intention of the entire ministry-based evangelism effort with which you are involved. Such statements usually include “meeting the spiritual, social, emotional, and physical needs of people in the community,” or “evangelizing and congregationalizing the people in the community.” They are statements of purpose.

Mission statements should be brief, but comprehensive. They should have input from all groups involved in carrying out the ministry and should be consistent with the mission statement of your church. If you are preparing a mission statement for the first time and if other people are assigned to your ministry, include them in the process as early as possible. If you already have a mission statement, spend some time thinking about it. Is it satisfactory the way it is or should it be revised?

Whether you are writing a new mission statement or revising an old one, think of the groups that should discuss the final draft. Make arrangements to review the mission statement with each group. These group discussions will further clarify the mission statement. Also, remember that accomplishing the mission statement depends on how much people buy into it as something worth doing. If they believe it is worthwhile and decide to do it, they will be willing to invest their time, energy, and money to see it done. If the mission statement is developed by you alone, you will likely have to accomplish it alone.



2. Decide what ministries you will establish first.

Take a look at the results of your community needs assessment. Most likely, you will be overwhelmed by the possibilities of what your church could be doing. The best advice is to begin with a few ministries and get them running efficiently and effectively. You can always begin more ministries later. Churches that try to begin too many ministries at the same time have a tendency to get discouraged. Decide on a few and do them well.

Make a list of all the needs you discovered. Begin with the most critical and move to the less critical. Review the list by asking the following questions about each need:

- a. Is some other group already adequately addressing this need?
- b. Could some other group meet this need better?
- c. Does meeting this need fall within our mission statement?
- d. Do we have the resources to meet this need (facilities, equipment, staff, funding, etc.)?
- e. Is meeting this need feasible?

Now look at your list again and decide on three or four needs you feel are within your mission statement, match your resources, are not being addressed effectively by others, and that are feasible for your church to address.

3. Prepare objectives for each need you will address.

An objective is needed for each area identified in your revised list of needs. Keep in mind that objectives are broad statements of what you hope to accomplish in each area of need. Don't worry at this point about how long it may take you to achieve each objective. Just think and dream.

Here is an example of a mission statement and one sample objective for a ministry-based evangelism program. Read it to get an idea of what an objective looks like.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The purpose of the ministry-based evangelism program of First Baptist Church is to meet needs and share Christ with all people with specialized needs living in the church neighborhood.

OBJECTIVE ONE (Identified need—high rate of adult non-readers):

To make available to adults in our community the opportunity to learn to read by:

- (1) Identifying adult non-readers through home visits, neighborhood fliers, and interviews with employers and school system adult education staff.
- (2) Identifying, recruiting, and training volunteers in the church to teach adults to read.
- (3) Matching volunteers with adult non-readers and providing the support and supervision needed for an effective and efficient ministry.



4. Prepare goals for each objective.

Goals are a series of steps identifying specific actions that move you toward accomplishing your objectives. A goal not only says what will be done, it also has a deadline for completion.

Using the First Baptist church example of teaching adults to read, see the goals provided below.

GOALS:

- (1) A minimum of 15 adults will be offered the opportunity to learn to read during the calendar year.
- (2) Fifteen volunteers will be recruited and trained to teach adults to read during the calendar year.
- (3) A minimum of ten non-readers will be matched with volunteer teachers during the calendar year.

Goals answer the question of what has to happen within a given time frame to move your ministry toward accomplishing the objective under consideration. Goals have to be measurable so you can evaluate your efforts at some stopping point. In the example given, evaluation takes place at the end of each calendar year. The measure of effectiveness is 15 non-reading adults, 15 volunteers, and ten matches. If we accomplish these goals, a pool of qualified, available personnel for this ministry-based evangelism project will exist. We will know that a group of adults who cannot read now will be readers at the end of the year.

5. Prepare action plans.

For each goal, you should use an Action Plan Sheet (see Appendix B). The Action Plan Sheet is a guide you will follow to monitor your work day by day. It should include specific assignments and lines of responsibility and accountability. The focus of the Action Plan Sheet is to identify the actions needed to reach a particular goal. The completed Action Plan Sheets will help you supervise staff and volunteers and keep yourself on track. They will also help prevent being distracted by other demands that come along. You will have a basis for saying, “no,” to some expectations. By utilizing this tool, you will know whether you are on track to meet your goals by the established deadlines.

If you know this, you will know whether you are on track to meet your objectives. If you know you are on track to meet your objectives, you will know for sure that you are accomplishing your purposes as stated in your mission statement. Not only will you know, you will be able to tell those who sponsor your ministry just where you are at any given time and where you will likely be at any point in the future.

If you find you are not meeting your goals, you must find out why. Maybe your goals are unrealistic or not as feasible as you originally thought. If so, revise them. Maybe you have let other things

HOW TO GET STARTED IN MINISTRY-BASED EVANGELISM



take time away from your goals. Whatever the reason, you will know where you are and where you are going.

6. Implement the action plans.

Now you must do what you planned. Some people find it helpful to keep track of all goals and actions on a time line. To do this, draw your goals and actions on a calendar. A time line might look something like this:

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
GOAL ONE:												
Objective 1			15									
Objective 2							1					
Objective 3												9
GOAL TWO:												
Objective 1		3										
Objective 2					15							
Objective 3											14	

On your time line, you would put in your actual goal statements and action steps. For this time line, Action Step 2 of Goal 1 should be completed by July 1. Action Step 1 of Goal 2 should be accomplished by February 3.

A time line helps in planning your work for the month. It's easy to consult a completed time line to see what you must do each month to meet the deadlines.

7. Conduct an annual evaluation.

Evaluate on the basis of how well you met your goals. Since each goal has action steps, a time line, and a measurement, all you have to do to evaluate is look at each goal and see whether you met it.

Celebrate your accomplishments! Remember that small gains gradually move you toward accomplishing your objectives. Share the accomplishments with your volunteers and staff.

Now comes the hard part. You must find out why you did not meet some of the goals. Answer these questions:

- a. Was the goal unrealistic? If so, adjust it for next year.
- b. Was the goal not reached because you let other things interfere? If so, decide what to do



about this problem next year. Make some resolutions.

- c. Was the goal not reached because of poor staff or volunteer performance? If so, plan a strategy for dealing with staff problems during the coming year. If the problem was a particular volunteer, develop a strategy for dealing with this person next year. Maybe the volunteer did not have the needed skills. If so, either reassign the volunteer or set up a training program. Maybe the volunteer had trouble working with the people. Is there something he or she can do that will not involve direct contact with people?
- d. Was the goal not reached because some new limitation was imposed on your estimate of feasibility? If so, should you ask for a change in the limitation? Do you need to come to terms with the limitation if it is not within your power to change it? Decide on an approach you can live with for the next year.
- e. Did some change take place in the community that made the goal not worth pursuing? If so, drop it for next year.

Your evaluation should measure how much progress you made toward accomplishing your objectives. It should also give you good feedback to build into your planning for next year.

You have completed what is called a planning cycle. Christianity is a plan of salvation and living. You have been called to minister, to bring in the plan for the kingdom of God. Aren't you glad that God made a plan for you? Can you do less as you seek to be God's minister?⁴

Step Seven: Equip Your People to Verbally and Intentionally Share the Gospel of Jesus Christ

Remember the purpose statement for ministry-based evangelism—to inspire and equip every believer to develop relational bridges through ministry, over which they intentionally share the gospel of Jesus Christ. To develop the relational bridge and then not be prepared to cross it by verbally and intentionally sharing the gospel would not meet the mandate given by the Lord Jesus to meet needs and share Christ. Here are four simple things you can do to equip your people to share Christ where they live, work, and play.

1. Preach personal evangelism.

Studies indicate that churches with strong evangelistic ministries are almost always led by pastors who place a strong emphasis on evangelism. The proclaimed Word of God is still one of the pastor's greatest tools for motivation and enlistment. Evangelism as a consistent theme proclaimed from the pulpit will remind the people of their biblical mandate to be personally involved in reaching the lost.

2. Profile personal evangelism.

Don't stop with just preaching about it. Make it a priority of the congregation by frequently talking evangelism in and out of the pulpit. Connect it with the vision and direction of the church. Discuss it in leadership meetings. Refer to it in all strategic planning meetings. Before they plan events, urge staff and leaders to ask, "How will this help us reach people for Christ?" That's



profiling evangelism through the leadership. But evangelism also needs to be profiled through the laity.

There is no better way to profile evangelism among the congregation than by affirming those who are already actively sharing their faith. Why not regularly have church members give brief evangelism testimonies during worship services? The testimonies can be either recent witnessing opportunities they've had or brief testimonies of how they came to know Christ. The testimonies don't always have to be stories that tell of people who actually received Christ. They can and should include stories that demonstrate simple obedience to share, regardless of the outcome. You may need to help them write their stories to keep them brief, to the point, and focused on the purpose—that is, everyone's personal responsibility to reach the lost.

3. Plan personal evangelism.

Effective evangelism requires intentionally planning it into your life and the life of your church. Events and ministries should reflect the priority of evangelism on the calendar. Nothing tends to reflect our priorities like our calendars do. If you want your congregation to give priority to evangelism, then you must reflect it as a priority in your church calendar and clearly communicate that calendar and its priority to your members. Additionally, planned evangelism is reflected by the funding it receives. Be sure to think about evangelistic training opportunities, supplies, resources, and the related costs when you create your annual church budget.

Further, you can reinforce the importance of evangelism by its place on your personal calendar. It's foolish to assume the family of believers will make evangelism a part of their schedule if the leader doesn't make it a part of his. How will they know it's a part of your calendar? They'll know when they see where you put your energy.

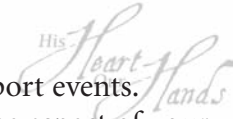
4. Provide personal evangelism tools.

No matter how much promotion you do, no matter how many evangelistic events you provide, no matter how much you preach and talk evangelism, you will struggle to mobilize your people if you don't provide resources and training opportunities that equip them to share their faith. Fortunately, there are plenty of tools and training options you can make available to your people that will enable and encourage them to be personally involved in reaching others.

Remember that intentional evangelism is no accident. Churches that are effective in mobilizing their people to reach people are churches that place a high priority on their personal responsibility to carry out the Great Commission. They preach about it faithfully, they promote it regularly, they plan it periodically, and they provide training and resources constantly.

Step Eight: Take Advantage of Special Evangelistic Events

Evangelistic events provide a support mechanism for churches using ministry as a bridge across which to share the gospel. No matter what goal a church establishes in ministry-based evangelism, a strategically placed event can help that church reach its goal more quickly and effectively.



It is important to distinguish between events used for direct evangelism and support events. Support events are not evangelistic in and of themselves, but help to support some aspect of your ministry-based evangelism strategy. Support events are catalysts. They should be used to make things happen. They can be married with ministry-based evangelism in some strategic ways.

- **Promotion and Awareness.** The visibility that events provide can help get the word out to the community about a ministry. For example if you are beginning a Senior Citizens Center, you could have a festival as a sort of “Grand Opening.” The community around you will notice and participate.
- **Worker Enlistment.** Need workers for a ministry such as an evangelistic food pantry or meal distribution ministry? There’s nothing like an event to motivate involvement and commitment from workers.
- **Image Enhancement.** The credibility and legitimacy of your ministry can be built by well-placed support events. A worship event involving religious and community leaders could help raise the image of a support group you have started. A well-known athlete could give instant credibility to the community after-school program you have instituted.
- **First Touch.** Some events provide a nonthreatening way for participants to begin to be involved in your church or ministry activity. Attendees can become familiar with your facilities, meet your friendly staff or church members, and get an idea of what your ministry is all about by attending a well-designed first touch event. For example, a children’s carnival could be used as a first touch event to promote your evangelistic medical or dental clinic.

As important as the above support events are, they are not truly “evangelistic events.” An evangelistic event provides an effective climate for the gospel to be shared and people to be invited to faith in Christ. Certain evangelistic events are ministry-based by their very nature.

- **Evangelistic Block Parties.** Block parties are the perfect combination of ministry-based evangelism and event evangelism. The evangelistic block party is a community event designed to share the gospel. Hold the block party in an established location within the community you are attempting to reach for ministry and evangelism. Provide a meal, music, and children’s games to build an informal, friendly atmosphere. Have drawings for prizes as a way to get everyone’s names and addresses. In needier areas, provide bags of food and racks of donated clothing for participants to utilize. Also consider providing a New Testament to each participant along with a short presentation of the gospel.
- **Evangelistic Felt Need Seminars.** These are events that address a ministry-based felt need and then move to a presentation of the gospel. One example of this would include a job fair. Subjects covered could include, “How to Write a Resume,” or “How to Interview.” A presentation could also be given explaining how God can be trusted to provide for His children. An opportunity to receive Jesus Christ could be included in the presentations. Other examples could be divorce recovery seminars, money management conferences, parenting conferences—the possibilities are endless.

The examples above only begin to describe the event ideas. Take some time to pray, reflect, and come up with your own great ideas.



During those endless lectures you heard as a child on the merits of eating all the food on your plate, had your parents given you a practical plan for freeze drying and shipping those despicable items to some needy country, you would have gladly done it. My prayer at this point is twofold. First, that what you discovered in the first few chapters of this guide is a lot more enticing to you than the foods you despised as a child. Second, that the discussion over the last few pages has provided a practical planning process for implementing ministry-based evangelism in your church.

Notes

- ¹ P.T. Forsythe, *The Soul of Prayer* (London: Independent Press, 1960), p. 28.
- ² Taken from *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire* by Jim Cymbala; Dean Merrill (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997), pp. 183-184. Copyright © 1997 by Jim Cymbala. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House.
- ³ John Ed Mathison, speaking September 10, 1999, at the REACH conference in Phoenix, Ariz.
- ⁴ Adapted from *CCM Planning Notebook: A Step-by-Step Planning Guide for Church and Community Ministry Settings* by C. Anne Davis (Atlanta: Home Mission Board), pp. 33-34.

Ministering Out of Your Spiritual Giftedness

Every believer should serve Christ according to his or her spiritual gifts. The discovery, development, and use of spiritual gifts by all members is key to having effective church programs and a healthy church.

There are three basic facts about spiritual gifts that you should keep in mind. First, every Christian has at least one spiritual gift (see 1 Cor. 7:7). Second, every Christian should know his or her spiritual gift or gifts (see 1 Cor. 12:1). Third, every Christian should be using those spiritual gifts to serve Christ (see Rom. 12:6).

When it comes to evangelism, not everyone has the gift referred to in Ephesians 4:11 as “evangelists.” This does not mean Christians without this gift are excluded from soul winning. *All* are commanded to be witnesses (see Acts 1:8), and to *all* has been committed the word of reconciliation (see 2 Cor. 5:19-20), so that *all* are ambassadors for Christ. The following example reveals that everyone can be involved in witnessing.

An unsaved couple was invited to church by their neighbors who lived in the same condominium complex. The four had met at a pool party. The people without Christ told the Christian couple they were discussing a divorce with separate lawyers. The Christian couple shared their testimony, telling how they had gone through the same experience until they were both converted.

The next week the unsaved couple visited the church. A greeter met them in the visitor parking lot. This greeter had the gifts of encouragement and showing mercy (see Rom. 12:8). They hit it off as friends, so the greeter took the couple to the hospitality table and registered them. The hostess at the hospitality table was using her gift of serving (see Rom. 12:8). This lady was faithful to her task, so she passed the information to the pastor.

The unsaved couple sat in church with their newfound friend, the greeter. He introduced them to some people seated nearby. When the pastor recognized visitors, the greeter stood and introduced the couple to the church.

During the next three days the couple received several contacts from the church. First, the hostess saw that a friendly letter was sent from the pastor. Then she phoned to make an appointment for a team to visit in their home on Wednesday night. She then sent another letter to confirm the appointment. The hostess didn't mind details since she had the gift of serving. She thrived on doing those small things that could make such a big difference.

On Wednesday evening, a couple from the church visited in the condo of the unsaved couple. This couple from the church had met them the previous Sunday at the hospitality table. During the visit the couple both prayed to receive Christ. They were receptive and responsive. The impending divorce had created the “season of the soul” and they did what they wanted to do—they asked Christ to come into their lives.



The hostess then arranged for another couple in the church with the gift of equipping to disciple the new converts. This equipping team had been trained and they loved to teach the Word of God. They were scheduled to visit in the condo of the new Christians for the next eight Wednesday nights to disciple them in the faith, couple to couple.

Who is responsible for winning this unsaved couple to Christ? No one person can take credit, nor should anyone want to take credit. Each believer used his or her spiritual gift or gifts. If all Christians had a proper understanding of spiritual gifts, they could serve where they are gifted. Also, they could grow in the process and would have more fruit.

Rather than try to make all Christians function as though they had the same gift, each believer should discover and develop his or her spiritual gifts and apply them in doing the work of ministry-based evangelism. Christians should serve in those capacities for which God has specifically and uniquely gifted them. In Proverbs 18:16 (KJV), Solomon wrote, “A man’s gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.”

This chapter establishes a holistic approach to evangelism that is flexible enough to make room for all that brings into the local church. It places everyone in service on the basis of their gifts, rather than the needs of the program at the time.

What Are Spiritual Gifts?

Definition

Any adequate definition of spiritual gifts must address at least three key issues: the source of spiritual gifts, the nature of the gifts, and the purpose of the gifts. Therefore, *a spiritual gift is a special ability given by the Holy Spirit to enable Christians to do productive service in the body of Christ.* This brief definition addresses all three key issues. (1) The Holy Spirit is the source of spiritual gifts. (2) “Special ability” speaks of their nature. (3) “Service” speaks of their purpose.

Scripture addresses those same issues. Paul spoke of gifts as being “the manifestation of the Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:7). Peter made clear the nature of spiritual gifts when he wrote, “if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth” (1 Pet. 4:11, KJV). Again in the First Corinthian letter, Paul indicated that the purpose of gifts is Christian service (see 1 Cor. 12:7,25).

Importance

Paul stressed the importance of understanding the nature of spiritual gifts when he wrote, “Now concerning spiritual gifts brethren, I would not have you ignorant” (1 Cor. 12:1, KJV). Two things need to be observed. First, the word translated “spiritual” is plural in the Greek. Second, the word *gift* is italicized, which means it was added for clarity and was not part of the original. Paul simply said, “I would not have you to be ignorant about matters (plural) concerning the Holy Spirit.” This means a Christian should not ignore this important topic if he or she is going to serve in the church.



The relationship of spiritual gifts to natural abilities

Everyone has natural abilities or talents, which are the result of the common grace of God and are present from birth. Just as God causes the sun to shine and the rain to fall upon both saved and unsaved alike (see Matt. 5:45), so He gives natural abilities or talents to both saved and unsaved people. Unbelievers are often very talented. Talents have to do with technique, methodology, dexterity, coordination, and other products of natural power. Therefore, talents are limited in their effect. They can only produce in natural realms. They may instruct, inspire, motivate, or entertain, but they cannot render spiritual benefit.

God often allows and enables Christians to use their natural talents and abilities as avenues for their spiritual gifts. For example, a Christian who has a natural talent for public speaking may be endowed with the gift of evangelist. Speaking is a tool to minister his or her gift of evangelism. But remember that many with the gift of evangelist are not public speakers but win people one-on-one.

Although spiritual gifts are often ministered through the channel of natural talents, the two are different and they are in no way dependent upon each other. Many Christians have outstanding natural talents that are never used by the Holy Spirit in spiritual ministry. Others have spiritual gifts that operate to the glory of God in spite of the absence of natural talents in that particular area.

Spiritual gifts are given to more than church leaders

Several church offices are specifically mentioned in Scripture—apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor-teacher (synonymous with elder and bishop), and deacons (see Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 3:8-13). In addition to these biblical offices, every local church has a diversity of appointed and elected offices that have been established for the effective ministry of the church.

Obviously, those occupying any of these offices should possess the spiritual gifts needed to function effectively in them. One who serves in the office of a teacher should have the gift of teaching. However, that does not mean that Christians who do not hold an office in the church cannot have spiritual gifts. For example, an individual might have the gift of shepherding (pastor) and not meet all the qualifications to hold the office of pastor. Yet that individual could exercise the gift of shepherding in any number of other positions in or outside the church.

Spiritual gifts are not the fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of the Holy Spirit is the mark of Christian character produced in the life of the believer by the Holy Spirit (see Gal. 5:22-23). These characteristics are in direct contrast to the works of the flesh (see Gal. 5:19-21).

Paul indicated that the *fruit* of the Holy Spirit works in cooperation with a person's spiritual gifts. In 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, Paul indicated that apart from love, which is one of the fruit of the Spirit, spiritual gifts would be as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

God's purpose for every Christian is to bring forth fruit for His glory (see Rom. 7:4). However, such fruit is not synonymous with the gifts of the Spirit. Spiritual gifts are special abilities for service and spiritual fruit is Christian character.



The Gifts Produce Unity in the Body of Christ

All too often, wrong understanding of the gifts of the Holy Spirit divides the body of Christ. Paul clearly taught that spiritual gifts were intended to unify the church (see 1 Cor. 12:25). Every Christian has been baptized into (identified with) the body of Christ (see 1 Cor. 12:13), and each has been endowed with at least one spiritual gift (see 1 Cor. 12:7,11). Because each believer is gifted differently, there is diversity in the body of Christ, and Paul compared that diversity to the diversity that exists in the members of the human body (see 1 Cor. 12:14). Paul also taught that diversity does not suggest division (see 1 Cor. 12:15-20).

God intends that the diverse members of the body of Christ should work together in harmony even as the diverse members of the human body work together. Each member should complement the function of the other members, because each member is necessary to the effective and efficient functioning of the body (see 1 Cor. 12:21-26).

While the above truth was written for all, that which is true of the whole must be true of each of its parts, each local church. In fact, Paul implied the same in his letter to the Corinthian church, “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular” (1 Cor. 12:27, KJV). However, the definite article “the” does not appear in the Greek text. Paul actually wrote, “Now ye are a body of Christ, and members in particular.” Paul was pointing out the fact that there was great diversity among the members of the Corinthian church, which is true in every local church, but diversity does not mean division. The diversity of spiritual gifts is intended to unify the local church and to enable the local body to edify itself in love (see Eph. 4:11-16).

How to Discover Your Spiritual Gifts

Study spiritual gifts

Those who want to discover their spiritual gifts must understand the basic teaching of Scripture on spiritual gifts. Discovery is dependent upon some degree of knowledge. Therefore, a thorough study of spiritual gifts is the place to begin in an attempt to discover your spiritual gifts.

During the 1500s, Spanish conquerors began seeking for gold among the Aztec Indians of Mexico. A legend grew up about a land called El Dorado, where gold was as plentiful as sand. Through the centuries, many explorers searched throughout Mexico for the legendary El Dorado without success. The truth is, there was very little gold to be found anywhere in Mexico.

Those same explorers, however, might have become very rich if they had only looked for silver. Mexico is the world’s fourth largest producer of silver and one of the two chief places where pure silver is found. Because they lacked knowledge, those early explorers came away empty. Many Christians are empty in service because they are looking for gold, when silver is all around them. They don’t know the riches of their spiritual gifts.



Spiritual gifts inventory

A spiritual gifts inventory is based upon the characteristics of Christians who are known to possess the various gifts. Such an inventory will not give conclusive results, but it will provide an indication of which gifts a person is likely to possess. A spiritual gifts inventory can be found in Appendix D.

Trial and error

One of the most important ways to discover your spiritual gifts is to get busy in the work of the Lord. Your proficiency in an area of ministry may indicate that you possess a complementary spiritual gift or gifts. This can be a very rewarding experience, even for those who think they already know their spiritual gifts. Trying a new area of ministry may uncover gifts that have gone undiscovered for decades.

Remember, the only people who do not make mistakes are those who never do anything. Those who eventually succeed have usually failed many times along the way. It may be necessary to try many things and fail at several before a gift is discovered and developed.

Consultation with other believers

Solomon referred to the wisdom of seeking the counsel of others (see Prov. 11:14; 15:22; 24:6). Older and wiser Christians sometimes recognize that a believer does not have the gift that he or she thinks or wishes he or she had. A young farm boy observed a cloud formation that looked like the letters G, P, and C. He decided that was an indication from God that he should Go Preach Christ. The young man's pastor, who was a very kind and understanding man, gave him an opportunity to preach one Wednesday night. After the service it was apparent to all (except the young farm boy) that he lacked the gifts needed for preaching. The pastor very wisely and kindly suggested that the letters G, P, and C, might have been an indication that the young man should Go Plow Corn.

Once the believer has studied all the gifts, taken an inventory to determine which gifts he or she is likely to possess, and begun the process of trial and error, there is great wisdom in seeking the counsel of older and wiser Christians. In Acts 6:3, the first deacons were chosen because the entire church observed that they had the gift of wisdom.



There is a place in ministry-based evangelism for every spiritual gift, just as there is work to do for every Christian who wants to serve the Lord. While fitting people and their gifts into the ministry can be time consuming, it is well worth the effort. When people serve according to their gifts, the work will ultimately prosper and the believers themselves will grow spiritually.

His Heart
Our Hands

CHAPTER 6

How to Discover Ministry-Based Evangelism Possibilities in Your Community

Need is the trigger which activates God's call to minister if we have the heart to hear and respond.¹

A community needs assessment is key to discovering ministry possibilities in your church and community. Perhaps your church is located in a peaceful, affluent area where needs are hard to find. But needs certainly exist. Susan discovered this when she received a call from her pastor asking if she would visit a woman and determine her needs for food and medical assistance. When he gave her the address, Susan thought, "This can't be right. That's a very comfortable suburb." When she pulled up to the two-story house with the luxury car parked in front, she grew more puzzled and almost drove away thinking there had been some mistake.

A few minutes later, she was glad she didn't drive away. A woman with a baby in her arms exited the house. Apologetically, she explained that, "yes," she did live in the house, and, "yes," she was the woman asking for assistance. She was the live-in housekeeper for the owner who used the house as a weekend getaway. The arrangement provided her and her baby with a place to live and free utilities, but no salary whatsoever. Until she could find affordable child care, she couldn't work to earn an income, and without an income, she couldn't get childcare.

Susan's church reached out to this mother and child, sharing both financial resources and the gospel. The pastor and Susan discussed the fact that they would never have dreamed to look for that kind of need in that particular suburb. God had used that situation to open their eyes and broaden their understanding of ministry-based evangelism.

Besides poverty-related needs like hunger and homelessness, a prosperous area can be host to ills that plague all people regardless of income—sickness, domestic violence, substance abuse, and more. A community needs assessment may help locate those needs, as well as what is and is not being done to address these needs.

Perhaps, however, a lack of visible needs is not your problem. Instead, your community has so many needs your congregation is confused about where to start applying ministry-based evangelism. With its focus on learning about community services, this needs assessment can help you determine which needs your church is best equipped to meet.

When you suggest conducting this assessment, some people may be hesitant, feeling that the church already knows the community well. As true as that probably is, there is always something new to learn. Point out that ministry-based evangelism is too important of an undertaking to not have all the possible facts before beginning.



Purposes of a Community Needs Assessment

1. **Learn** about community services.
2. **Assess** community problems and unmet needs.
3. **Establish** relationships with community agencies and organizations.
4. **Determine** how Christians and churches can become involved in ministry.

Assessment Participants

Your survey group should include some or all of the following: church staff, church leadership, the survey director, and other volunteers. These “other volunteers” may be missions education organization leaders, people involved in existing ministries, or people with ties to community service agencies. Or, they may be people you know who have a passion for a particular type of ministry-based evangelism (food pantries, pregnancy care centers, migrant work, and so on). Not all participants have to go on the actual survey, unless all are needed in order to have enough volunteers to interview all agencies. Laity who have a heart and inclination to get things done usually make excellent participants.

Agencies/Individuals to Interview

Preparing for the Assessment

- Alcohol and drug rehabilitation programs
- Associations for the developmentally disabled
- Battered women’s shelters
- Board of education
- Campus ministers
- Chamber of Commerce
- Chaplains
- City council/county commission members
- City mayors/managers
- Civil/criminal court administrators
- Community cooperative ministries
- Convention and visitors authority/bureau
- Counseling services
- Fire departments
- Food banks
- Food pantries/soup kitchens
- Habitat for Humanity
- Halfway houses
- Head Start programs
- Homeless shelters
- Hospices
- Hospital administrators/chaplains
- Housing project managers/residence council presidents



- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Human services departments | • Public health departments |
| • Jail and prison administrators | • Salvation Army |
| • Mental health departments | • School counselors |
| • Military base commanders/chaplains | • Senior adult centers |
| • Multihousing community managers | • Service clubs |
| • Parks and recreation department | • Sheriff departments |
| • Police precincts | • Vocational rehabilitation services |
| • Pregnancy care centers | |

Establish a community needs assessment study group. This group will define the area to be surveyed. The area may be defined geographically (major city or local community). This definition will determine the breadth of the survey. The other way to define the area is by topic (select agencies and/or individuals). This approach favors depth over breadth. Neither approach is superior to the other, but is a matter of preference primarily based on your church's purpose, situation, interests, resources, and location.

Another important part of preparation is to define what you wish to accomplish through this assessment. Do you want to begin a new church-based ministry outreach to unchurched people? Does that include all unchurched people in the community or those in a certain group? Or, are you looking for a number of possible ministry opportunities to present to church leadership for consideration? What you want to accomplish will set the parameters for what you will look for. However, always keep your eyes and ears open. More importantly, keep your mind and heart open. (Remember Susan's story at the beginning of this chapter.) Allow God to reveal new things to you.

Planning Assignments

1. Determine the agencies/individuals to be surveyed.
2. Set a date for the survey.
3. Recruit church volunteers to conduct interviews; this will be your survey team. Enlist the same number of volunteers as the number of agencies and/or individuals to be visited.
4. Set appointments with agencies, organizations, and community leaders. Each team of two volunteers will visit two agencies. Schedule half of the appointments for 10:00 a.m. and the other half for 11:00 a.m. Adjust times to allow for travel between the two appointments, if needed.
5. Send a letter of confirmation one week before the appointment date. Include in the letter the seven questions to be discussed in the interview.



Assessment Schedule

Day One

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 8:30 a.m. | Continental breakfast |
| 8:50 a.m. | Pairing of teams and distribution of assignment cards
(do not send married couples sent together) |
| 9:00 a.m. | Orientation/Interview assignments |
| 9:30 a.m. | Departure for appointments |
| 10:00 a.m. | First appointment |
| 11:00 a.m. | Second appointment |
| Noon | Lunch and sharing time to complete written reports |
| 1:30 p.m. | Preparation and printing of a report of ministry possibilities
(print enough copies for all of the participants in the evaluation sessions) |

Day Two

(This session could be scheduled for a later date if more convenient.)

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 10:00 a.m. | Presentation of the ministry possibilities report and discussion
of the implications for strategic planning |
|------------|--|

Conducting the Assessment

1. Give each volunteer a card listing the agency name, contact person to be interviewed, address, phone number, directions, and time of interview. Each team will receive appointment cards for two agencies located near each other. Stress the need for punctuality relative to each appointment time.
2. Distribute “calling cards” to all volunteers. On the cards, volunteers will print their names and leave these with the people they interview. Cards may be from the church or association. Customize them to fit your setting.
3. Give Field Interview Forms to all volunteers (see page 45). The form lists the questions to be discussed and provides suggestions for beginning and concluding the interview. Review the form and the format of the interview. If necessary, reword the questions to make them more appropriate for your situation.
4. Give Interview Report Forms (see page 47) to volunteers to complete when they return from their appointments.
5. Have a typist prepare the assessment report.



Interviewing People Who Live in the Community

Many churches have found it helpful to interview people who live in the community. This can be a helpful source of information. Before doing this, consider the appropriateness of doing this in your neighborhood. If you decide to do this as a door-to-door survey, keep safety issues in mind:

- Remain on the porch. Do not go inside unless you know the person.
- Go during daylight hours and during good weather.
- Go in pairs. Never knock on someone's door alone to do an interview.
- Be aware of your surroundings while walking in the community.
- Respect signs that indicate the person does not want a visitor.

Once someone answers the door, explain that you are surveying the neighborhood to discover needs with which a church might help. Identify your church or association by name. Ask the following questions:

- What problems and needs are there in this community?
- What could a church or group of churches do to help?
- If you could speak to a church group, what would you say?

Thank them for their time and for the information they provided. Do not promise anything. Explain that you are only gathering information and that decisions will be made later about what the church will do.

Offer to pray with them and ask if they have specific prayer requests. If a person does not want you to pray with them, respect their wishes and pray for them after you leave their property.

Choosing and Implementing a Ministry

The report should give your group a number of ministry possibilities. Ministry possibilities usually fall into three categories: periodic ministry efforts (such as collecting food for a food bank); partnering with an existing agency or program (such as a church family becoming a foster family through the county social services department); or beginning a new church-based ministry (such as an after-school tutoring program). The outline of how this is done appears below:

- Prayerfully select a ministry project.
- Define the purpose of the ministry.
- Write objectives for the ministry.
- Develop action plans to reach the desired goals.
- Secure resources for the ministry.
- Assign responsibility for implementation.
- Receive progress reports and evaluate results.
- Celebrate God's activity.

How to Discover Ministry-Based Evangelism Possibilities in Your Community



Notes

¹ Albert L. Meiburg, *Called to Minister: Serving in Christ's Spirit* (Self-published, undated), p. 3.



FIELD INTERVIEW FORM

1. Introduce yourselves and present calling cards with your names and phone numbers.
2. Explain that you are one of many teams doing a community needs assessment.
3. Say, “Thank you for your time. We represent a church (or churches) that want(s) to learn about the needs in the community and how to help meet these needs.”

Remember your goals: **Build** relationships with community agencies and leaders. **Learn** about community services. **Assess** problems and community needs. **Determine** how churches can become involved in ministry. Ask questions. Take careful notes. Obtain direct quotes.

1. What services do you provide?

2. What problems do you face as an agency?

3. What problems and needs exist among those you serve? (Write quotes.)

**How to DISCOVER MINISTRY-BASED EVANGELISM
POSSIBILITIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY**



4. What trends do you see that will affect your work over the next five years?

5. What can a church, group of churches, or volunteers do to help? (List numerically by priority.)

6. If you had an opportunity to speak to challenge church people, what would you say?

7. May we have permission to pray for you and your work before we leave? (Pray for the person being interviewed, the agency/organization, and the people/families served.)

How to Discover Ministry-Based Evangelism Possibilities in Your Community



4. List numerically, in priority order, the areas where volunteers are needed in existing services and programs. Also, list the services and ministries that could be implemented by a church or a group of churches. Specify clearly what could be done.

5. What final statement was made by the person you interviewed? (Write quote.)

6. Briefly state your evaluation of your experience in this needs assessment.

Guidelines for Recruiting Volunteers

Volunteers want their missions experiences to be fulfilling and meaningful. Whether a retired couple gives four months to serve in an inner-city ministry or an auto mechanic gives one week of his or her vacation to repair missions vehicles in a resort ministry, people want to invest their time, skills, and financial resources wisely. Therefore, mission leaders need to be willing to adequately plan and prepare for volunteers. Although this chapter focuses on recruiting short-term volunteers, some of the principles will apply to utilizing volunteers from within your congregation.

Understanding Volunteers

What makes people volunteer? What motivates them? Do they expect something in return for their services? Lyle Schaller, in *The Parish Paper*, says today's volunteers are motivated by a complex assortment of overlapping factors that include:

- A need for self-fulfillment
- A response to a call to commitment
- A desire to serve
- A hunger for community and to feel needed
- A vision of making a meaningful contribution to a worthy cause
- A yearning for the satisfaction that results from achievement of a goal
- A response to a sense of duty or obligation
- An expectation that this will be a learning or enriching experience
- A longing for power and influence
- A response to God's love and call to reflect that love by serving one's neighbor
- A desire to express one's faith through works
- A search to find meaning and purpose in life¹

All volunteers have needs to be met through the volunteer experience. The volunteer's greatest need is to feel that his or her contribution is important to the ministry, whether it's washing dishes or serving as weekend director of the ministry. Remind each volunteer of the importance of his or her skills in carrying out the tasks in this ministry setting. In addition, express your gratefulness for his or her involvement and commitment to this important ministry.



Understand Your Need for Volunteers

Whether you are a center director, a pastor, a lay person, or a resort ministries director, you should ask yourself the question, “Do we really need volunteers?” The cause of missions is not always advanced by the presence of a particular number of dedicated, willing, and talented volunteers. On the other hand, volunteers may be one of God’s greatest resources for a particular mission situation.

Chuck Clayton, former national resort consultant for the Home Mission Board, suggests this simple outline for missions leaders as they consider their need for volunteers.

- Know your ministry setting
- Identify needs and aspirations
- Visualize ministries to meet needs
- Determine resources needed²

Find Volunteers

You have determined you need people resources to reach your ministry goals. But where are the volunteers? How do you find them? Look first to local resources for volunteers. Explore local churches, student ministry groups, senior adult ministries, and Sunday School classes. Prepare a needs list of volunteer positions.

People will respond if they feel needed and if they feel they can make a difference. Make your ministry needs known clearly and creatively. Be specific. Share the type of work to be done, the time required, the number of volunteers needed, and goals to be accomplished. Use the following to help communicate your ministry needs:

- Church newsletters
- Church bulletin inserts
- Announcements about needs by pastor from the pulpit
- Church and community bulletin boards
- Church, women’s ministry, and men’s ministry leaders and appropriate meetings
- Slide, video, and PowerPoint® presentations
- Posters and flyers distributed to churches
- Church mission action fairs promoting volunteer opportunities
- Ministry site on the Web
- Testimonies by current volunteers



Your Role as Supervisor

Most mission leaders find themselves wearing many hats of responsibility. Two of the most important roles they fulfill are those of administrator of programs and supervisor of people.

Administrative activities might include planning, researching ministry possibilities, requesting budget, and requesting people. Administrators think about objectives, look at priorities, set goals, and consider specific actions that will help reach ministry goals. Administrators write job descriptions, recruit volunteers, and match volunteers to various tasks.

Supervisory activities might include training, conducting orientations, providing resources, delegating tasks, and giving feedback. Supervisors oversee, support, counsel, communicate, and evaluate. Supervision is a ministry—a ministry of taking chances, risking work to others' hands, listening creatively, training patiently, matching skills and tasks carefully, giving feedback honestly, and expressing thanks sincerely.

One of the most important aspects of the supervisor's role is developing a covenant with the volunteer. A covenant is the road map by which volunteer and supervisor determine expectations and goals. Expectations of time, work, behavior, relationships, and structure should be clearly defined in the form of a written covenant.

It may be prudent to run a criminal background check on any volunteer who will serve with children and youth. If you are not able to do this, insist as a matter of operating procedure that no one ever works alone with children and youth during the program or while transporting them to and from the church or ministry site.

Preparing for a Volunteer's Arrival

Many mission leaders have found it worthwhile to conduct a personal interview or at least a phone conversation with prospective volunteers. Discussion during the interview can include:

- Understanding of missions, ministry, and evangelism
- Previous volunteer experience (letters of reference, if any)
- True understanding of the purpose of the ministry setting
- Reasons for volunteering
- Flexibility
- Ability to communicate
- Maturity and stability
- Level of self-confidence
- Hidden agenda (volunteer's special needs or concerns)
- Sense of humor



- Enthusiasm and commitment
- Unhealthy need for domination, perfection, success, influence, or approval

Communication is the key to preparing volunteers for ministry. Communication with volunteers should occur often and take many different forms—letters, phone calls, videos, e-mails, slide presentations, and so forth. The tone of your initial communication is important. If you are excited about your ministry, the volunteer will want to be a vital part of it.

Many preparations must be made in order for volunteers to be successful. Ministry forms such as job descriptions, covenants, evaluations, reports, registrations, inventory, budgets, schedules, and lessons must be developed and printed. Other arrangements might include gathering resources and coordinating lodging, meals, publicity, transportation, equipment, insurance, and budget.

Orientation and Training

When volunteers arrive to join the local ministry, the orientation and training process begins. Each volunteer comes with hopes, dreams, expectations, goals, talents, needs, and anxieties. Orientation is the process of locating oneself in relation to one's surroundings. It enables volunteers to find where they are and how they fit.

Orientation acquaints volunteers with the structure of the ministry. This includes physical facilities, organizational structure, and the way the ministry functions.

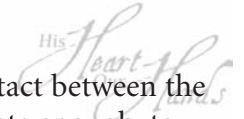
Training is another important element in orientation. An effective training process for volunteers includes the following:

- Telling volunteers what to do
- Showing volunteers what to do
- Letting them try it
- Evaluating their performances
- Giving praise or starting over with telling

Don't assume volunteers are prepared to verbalize their faith in Christ. Often, they will do this for the first time while involved in a mission experience. Always provide evangelism training. (See Chapter 8 and Appendix A.)

Working at the Task

After orientation has taken place and volunteers have been trained, the work begins. The mission leader's basic responsibility is to provide an ongoing support system to help volunteers accomplish the goals and tasks to which they have committed themselves. Volunteers need to meet ministry goals during their time of service and also need to grow as people.



In addition to regular staff meetings, there should be consistent, one-on-one contact between the supervisor and each volunteer. These meetings should be often enough, and private enough, to deal with any difficulties the volunteer or the supervisor is having.

Volunteers need a significant task, resources with which to do the job, and permission to do it. Volunteers also need honest feedback from their supervisors. They need to know how they are doing. Volunteers who feel good about themselves and their work usually do good work. Good supervisors praise and affirm their volunteers, but they can also point out areas that need improvement.

Final Evaluation, Closure, and Continuing Relationships

Evaluation is an ongoing process that begins on the volunteer's first day and continues until he or she leaves the ministry. Routine evaluation of volunteers should take place on a daily or weekly basis. Positive or negative feedback should never be saved until the final evaluation.

Closure is the wrapping up of this phase of the volunteer's life. It can help the volunteer begin new relationships and new responsibilities. Closure should do the following:

- Help volunteer conclude work
- Help volunteer see results of his or her work
- Help volunteer resolve relationships
- Help volunteer move to a new role
- Help prepare a special way to say thank you and good-bye

The relationship between mission leader and volunteer does not have to stop at the end of a ministry assignment. It is helpful for the relationship to continue. You can stay in touch through letters, e-mails, and newsletters. You can also plan volunteer reunions. Encourage volunteers to support the ministry through prayer and recruiting others to be involved in the ministry.

Notes

¹ Lyle Schaller, *The Parish Paper* (Richmond, Ind.: Yokefellow Institute, 1978), p 2.

² Jack Merritt, ed., *A Practical Guide for Supervisors of Short-Term Volunteers* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board), pp. 11-12.

His Heart
Our Hands

Sharing Your Faith

An on-mission Christian looks for opportunities to share his or her faith. As you share your time and knowledge with people, you should not hold back or hide the most important information you possess—the salvation that comes from and through Jesus Christ.

Do not be afraid of offending people by talking about your faith. Your faith is a vital part of your life. You should let people know this. One literacy student said to a friend, “My teacher’s faith must not be very important to her; she never tells me about her attachment to her Christ, her Bible, or her church.” If your motive is sincere and your spirit is humble, you will not give offense.

Preparing to Share Your Faith

1. Commit to yourself and God that you will share your own experience with Christ with the people you meet.

2. Prepare through prayer. The effectiveness of your ministry and your introducing people to Jesus will be directly proportional to the amount of time spent in prayer by you and others involved in the ministry.

- Have personal prayer preparation.
- Pray for guidance from the Holy Spirit about when, where, and how to share.
- Enlist others to pray for you as you witness and for the people with whom you will share your witness.
- Pray that each person you minister to will be convicted by the Holy Spirit.

3. Pray out loud with the person to whom you are witnessing.

- This shows you have a personal relationship with God.
- This demonstrates that you can pray directly to God without an earthly intermediary.
- This indicates that God is interested in every aspect of your life.
- As you pray for people’s needs, you show your concern for them.
- Answered prayers communicate God’s love and power.
- People will begin bringing their prayer requests to you whether they are believers or not.

4. Prepare to tell about your own experience with Jesus Christ, using simple, clear language.

- Keep it short and simple, two or three minutes at the most.
- Avoid church jargon, words that have special meaning to Christians but may not be understood or interpreted correctly by non-Christians.



- Be positive. Emphasize the benefits of your relationship with Christ, rather than listing the things you don't do.
- Be current. Include recent experiences of God working in your life.
- Give adequate details of why you needed Christ and how you accepted Him as Savior.

How to Become a Christian

A Christian is a follower of Jesus Christ. A Christian has a growing relationship with Jesus Christ, tries to obey Him in all things, and draws on His strength to help with problems.

God made us for Himself and our souls are restless until they find rest in Him. Only God can fill the void in your life. The answer to your search is accepting Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior of your life.

How to Find the Unconditional Love of Jesus

Realize that God loves you and has designed you with purpose.

- His purpose for your life includes you receiving the free gift of eternal life. "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope" (Jer. 29:11, NLT).

Realize your need.

- We all have sinned and our sin has separated us from experiencing God's purpose and design for our lives. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23, NKJV).
- We deserve death and hell. "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23, NKJV).
- We cannot save ourselves. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9, NKJV).

Realize that God has made a way.

- God sent His perfect Son into the world to die on the cross so that your sins could be forgiven and so that you may have eternal life. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16, NKJV).

Realize that you must personally receive Jesus into your life.

- We must repent of our sins and place our trust in Jesus alone for forgiveness. Repentance is more than a feeling, it means to turn away from our sin. "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19, NKJV).

Realize that you can receive Jesus right now.

"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2, NKJV).



This Prayer Can Be Used to Invite Jesus into Your Life

“Lord Jesus, thank You for loving me and coming to earth to show me the way. I believe You died to pay for my sins and that You were raised from the dead so that I could have eternal life. I know that I have sinned and need Your forgiveness. I want to turn from my sin and place my faith in You right now. Please come into my life as Savior. I acknowledge You as Lord.

Thank You for hearing my prayer, forgiving my sin, and for saving me. In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.”

You Are Assured of Eternal Life and Hope

- You can trust God’s promise. “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Rom. 10:13). Did you sincerely ask Jesus into your heart as Lord and Savior? Where is He right now? What does God’s Word promise?
- You are a member of God’s family. “The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children” (Rom. 8:16).
- Your life is eternally secure in God. “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:38-39).

Personal Testimony Outline

1. My life before receiving Christ

Include: Your separation from God because of sin
 Your inability to overcome sin by yourself
 Christ as the only remedy for sin

Consider: Your religious background
 How you became aware of your need for God
 How you became aware of sin in your life
 How you became aware you were not a Christian
 Was it over a long time and series of events or over a short time
 and a single event?



2. How I received Christ

Include: Your confession of sin
Your repentance
Your acceptance of God's forgiveness

3. How Jesus makes my life meaningful

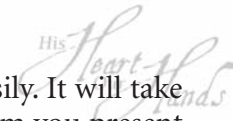
Include: Recent experiences of God's work in your life

Consider: Your vision of God's purpose for your life
How you deal with life's experiences as a Christian
The joy and peace you have as a Christian

Things to Keep in Mind When Sharing Your Faith

1. **Be prepared at any opportunity to tell how Jesus Christ makes a difference in how you deal with life's experiences.** Don't always tell your story the same way. Every situation will be different. Be prepared to make your testimony relevant to the person you are talking with.
2. **Ask and listen.** After you have shared your experience with Christ, ask, "Has anything like this happened to you?" or "What is your relationship to Jesus Christ?"

Find out what the person believes about Jesus. Find out whether the person claims another faith and how that influences his or her life. Start where the person is, not where you think he or she may be. Individuals' beliefs may differ from the basic tenets of the faiths they claim, just as individual commitment levels to our religious beliefs vary.
3. **Try to understand the faith to which the person belongs, if any.** Read books and pamphlets on that faith to increase your understanding of it.
4. **Don't tear down someone else's religion or faith.** As one person said, "I want to know more about your religion, but don't begin by telling me mine is all wrong." Simply share what Christ has done for you and the joy you have as a Christian. Your joy and peace will communicate more loudly than theological arguments.
5. **Be open to questions.** You may have to clear up some misconceptions about Christianity. If you don't know the answers to the person's questions, tell them you will find out. Search the Scriptures. Ask your pastor. You are not expected to be an expert.
6. **If the person with whom you are working points out non-Christian conduct by Christians,** acknowledge it. But point to the life and teaching of Christ as the model to be followed.



7. **Be prepared to wait for results.** You must be patient. Don't give up easily. It will take time for people to understand and respond. And not all people to whom you present the gospel will respond. Not every person who met Christ accepted Him as Savior.

If the person indicates unwillingness or unreadiness to accept Christ, provide a booklet or tract to keep. Many want to consider this step cautiously. In the privacy of their homes, God will speak to them.

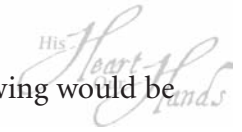
Our responsibility is to share what Christ has done in our lives. The Holy Spirit does the seeking, the leading, and the convicting. Sometimes our most difficult role is to stand by quietly praying and waiting.

Making the Transition from Ministry to Sharing Your Faith

It is important that you make a transition from ministering to a person to sharing the gospel with that person. Conducting a spiritual survey is a great way to gain an opportunity to tell your story. Thank the person for the opportunity to minister to them. Then ask if they would be willing to help you with something. Explain that your church is doing a spiritual survey of the community in order to find out how you can better help the people in the community. Ask if they would be willing to answer a few questions in order to help you complete your survey.

Once they agree to help you, ask the following questions:

1. Among the people you know, would you say interest in spiritual matters is:
 - a. on the increase
 - b. on the decrease
 - c. about the same?
2. Would you rank your own interest in spiritual matters as:
 - a. on the increase
 - b. on the decrease
 - c. about the same?
3. Would you say Jesus Christ has had:
 - a. a major influence in your life
 - b. a minor influence in your life
 - c. no influence in your life.
4. Would you say the local church is:
 - a. very relevant to your life
 - b. somewhat relevant to your life
 - c. not relevant to your life.
5. An overwhelming number of Americans have indicated they believe in life after death and a real place called heaven. The Bible says that everyone will spend eternity in heaven or hell. In your opinion, do you believe this to be true?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Not sure.
6. Do you believe it is important for a person to understand how they can have a personal relationship with God?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No.



After they answer the questions, thank them for their time and responses. The following would be appropriate responses on your part at this time:

1. Based on their answers you believe the person is already a growing Christian. Rejoice with them that you are brothers and sisters in Christ and that you had this opportunity to serve them and to get to know them. Pray with them that God will continue to bless them and that they will continue to grow in Him.
2. Based on their answers, you believe the person is a Christian, but is not growing. Rejoice with them that they are saved and know that they will go to heaven when they die. Explain that God wants them to be in a right relationship to Him and to be growing as a Christian. Help them find a church if they are not already members somewhere and encourage them to fellowship with other believers. Be sure they have a Bible and encourage them to be reading it and studying it on a daily basis. Encourage them to spend time with God in prayer every day. Pray with them that they will begin to grow as Christians and that God will lead them to other Christians with whom they can grow.
3. Based on their answers, you believe this person is probably not saved. You can say, “You know, there was a time in my life when I didn’t believe spiritual things were important either. May I tell you my story?” Then share your testimony and lead them in a gospel presentation. You could make a similar transition statement as a result of their answer on any of the six questions. The important thing is that you use this tool as a transition to share the gospel with this person.

What to Do When Someone Expresses a Desire to Become a Christian

1. **Beware of asking questions that can be answered with, “yes” or “no.”** Questions that seek to clarify a person’s understanding of the decision are more helpful, such as:
 - “Why do you want to become a Christian?”
 - “How will becoming a Christian change you?”
 - “What made you think about becoming a Christian?”
 - “What do you think or feel about your relationship to Jesus?”
 - “Why do you want to be baptized?”
2. **Use Scripture.** Having the person read Scripture verses that explain the plan of salvation is helpful. Use Scriptures translated into a lower reading level if necessary. See “How to Become a Christian” on page 54 for a gospel presentation using Scriptures that you can use to explain to the person how to become a Christian.
3. **If the person wishes to make a profession of faith, lead him or her in a prayer** that gives an opportunity to confess sin and acknowledge Christ as Lord. See page 55.



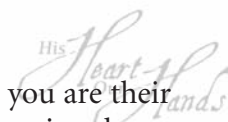
4. **Explain the role of baptism** as an outward sign of the decision the person has made and the importance of prayer, Bible study, and church membership.
5. **Take personal responsibility for connecting the new believer with a local congregation for follow-up and discipleship.** Don't leave this baby in Christ without any support.

Other Ways to Show God's Love to People

As you engage in ministry-based evangelism, Christ can shine through you in the following qualities and attitudes:

1. Being patient by letting people set their own learning rates, by repeating many times in many ways, and by listening.
2. Being flexible enough to put aside your plans to meet expressed needs.
3. Making your ministry important enough to plan in advance. This frees you to be sensitive to people and to the Holy Spirit.
4. Expressing joy, for joy is contagious.
5. Demonstrating a kindness that does not embarrass, scold, criticize, or make a person feel uncomfortable even by a look or gesture. People are already painfully aware of their failures and shortcomings.
6. Being thoughtful by making every minute count, beginning and ending on time, and not talking more than necessary.
7. Being selfless by praising people and rejoicing with them in their progress.
8. Accepting people for who they are, where they are, and what they can become in Christ. Putting aside their past failures, inadequacies, and frustrations will help them build self-confidence.
9. Realizing that there is something to be learned from every person will help build creative relationships.
10. Accepting each person as unique, valuable, and worthy of respect. This attitude will foster feelings of self-worth and self-respect.
11. Being willing to become personally involved in people's lives. This ultimately may contribute to each person's wholeness by building a healing relationship.
12. Desiring to understand people's feelings, ideas, and goals. Their goals and yours may not be the same.
13. Depending on God to supply ideas to meet the people's needs at the right time. This will compensate for many feelings of inadequacy or discouragement you may have at times.
14. Committing time with people to God. Let Christ's Spirit work through you. Take care of the intentions and preparations and leave the results to God.

SHARING YOUR FAITH



People who find in you a deep respect for them and all that concerns them, who feel you are their friend, and who feel comfortable with you will be open to what you have to say concerning the love of Christ.

Above all, remember that people need to be loved. You must accept people as equals and be concerned for them as people, not just concerned for their salvation.

Involving Families in Ministry-Based Evangelism

The most basic building block for society is the family. In fact, it was the first institution initiated by God after creation. Just think, before God created the church or any government organization, He instituted the family. History reveals that societies have risen or fallen based on the health of the family. Strong vibrant families are key to healthy societies and churches. Today's churches often become an enemy of healthy families even as they seek to serve them. This happens imperceptibly. Certainly church leaders would not participate in doing this intentionally. It just seems to come with the landscape of a fast-paced society.

What is life like for an average Christian family today?

It's been 12 days since Mom, Dad, Eric, Janey, and Melissa Morgan had a meal together. No, Dad isn't out of town, and no one is angry. They didn't plan it this way, but they figure that's just the way life is today. You see, Eric's bus leaves for high school at 7:05 a.m. Janey leaves for middle school at 7:40 a.m. Mom takes Melissa to elementary school at 8:45 a.m., then she's off to work. She works three-quarters time so she can be with the children—in reality, the only time she is with the children is in the van. She feels more like a taxi driver than a mom. Janey, one of the top acrobatic and jazz dancers in her troupe, has advanced dance class after school on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday until 6:00 p.m. (with an occasional Saturday morning rehearsal thrown in). Eric's high school basketball team, off to a 2-7 start, is practicing overtime every day after school, except on game days. Melissa wants to be a dancer like Janey, so she practices with the beginner group as soon as Janey's class is over. Monday night is church visitation. Wednesday night there are church activities. Sunday night is church, too, of course. Almost every Friday or Saturday night at least one of the children is spending the night with a friend. And Saturday is lawn day, basketball games, dance performances . . . the list is endless.¹

Sound familiar? This family is easy to find. They live in your neighborhood, on your block—maybe in your house. On the surface there may not be anything wrong with these activities. The children's athletic activities are healthy and teach discipline, commitment, and how to handle winning and losing. Dad goes off to work as Mom heads for a computer class. And you can't get too much church, can you? The problem is that collectively, the Morgan's activities have turned them into a family who knows what each other does, but does not know each other. In the midst of it all, they have lost the deeper meaning of what God designed them to be.

As you mobilize your congregation to implement ministry-based evangelism, include families as one of your basic building blocks. You can help families get off this maddening activity-driven merry-go-round by helping them discover and live God's purposes.



There are three key reasons for doing this:

- First, you will be following the biblical model—God instituted the family first (see Gen. 1:28-30).
- Second, you will be helping parents lead their children to Christ and mentor them spiritually as they discover and live God’s purposes. Get this, 88 percent of the children who grow up in our churches leave by age 18 and never return. However, when their parents model their faith and get involved in reaching others, the dropout rate falls to less than 5 percent.²
- Third, involving families is the only practical way for you to reach your church field with the gospel. Just think, every lost person lives on a street or block, in a subdivision, or in an apartment complex. The best candidates to reach these hurting people are Christian families who are inspired and equipped to develop relational bridges through ministry over which they intentionally share the gospel of Jesus Christ right where they live.

Let the weight of the above information really sink in. When mom and dad are engaged in the harvest—when mom and dad are engaged in reaching people for Christ through ministry-based evangelism—then not only will God use them to impact their neighborhood, their block, and your church field, but God will use them to pass on their faith in Christ to their children. Let me say it another way. One of the keys to mom and dad effectively leading their children to Christ and mentoring them spiritually is for them to be engaged as a family in the harvest. *For the sake of your families and the ministry of your church, it is a must that you involve families in ministry-based evangelism.*

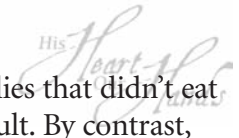
The Nuts and Bolts of Involving Families in Ministry-Based Evangelism

1. Challenge them to spend quantity and quality time together.

A healthy family cannot exist without time together. We must explode the myth that, “We have quality time, not quantity time.” It takes time to invest in your children, and if they see more of their dance teacher and basketball coach than they do of their parents, then the dance teacher and basketball coach have the greatest influences. Fathers, in particular, must be careful in this area.³ George Barna writes, “There is no research, however, that supports the view that the quality of the time parents and their offspring spend together is any acceptable substitute for the quantity of time committed to that relationship.”⁴ Please note the following study cited in a recent Focus on the Family publication.

Dr. Blake Bowden and his colleagues at the Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Center studied 527 teenagers to learn what family and lifestyle characteristics were related to mental health and adjustment. Their findings were significant.

What they found was that adolescents whose parents ate dinner with them five times per week or more were the least likely to be on drugs, to be depressed, or to be in trouble with the law. They were more likely to be doing well in school and to be surrounded by a



supportive circle of friends. Surprisingly, the benefit was seen even for families that didn't eat together at home. Those who met at fast-food restaurants had the same result. By contrast, the more poorly adjusted teens ate with their parents only three evenings per week or less.

What do these findings mean? Is there something magic about sitting down together over a meal? No and those parents who interpret the conclusions that way will be disappointed. What Bowden's study shows is that adolescents do far better in school and in life when their parents are involved with them, when they have time for them and, specifically, when they get together almost every day for conversation and interaction.⁵

Meaningful time together is key to the health of every family regardless of its shape. Traditional nuclear families, single parent families, and grandparents raising grandchildren all require quality and quantity time.

2. Lead them to develop a family mission statement.

Joey's friends are sitting in the car, honking the horn, and yelling obnoxiously, "Come on Joey, let's go! You don't need that garbage anymore."

Joey, 17, stands literally on the threshold of the home where he has grown up, his bags under one arm, his other arm around his crying mother. Dad is in the foyer, hands on hips, with a look that shares anger and hurt. "You KNOW this is wrong, Joey. You KNOW. You're going to get yourself killed with those crazy people!"

"They're not crazy; they're my friends, Dad! I'm sorry. Maybe I'll come back. Maybe I'll go to college. Maybe . . . I don't know. Mom, let go. I'll call. I'm sorry."

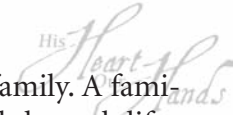
Joey pulls away from his mother, gives his father one last, desperate glance, and races—as unsure of himself as he's ever been, but unable to stop—toward the carload of buddies. "The rules at home choke me," he thinks as he throws his stuff in the trunk. "I've got to make it on my own. I can't be what they want me to be. It'll be okay if I get past today."

Joey jumps in the back seat. "All right! Good move," Joey's new friend, Ramon, says as he pulls a beer out of a bag. "This one's on me." And they drive away.

Joey's purpose is at odds with that of his parents. But was his family's purpose ever stated? When Joey went searching for significance and purpose, did he have a lifetime of godly, directed experience to draw from, or a disjointed set of ideas that lacked cohesiveness?

Parents cannot totally guarantee that one or more of their children will not rebel. However, they can decrease the chances of it happening, as well as give them a firm foundation to return to "when they are old," by developing a family mission statement and then organizing and prioritizing around it.

Discovering real purpose involves making choices—choices about who you are and what you stand for. Joshua made such choices, and he announced them boldly, "And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Josh. 24:15, NKJV).⁶



Clearly, parents must be intentional about submitting to Christ as the center of the family. A family mission statement will serve as a centerline and guardrails for a family on the road through life. When life is foggy, they will have a centerline on which to focus.⁷

Otis Ledbetter and Kurt Bruner write, “The number one reason we fail to give a solid heritage is negligence—we neglect to create a plan for doing so.”⁸

A family mission statement is a way for a healthy family to make Christ’s priorities its priorities. What is most important? Why is it most important?⁹

Steps to Developing a Family Mission Statement

1. Understand that Jesus’ mission reveals our purpose. Parents must first understand that as they begin to carefully consider their family’s mission, it will serve them well to consider the mission of Jesus and His directions to those who choose Him as Savior. A verse-by-verse review of the words of Jesus in the four Gospels reveals at least 35 statements that could be construed as statements of purpose. Three of them are overarching.¹⁰

“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost”
(Luke 19:10, NKJV).

“For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice”
(John 18:37, NKJV).

“Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matt. 20:28, NKJV).

Examination of other statements of purpose by Jesus (including Matt. 4:19; 5:17; 9:13; 10:34; 11:28-30; Luke 4:18-19; 12:8-9; John 6:38-40) reveals a cumulative list of the purposes of Christ. They are: do the will of the Father, bear witness to the truth, seek, serve, preach, teach others to evangelize, heal, fulfill the Law, separate holiness and sinfulness, provide rest for those who follow Him, be a ransom, call to repentance, represent man before God the Father, and save.

While parents will not likely include all of these elements in their family mission statements, a study of Jesus’ purposes should serve to frame their statements. These purposes must serve as a test to measure the nature of our mission statements as they are being built.

From Jesus’ purpose we naturally move to Jesus’ commands. The Great Commission is found clearly in five places, not by chance in each of the Gospels and Acts (see Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8).¹¹

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt. 28:18-20).

He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation” (Mark 16:15).



Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things (Luke 24:47-48).

As the Father has sent me, I am sending you (John 20:21).

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Indeed, a key point of the Great Commission statements is that we are to pass on what we have experienced—the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

The study of these Scriptures leads to a composite Great Commission Statement: *In the power and companionship of Christ by the Holy Spirit, and beginning in our own home, we will testify to what we have seen in Christ Jesus by going to all the nations and preaching the good news of salvation through Christ to all people. We will go as Christ went, teaching of repentance and forgiveness, baptizing those who trust in Christ in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and making disciples by teaching them to obey all that He commands.*¹²

If, in fact, we acknowledge Jesus is our Lord and the Lord of our families, then His mission must be ours as well. His was an evangelistic mission; thus ours must be, too! Our desire and specific intent must be to extend the kingdom of God by fulfilling the Great Commission.

2. Apply Jesus' mission through four practical steps. With Christ's mission and His purpose for humanity draping their effort, parents will want to begin the challenging but fun task of developing a family mission statement. The process for developing a mission statement is very important. It is crucial that the process not be rushed. Make it fun, especially for the children. Be sure that everyone is genuinely a part of the process—this is a statement the entire family needs to “own,” to wear with pride. We do not want to send our families off into the wilderness of life without a compass. The mission statement—based on the Word of God—is the compass.¹³

Derrick Mueller suggests a four-step process for developing your statement.

Step 1: Take a family inventory. Ask:

- In what activities are we presently engaged as a family?
- What motivates us?
- How would others describe our family?
- What are our priorities?

Step 2: Consider the family's goals. Ask:

- What does our family stand for?
- What values do we live by?
- What activities will be important to our family?
- Is there a Scripture verse(s) or passage(s) that summarizes our intent?



Step 3: Conceptualize the statement.

As a family, we will stand for _____, living by the values of _____. Needs, conflicts, and issues will be addressed by _____. This is based on the Scripture verse/passage _____.

Step 4: Fine-tune and personalize the statement.

Write the phrase again, this time in your own words. Each member of the family should answer, “Is there something crucially important to our family that is not included in this statement?” If so, refine it. Rework it until you develop a form and substance that will be appealing and meaningful.¹⁴

Children should be actively involved in developing the mission statement. The means by which they are involved should correspond to their ability.

- Use paper and colored markers with young children.
- Allow any child who is old enough to write his or her own mission statement no matter how elementary, and consider it when making the family mission statement.

Examples of Mission Statements

There is no certain way a family mission statement should look when completed, but following are some examples.

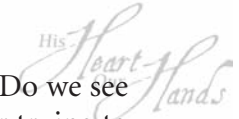
- “Our family will share the love, grace, and mercy of Jesus Christ with each other, our extended family, our neighbors, and our community as we go through life.”
- “Our family lives to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ, sharing His mercy and offering His salvation to all who will give us the opportunity.”
- “This family exists to live the great commandments and fulfill the Great Commission, beginning in our home and extending to every arena of life.”¹⁵

Provide Ministry-Based Evangelism Ideas and Opportunities

It’s not enough to challenge families to spend quality and quantity time and develop a family mission statement. The next step is for them to organize and prioritize around their mission. This probably means drastic change that will require a work of the Holy Spirit along with some practical ministry-based evangelism opportunities.

Section Two in this guide is made up of just those opportunities. There are numerous MAPs from the simple to the complex. Many lead naturally to family involvement. Be creative and let the adventure begin.

In addition to these, challenge your families to join in taking responsibility for their street, block, subdivision, or apartment complex. None of us can lead our whole community to Christ, but we can all impact our niche. The needs are all around us if we would just:



Look—Keep our eyes open. Do we see a neighbor who seems depressed? Do we see a mother struggling to care for her children? Do we see the man next door trying to drag his new refrigerator from the pick-up to the kitchen alone? Big need or small need, we can share the love of Christ.

Listen—What are people saying and how are they saying it? Are we hearing them or only listening to the words? While they may not always be as clear as we would like, careful attention to what people say will reveal much about their needs. Pay attention.

Linger—This does not mean overstay our welcome, but it does mean to be there for neighbors, family, and acquaintances. Invest some time. Hang over the fence talking a few minutes longer than you normally might. Stop, check in, and look and listen for how Jesus may use you to bless and ultimately to share Christ with those hurting people.¹⁶

Ministry-Based Evangelism Ideas for Reaching Neighbors and Friends

Consider these for yourself and then share them with the families in your church.

When your close friend has a need, serve him or her. Help your friend move, build a fence, take care of his or her children, or be there for that person whenever there is a need. During the break times, share your faith in Christ.

If senior adults live in your neighborhood, adopt them as grandparents. Help them with yard work. Visit them regularly as a family. Have your children create a drawing, painting, or some other type of artwork and present it to them. Help celebrate birthdays and other special events in their lives. Call or visit them regularly to check on their well being.

If single parents live in your neighborhood, adopt a single-parent family. Offer occasional child care so that the parent can run errands or have some time alone. Plan outings every month or so with the family. Invite them to church, and offer help in times of personal challenges.

Organize a parents' day or night out three to four times a year. These give parents a place to leave their children while they spend some time together.

When you hear about a family who has faced a crisis, lead your family to pray for them, visit them briefly, or write a note of encouragement that lets the family know you are praying for them.

When a neighbor is ill, have your family create and deliver a homemade get well card.

When a family has a baby, prepare a meal (ask about diet limitations in advance), and deliver it. Perhaps offer to run errands or do anything that may help in the first weeks of recovery and adjustment.

When your neighbors leave town on vacation or for some other reason, do their yard work while they are away. (You might want to ask in advance, in case they planned to make other arrangements such as paying for it to be done). When they return, leave a note on their door: "Welcome home! Thanks for being a good neighbor."¹⁷



What Happens When Families Catch the Vision

It is the Christmas season, and Ben and Margaret's children want to do something special. "How about a birthday party for Jesus!" Margaret suggests to Katelyn (9), Jason (7), and Ricky (4). Everyone agrees it is a great idea. Invitations are made, and for two afternoons, Margaret and the children walk through the neighborhood delivering them to 20 neighbors. Margaret is careful to tell the neighbors, "We're going to tell the Christmas story—how Jesus came to Earth as a tiny baby—and why that's important." That way, no parent is surprised by what the children are taught. The parents are encouraged to attend, too.

About a week before Christmas, it is time for the party. Jesus has a birthday cake. There are party hats and all the typical birthday trim. About halfway through the celebration, Ben takes a few minutes to read the Christmas story from the Bible. Then he says, "This is a very important story for our family, because we believe Jesus Christ was sent to the world to save us from our sins. We live according to the Bible. We follow Jesus. Moms and Dads, we hope this is something you'll learn more about, and we'll be glad to talk to you about it, if you want."

No pressure. No complex theology. Just fun, Jesus, and the opportunity to meet people, discover needs, develop relationships, and share. Several children began attending church with Ben and Margaret's family. Soon, some parents began attending, too. Ben, Margaret, Katelyn, Jason, and Ricky have developed the relationships that are leading to opportunities to meet needs and share Christ resulting in neighbors having a glorious reason for celebrating Jesus' birthday.¹⁸



Are you getting the picture? Involving families in ministry-based evangelism is not only biblical—it's smart. Not only will your families help you saturate your church field with the gospel, the dropout rate for the kids who grow up in your church falls drastically from 88 percent to less than 5 percent. Remember, 88 percent of the students who grow up in our churches check out by 18 and never return, but, when Mom and Dad model their faith and get engaged in the harvest, the dropout rate is less than 5 percent.¹⁹ May God grant us the grace and wisdom to inspire and equip families for the harvest.



Notes

- ¹ Victor Lee and Jerry Pipes, *Family to Family* (Alpharetta, Ga.: North American Mission Board, 1999), p. 5.
- ² The 88 percent drop out figure is from Jay Strack's experience among the nation's top student ministry leaders. The second figure is based on Proverbs 22:6 and Jerry Pipes' experience from 23 years of ministry with students and parents.
- ³ *Family to Family*, p. 11.
- ⁴ Taken from *The Future of the American Family* by George Barna (Chicago: Moody Press, © 1993), p. 103. Used with permission.
- ⁵ Taken from *Coming Home: Timeless Wisdom for Families* by James C. Dobson (Carol Stream, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, © 1998), pp. 172-73. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. All rights reserved.
- ⁶ *Family to Family*, pp. 23-24.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 25.
- ⁸ Taken from *The Heritage—How to Be Intentional About the Legacy You Leave* by J. Otis Ledbetter and Kurt Bruner (Colorado Springs: ChariotVictor Publishing, 1996), p. 237. © 1996 Cook Communications Ministries. Copied with permission, May not be further reproduced. All rights reserved.
- ⁹ *Family to Family*, p. 25.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 32.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 32-33.
- ¹⁴ Derrick Mueller, Mennonite Brethren Web site, *Mennonite Brethren Herald*, Vol. 35, Issue 12, www.mbconf.ca/mb/mbh3512/mueller.htm. Used with permission.
- ¹⁵ *Family to Family*, pp. 35-36.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 72.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 76-78.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81.
- ¹⁹ See Note 2.

His Heart
Our Hands

Starting Churches Through Ministry-Based Evangelism

The recovery of the apostolic ministry of the clergy, and all the people of God, to peoples who do not yet believe is perhaps the most significant movement in the world Church in our lifetime. The Church in many lands is rediscovering that God entrusts evangelism, church planting, and cross-cultural mission to all disciples (not just religious professionals). . . . The recorded early traditions about the apostles leave no doubt about their job description. That tradition does not picture the apostles primarily as church administrators or desk theologians. Primarily each was “sent out” into the world by the Holy Spirit, usually to a new field, area, or ethnic population, to extend the Church to people groups who had not yet received the opportunity.¹

Pastors are seeking ways to lead their churches to become more effective and relevant. They recognize the failure of programs. In an effort to revitalize their churches as Great Commission congregations, they are increasingly leading their churches to develop “needs-based” ministries and to adopt church multiplication strategies to reach unreached communities and people groups through ministries that are contextually relevant. These innovative approaches to kingdom growth assume a priority commitment to mobilizing members in gift-based ministries that meet real human need.

Principles for Using Ministries to Support Church Planting

- Research prayerfully, creatively, holistically, and boldly about the people needs and service opportunities that exist in your community, city, or county for ministry evangelism.
- Identify, through surveys and research data, people groups that are unchurched and organize ministries around their sets of needs.
- Engage members in ministries based on their training, interests, and spiritual gifts.
- As ministry groups are being developed, implement an intentional plan for involving participants in evangelistic Bible study.
- Some groups will aspire to become self-sustaining congregations, but others will need the ongoing support of a partner church.

When starting a new mission-type church plant, a planned course of action will help to maximize the probability for success. Wise stewardship of opportunity, resources, and people require an intentional plan of action. A planning principle is that action follows focus. The amount of time and resources necessary to get a new church start organized and functioning varies greatly from



situation to situation. It is important to know that the average new church start takes a minimum of three to five years to reach a sustainable level of stability and organizational maturity.

Implementation Strategy

Biblical Principles

Deuteronomy 15:11; Proverbs 21:13; 31:7; Isaiah 43:18-19; Matthew 5:13-16; 9:35-38; 25:31-46; 28:19-20; Luke 10:25-37; John 3:16-17; James 3:14-17; 1 John 3:16-18

Engage in Prayer

- Seek God's guidance and calling through personal and group prayer and Bible study.
- Prayer walk and drive communities and neighborhoods that are being neglected and unreached by existing church ministries.
- Prayer journey your city and/or church community to become sensitive to the needs of residents.

Gather Information

- Conduct a community needs assessment to identify needs and service opportunities.
- Survey church members for ministry concerns and call to service.
- Use demographic and psychographic data to identify lifestyle segmentations and people groupings.
- Focus on communities that are unchurched (or underchurched) for new ministries.

Organize Volunteer Ministries

- Establish objectives for existing and new ministries that clearly call for evangelistic and discipleship outcomes.
- Recruit and train ministry coordinators who will coordinate and coach other volunteers and will keep the church informed on needs and results.
- Strengthen and resource those ministries that intentionally focus on lost and unchurched persons.

Prioritize Outreach and Missions

- Seek to direct a minimum of 60 percent of the church's resources and ministry toward evangelistic outreach ministries and church planting.
- Create a visionary congregational culture that values every member serving as a called, gifted, on-mission Christian.



Ministries Being Used to Start New Churches

Church planters/pastors are using a variety of ministries to start new churches.

- Evangelistic block parties
- Outreach Bible studies
- Random acts of kindness
- After-school and weekday children and youth ministries
- Cross-cultural events and fellowships
- Community events using drama and music
- Bible study and prayer ministries in jails, nursing homes, universities, multi-housing communities
- Workplace prayer fellowships

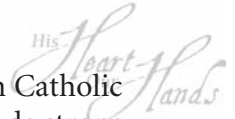
Testimony from Sam Cannada, Church Planter in West Virginia

It is often said that community ministry is not as important as evangelism. Some have even called it “watered-down gospel.” Pastors often distinguish between ministry and evangelism as if the two have no relationship whatsoever. While salvation is the ultimate goal, we are not called just to win converts, but to make disciples (see Matt. 28:18-20). Ministry and evangelism must go hand in hand. We should not tell of the love of Jesus and ignore the fact that the person we are talking to is hungry. However, we cannot and should not provide the meal to take away his or her physical hunger without telling him or her how Jesus came to take away spiritual hunger. (For more about the biblical basis of ministry-based evangelism see Chapter 1.)

In church planting, a new church start needs to demonstrate the love of Jesus by caring about its community. A church will not succeed if it does not love its community. Jesus did not just tell the people of His love, He demonstrated love through His actions. Love is not something we say, it is something we do.

People who are reached through community ministries are often more loyal to the new church and more active in inviting their friends by bearing witness to the needs that have been met in their lives. Even more important, people who have seen God meet their needs are more loyal to Him and more willing to walk by faith in the future. Having a church to plug people into is important. As a new work meets needs, it has the responsibility of reaching out to the spiritual needs of a person. Inviting people to a Bible study or worship service gives the ministry identity.

Tony had long given up hope of finding true purpose in life. A 62-year-old who left home as a teenager, Tony’s only friends had experienced alcohol, drugs, and prison. He had spent over 30 of his 62 years behind bars. After his release, he moved into a public housing project for senior adults because it was all he could afford on his Social Security income check. Still, he couldn’t get away from the alcohol that continued to control him.



He had tried to find answers in God. His search had taken him away from his Roman Catholic roots to almost every denomination. He knew religious life was important and he made strong efforts to help churches and pastors, particularly at Thanksgiving and Christmas, but he was missing a relationship with his Creator.

We met Tony in 1997 through a ministry our two-month old church plant had started in the housing project where he lived, serving meals to about 70 residents on Saturdays—usually a bag lunch and a cup of soup.

During the first months of this ministry, we had many opportunities to visit with Tony, invite him to church, and talk to him about our Lord. One day, Tony asked to see me. When I got there, he was suffering from the ravages of long-term alcohol use and he was very sick.

Looking me straight in the eyes he said, “Can you tell me how I can get my life out of the mess that it is in?” I responded by telling him once again about the love of Jesus. This time, he prayed to receive Christ as Lord and Savior. He struggled early in his newfound faith, but eventually God delivered him completely from the alcohol. Not only is he an active member of our church, he was one of the elected messengers when our newly constituted church was approved for membership by the state convention. Tony is also helping us to start a church inside the housing project where he lives.

Ginger is a mother of four whom we met through our Christmas Toy Store. In this ministry, parents pick out gifts for their children, but pay only ten cents on the dollar. As a result of the store and subsequent ministries that helped her loved ones, Ginger and her family began attending church. Because of her Jewish upbringing, Ginger had lots of questions and concerns about Christianity. But within just a few months, she received Jesus Christ as her Messiah. She has been active in her apartment complex, inviting adults and children to different activities in the church. She and her oldest daughter were baptized together.

Helen and her husband, Kenny, had an opportunity to move to a nice home where they could raise their two daughters. They had received help from HUD to rent the home, but lacked money to move. A group from the church offered to move them with a pickup truck. The family felt the love of God, and Helen and her family began attending church. Thankful for God’s love, Helen began inviting people to church. Six other people have started coming to church regularly as a result of Helen’s invitation. She is constantly seen on the street in front of our church inviting people to come in.

These stories demonstrate that ministry is sharing the love of Jesus by meeting the needs of individuals and communities. Ministries can include almost anything: tutoring, food pantries, clothing closets, job training/referral, feeding programs, Christmas toy programs, homeless shelters, AIDS ministries, divorce recovery, grief support—the list is endless. A new work does not need to have big numbers to start reaching the community, as long as those ministering have a servant’s heart.

Notes

¹ Taken from *How To Reach Secular People* by George G. Hunter, III (Nashville: Abingdon Press, © 1992), pp. 108-110. Used with permission.

The Power of Servanthood Through Ministry-Based Evangelism

Service-oriented evangelistic ministries are among the purest expressions of ministry based evangelism available to the church in the new millennium. Through the words of Christ in Matthew 20:28, “the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve,” Christians are given their marching orders to take the gospel into a lost world through love and service.

The truth is, most of us appear to talk more about evangelism than to actually practice it. Surveys show that only three to five percent of believers consistently share their faith. It is not due, however, to a lack of viable evangelism training tools. In reality, while terrific tools are available for teaching various approaches to presenting the gospel, statistics reveal that there is a breakdown in the application phase. It seems that in spite of the training, most people still face the challenge of overcoming their inertia; actually getting off the pews and into the fields. Thus we are left with the question of how to get people in our churches to actually start witnessing.

At this point you may be thinking, “It’s impossible—you don’t know my church, they could care less about being involved in evangelism!” Oh ye of little faith. The truth is, many people in our churches want to share their faith, but do not because they are intimidated by the prospect of stereotypes relating to “in your face” evangelism. In fact, many church leaders may secretly feel the same way.

Actually, personal evangelism doesn’t have to be intimidating. As a basic expression of ministry-based evangelism, many people have discovered new joy in witnessing through a tool known as “servanthood evangelism.” The information in the next few pages can assist you in implementing this highly effective and innovative approach in your church. Here’s what some notable people had to say about servanthood evangelism.

When Jesus walked on this earth, He used a servanthood ministry to build a bridge over which the message of the kingdom could cross. I believe one of the most effective means of evangelism for the twenty-first century will be servanthood evangelism based on ministry. Churches that are trying it are amazed with the results. Do not be left out!¹

Servanthood Evangelism shows concern in the name of Jesus asking nothing in return. It is perhaps the purest form of modeling God’s love we have come across.²



What Is Servanthood Evangelism?

You may be asking yourself, “What is servanthood evangelism? Is it just a new kind of program or something?” Actually, it’s not really a program. Servanthood evangelism is a strategic, biblical activity. In fact, it can more easily be considered a lifestyle or a process than it can be labeled a program. Sound interesting? It should.

By definition, servanthood evangelism involves intentionally sharing Christ by modeling biblical servanthood. It is a combination of two components: (1) simple acts of kindness, i.e., servanthood, and (2) intentional personal evangelism. The key word is “intentional.”

It is the simplest, most transferable, and yes, most fun approach for moving believers closer to a biblical lifestyle marked by consistent witnessing. Here’s how it works: get a group of believers, say for instance at a local church, and begin practicing simple acts of kindness with an intentional aim toward evangelism. In many cases, such acts of kindness open the door for the greatest act of kindness a Christian can give: the gospel.

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., uses this approach in its personal evangelism classes. Some students have gone door to door giving away free light bulbs. “You’ll probably have a light bulb go out sometime, so here’s one,” they say. “By the way, did you know that Jesus said He is the Light of the world?!” It is amazing to see how responsive people become as the result of a simple gift or act of servanthood as expressed in the realm of ministry-based evangelism.³

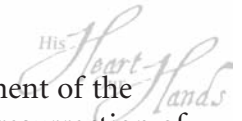
Servanthood evangelism wonderfully intertwines the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. This approach provides “entry-level” evangelistic training for church members. Do you want to mobilize more laypersons for evangelism? Then begin a ministry of servanthood evangelism in your church (Timothy K. Beougher, Associate Dean, Billy Graham Professor of Evangelism and Church Growth, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary).

The Biblical Rationale

At this point, it’s common for people to remark, “You know, this stuff sounds a lot like what Jesus did.” That’s right. Scripture gives many examples of Jesus modeling servanthood and kindness as the introduction into His evangelistic ministry.

For instance, in John 4, Christ overlooks the obvious taboos of His day in order to reach out to a Samaritan woman needing the “water of life.” Although conventional wisdom dictated that Christ should have avoided any contact with the woman in order to guard against religious defilement, He nevertheless chose to converse with the “woman at the well” thus presenting the opportunity for personal evangelism as she asked the simple question, “why?”

Obviously, many other biblical accounts demonstrate Jesus reaching beyond the barriers of tradition in order to demonstrate His love through kindness and servanthood to intentionally lead others to Himself. The same approach was mirrored through the ministry of the disciples.



Consider Peter in Acts 3 when he healed the lame beggar. Through all the excitement of the moment, Peter took the opportunity to preach to the multitudes concerning the resurrection of Christ and approximately 5,000 were converted to the Savior.

As a final word of encouragement relating to the challenge of servanthood, let's consider the words of Paul to the Philippians. In these verses he admonishes them to, "do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves" (Phil. 2:3, NASB). He further states, "have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus," who willingly, "emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant" (Phil. 2:5,7, NASB). Think about it, if Jesus became a bond servant in order to multiply His witness through intentional acts of kindness, what about us? Shouldn't we go and do the same?⁴

Servanthood is the purest "biblical" form of ministry-based evangelism available to the contemporary church.

How to Start

For the sake of brevity, the acrostic, "SERVE," provides a helpful outline for field application. The "S" stands for "Seek the Father's power and presence." Prayer is essential to effective evangelism. Pray for those who will be participating in the servanthood evangelism projects as well as for those who will be reached.

The "E" stands for "Enlist the people." Make sure trained witnesses will be involved. Experienced soul-winners can be your team leaders.

Whatever you decide, do not depend upon sign-up sheets without personal contact. The most effective approach is to establish the church's outreach vision and then approach individuals and small groups in an attitude of excitement. You may also devote a Sunday evening or midweek service for purposes of education and recruitment.

The "R" stands for "Resource." One of the strengths of servanthood evangelism is that, other than the commitment of personnel, many of the projects usually do not require a large amount of financial resources. Nevertheless, there is the need to gather resources for specific projects.

The "V" stands for "Vacate the building." After mapping out your community and establishing specific areas for evangelistic saturation, it is time to "vacate" the church walls and experience the power of servanthood through sharing the love of Christ. Again, whatever you decide, do not delay the application phase. It is here that lives are changed.

The "E" stands for "Evaluate." After a time of participation, always plan to have a reporting period for evaluation. This is usually the best time to encourage creativity concerning new ideas. Before dismissing in prayer, the pastor and team leaders should share about upcoming projects so the excitement and commitment continues. It is imperative to keep the vision alive.⁵



What to Say

It has been said that none of us get a second opportunity to make a first impression. This is especially true when we are trying to communicate the genuine love of Christ. With this mind, we would all agree that servanthood evangelism is a powerful ministry tool of communication all by itself. Still, you may ask, “What do I say to those I serve?”

The truth is, your actual expressions may vary according to the project. For instance, when delivering cookies door to door, it may be good to say something like, “If you think these cookies are sweet, then you should taste the fellowship at _____ church.” Another example could be the approach, “Why don’t you POP in and see us sometime,” when giving out microwave popcorn or cold cans of soda on a hot afternoon.

Nevertheless, while there are numerous and varied expressions to catch people’s attention, you always want to communicate a genuine attitude of love and grace. At this point, it is usually advisable to add a phrase like, “We are doing this activity to show you the love of Christ in practical ways, no strings attached.” As a result, most people are touched by the simple expressions of generosity and often become more receptive to the gospel message. After all, isn’t this what ministry-based evangelism is all about?

Where to Go from Here

Aside from inspiring testimonials, there are several more examples of creative expressions and cards to be utilized when doing the projects. Foundational principles, strengths, helpful training hints, and Prayer Journeys are among the other subjects discussed for your assistance.

Sound Interesting? It should. Remember: all the projects are FREE, no donations accepted. Some services are provided while people are away, making cards or printed notes necessary.⁶ Have a great time.



Top Ten Servanthood Evangelism Projects

Project	Concept	Equipment Needed	People Needed	Cost	Weather
1. Soft drink giveaway	On a hot day, nothing refreshes like a cold drink in Jesus' name	Cards, drinks, ice, clean plastic trash cans for storing cans on ice, table	Minimum of 10	Can lower cost to 20¢ per unit buying in quantities	Warm or hot weather
2. Light bulb service	Go door to door with light bulbs offering to change burned out bulbs	Supply 15-60 watt light bulbs, cards, step ladder	Teams of two	Light bulbs cost 50¢ each	Any weather
3. Smoke detector batteries	Give out complimentary smoke detector batteries	Cards, reminders with date, batteries	Teams of two	In quantity, these cost about \$1.25 each	Any weather
4. Neighbor-hood windshield washing	Go door to door washing windshields in driveways	Cards, squeegees, squirt bottles, cleaner, shop rags	Two or more	Minimal	Cool to warm, but not hot
5. Summer car wash	Use banners that say "Free Car Wash—No Kidding"	Cards, basic wash equipment, banners, also drinks, music, and chairs	Minimum of 12, prefer 25-30. Designate an "evangelist" to talk to people.	Minimal—use a sports bar's parking lot and pay for the water.	Above 60—overcast days don't work well (people won't stop if it looks like rain)
6. Rainy day grocery escort	Help shoppers to cars with packages	Cards, golf umbrellas	Two or more	Minimal	Rainy days
7. Single mom's oil change	Single moms regularly have car problems	Cards, filters, oil	Five or more (knowledgeable of job)	\$7-\$10 per car	Any weather except extreme cold
8. Laundromat™ outreach	Pay for washing machines and dryers at local Laundromats™	Cards, rolls of quarters	Teams of two, both adult men and women	Varies	Any weather
9. Christmas gift wrapping	Wrap gifts at the mall for free	Cards, paper, tape, scissors, etc. (may need to build simple kiosk or booth)	Lots of people (depending on mall traffic, you need to schedule teams)	Can be costly, depending on suppliers	If inside, any weather
10. Popsicle™ giveaway	Set up tables at store exits or sporting events and serve Popsicles™	Cards, table, coolers, ice, sign	Three or more	Minimal, according to brand	Warm weather

THE POWER OF SERVANTHOOD THROUGH MINISTRY-BASED EVANGELISM



Notes

- ¹ Alvin L. Reid and David A. Wheeler, *Servanthood Evangelism* (Alpharetta, Ga.: North American Mission Board, 1999), p. 5.
- ² *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-24.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-29.

Section Two

His Heart -
Our Hands

Adult Reading and Writing (ARW)

Mark, one of the more than 70 percent of inmates in U.S. prisons who are functional nonreaders,¹ wanted to learn to read the Bible for himself. Carolyn, one of the local church literacy missions volunteers working at the prison, wanted to teach someone to read the Bible. They both rejoice that the lock which barred Mark from the Bible, his inability to read, was removed. Mark has found a new freedom through God's Word.

Who Needs ARW?

According to the 1999 report of the National Institute for Literacy in Washington, D.C., over 40 million adult Americans are functional nonreaders.² They have difficulty filling out a job application, reading a newspaper, or reading a Bible. Some of these people are homeless, many are incarcerated in jails and prisons, and many are the working poor. Some, however, are highly successful individuals who have spent much time and effort hiding the fact that they cannot read. Do not assume that there is no one in your community who needs an ARW ministry. Those 40 million Americans are spread across the country, and some may be closer than you think. Beginning an ARW ministry will provide the opportunity to build relationships with people in your community who may never hear the gospel in any other setting.

What Is an ARW Ministry?

The premise for an ARW ministry is very simple: trained Christian tutors work one-on-one with adult nonreaders helping them with their reading skills. This may take place inside the church building itself, but a church can sponsor a ministry even if that ministry takes place in the public library, a school building, or in students' homes. An ARW ministry depends on volunteers committed to sharing their time, skills, and Christian faith with students, but not all volunteers will be teachers. A ministry requires a director and may need other volunteers to provide child care, transportation, and refreshments. Other church members who do not give their time as teachers can support the ministry through prayer and financial giving.

How Do We Plan an ARW Ministry?

1. **Pray.** Seek God's guidance throughout the process of investigating the need for the ministry, designing the ministry, and training volunteers. Continue to pray after the ministry begins.
2. **Survey the community.** Chapter 6 gives thorough guidelines for how to survey your community needs. When looking specifically for literacy needs, remember to interview the following:
 - Adult basic education counselors
 - Armed forces induction centers
 - Bank employees

ADULT READING AND WRITING (ARW)



- Block organizations/neighborhood councils
- Church pastors, staffs
- Community action programs
- Community centers
- Construction workers
- County extension agents, farmers
- Correctional facility staff
- Crisis clinic employees
- Denominational social service agencies
- Department of Motor Vehicle staff
- Employment office/manpower training programs
- Factory/industrial workers
- Family counselors
- Goodwill Industries
- Halfway houses/rescue missions
- Health agencies
- Head Start parent group leaders
- Homes for the mentally disabled
- Homes for unwed mothers
- Law enforcement
- Legal Aid Society
- Low income housing resident council members
- Medical or hospital receptionists/admissions clerks
- Migrant ministry/migrant council
- Minority group leaders
- Newspaper editors/reporters
- Personnel directors
- Refugee resettlement offices
- Salvation Army
- School principals, teachers, counselors
- School reading specialists



- Social Security office
 - Truant/probation/juvenile delinquency officers
 - Trucking companies, truck drivers
 - Urban renewal housing management/low-income housing office
 - Visiting Nurses Association
 - Vocational Rehabilitation department
 - Welfare department
 - YMCA, YWCA
- 3. Obtain church approval.** Vote to recognize the ministry as a part of the church programming. This helps the church identify the ministry as a part of its corporate outreach, even if only one volunteer is serving in the ministry. Including the ARW ministry in the budget strengthens this relationship. At this point, you will need to decide where the ministry will fit in the church structure. An ARW ministry may relate to the missions committee, woman's ministry, men's ministry, missions development council, evangelism committee, church and community ministries committee, or any other group that seems appropriate in the church.
- 4. Select a director.** This position is crucial. The ministry director will support both students and teachers. Experience has shown that an ARW ministry gets off to a stronger start if the director is selected before volunteers are enlisted and trained. The job responsibilities of a director include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:
- Recruiting volunteer workers
 - Providing training for workers
 - Administering the ministry
 - Supervising volunteers
 - Evaluating the ministry
 - Recognizing volunteers
- 5. Enlist teachers/tutors and other workers.** This process involves several steps. Keep in mind as you enlist workers that you may need volunteers to provide child care, snacks, and transportation for students. You will also want to train people who can fill in when a teacher/tutor needs to be absent or needs a breather.
- Write a job description or covenant before you enlist teachers/tutors. A volunteer should commit to a minimum of six months service. This gives time for the student to make progress and for a good relationship to develop. Commitment to a shorter time will not be as beneficial.



A tutor should agree to:

1. Attend tutor training events.
 2. Teach at least once a week for six months.
 3. Prepare lessons based on the student's needs.
 4. Keep records of student's progress.
 5. Report regularly to the student placement coordinator or program director.
 6. Attend regular teachers meetings.
 7. Contact students when they are absent and seek outreach opportunities with all students.
 8. Pray for and with each student.
 9. Share the gospel with students.
- Review the church rolls for potential volunteers. Some names will probably come to mind immediately, but do not limit your enlistment to those people. List all those you think would be qualified and available.
 - Personally contact potential volunteers. There are many advantages to a personal touch. Volunteers can ask questions and get immediate response. They feel important because you singled them out and made a contact. Some qualified workers simply do not volunteer without being specifically asked, even when they would like to serve.
 - Use ads in newsletters, bulletin inserts, posters, and handouts.
- 6. Train teachers.** After basic training you will want to find ways to provide continuing education to keep volunteers fresh and motivated.
- 7. Secure funding.** Money is necessary for the ministry as a whole, for student books, for teacher materials, and for supplemental resources.
- The best way to fund the ministry is through the church budget.
 - The student is usually asked to pay for books. This provides the student a positive investment in learning. If the student cannot afford the initial cost of materials, the church, a Sunday School class, or other group may help with the cost of books. It is better for the student to pay, however, even if the payment is just 50 cents a week.
 - Teachers usually purchase their own teaching manuals. Some ministries, however, provide manuals for their volunteers.
 - The ministry may purchase supplementary materials like a resource library for teachers. While public libraries often have simplified adult reading material, if it is not available, a library of simple materials for students would be very helpful.



What Sources of Help Are Available?

LifeWay Christian Bookstores

- *Literacy Missions: Adult Reading and Writing Workshop Manual*, the North American Mission Board (NAMB), (ISBN 0840085001).
- *Bible Materials for Adult Reading and Writing Lessons* available by calling NAMB at (770) 410-6360.

New Readers Press

The materials listed below are available from New Readers Press, U.S. Publishing Division of Laubach Literacy, Department F99, P.O. Box 888, Syracuse, NY 13210-0888, 1 800 448-8878, www.newreaderspress.com.

- *Laubach Way to Reading*
 - Each of the four skill books, both student and teacher editions
 - Checkups for each of the four skill books
 - Correlated readers for each of the four skill books
 - More stories series
- *Voyager: Reading and Writing for Today's Adults*
 - Seven skill books (both student and teacher's books)

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

Prayer

Ask the people who prayed during the initial phases of the ministry to continue to pray as it begins. Ask them to pray for teachers, the director, other volunteers, and students. Homebound people and others who cannot tutor can be a vital part of an ARW ministry by praying for it.

Pray for potential students. Each literacy tutor should have at least one prayer partner. Continue to pray for students until each volunteer is working with a student, and then pray for their progress in learning and in experiencing Christ's saving love. Often you will find that students have been praying themselves for someone to help them learn. Your ARW ministry is an answer to that prayer.

Prayer also brings up the point of confidentiality. While each student should have at least one person praying for him or her (preferably not the same person praying for the tutor), the student may not want that person to know intimate details or even the student's identity. Respect those wishes! The prayer partner can pray on a student's behalf without knowing that person's name; God will know and hear the prayer.



Besides individual praying for tutors and students, bring prayer requests before the whole church at every opportunity, such as prayer meetings, Sunday School classes, mission prayer groups, and special prayer vigils. Include prayer requests in the church bulletin and newsletter. Report praises and answers to prayer.

Publicity

You will need printed materials (posters, business cards, newspaper ads, fliers, and brochures) with the following information:

- Free one-on-one tutoring for adults who need to learn to read (mention the cost for books)
- Confidentiality assured
- Trained volunteers
- Church name and address
- Phone number and times to call for further information

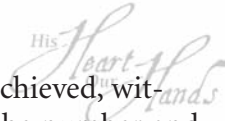
If there is a placement coordinator, it is best to list his or her phone number. However, be certain the person answering the phone knows the answers to questions that might be asked. If a home phone number is given, be sure there is an answering machine. Potential students often do not call twice.

Also, use public service announcements on local radio and television stations. In addition, contact the agencies and entities you surveyed in the beginning stages of the ministry. Let them know you are now ready to enlist students.

Student Placement

1. **First, ask for the student's name and telephone number and arrange for a time and place to conduct the initial interview.** If the student is available only in the evening and you have no volunteers at that time, you must refer the student to another program. Conduct the placement evaluation to determine which teaching material is appropriate.
2. **Assign the student to a tutor.**
3. **Decide where to meet.** Neither your home nor the student's home is the best setting for teaching. Interruptions such as the telephone, unexpected visitors, or children often prove disruptive. Instead, try to have lessons in a church, library, school, or other quiet place the student can feel comfortable. The staff of a church, association, or Baptist center may choose to develop a literacy center in their building. There could be a designated area where volunteers and students could have lessons on their own schedule.
4. **Decide on the length of the class.** Plan to give not less than two hours a week to the class, either one two-hour session or two one-hour sessions.

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?



You will want to keep records of the number of students and volunteers, success achieved, witnessing moments, professions of faith, and baptisms. You may also want to track the number and type of community agencies and entities (see the list in “How Do We Plan an ARW Ministry?”) referring students to you. Meet with the pastor or staff person related to the ministry at least quarterly. Use your evaluation information when you make reports to the church, which you should do at least annually.

Notes

- ¹ Karl O. Haigler, Caroline Harlow, Patricia O'Connor, and Anne Campbell, *Literacy Behind Prison Walls* (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, 1994), p. xviii. Also available from nces.ed.gov/naal92/PrisonSum.html.
- ² *Fast Facts on Literacy*, [published online] (Washington, D.C.: National Institute for Literacy, 2000 [cited 19 September 2000]). Available from novel.nifl.gov.

His Heart -
Our Hands

Benevolence

Right before Christmas, the pastor of a local church received a call. A family living nearby had suffered a house fire and had lost everything—clothes, appliances, personal papers, as well as Christmas gifts for the four children in the family. One church was supplying an apartment and another was helping the family apply for aid with community agencies like the Red Cross. Could his church help? Even though it was a hectic time of year and the request was unexpected, the pastor was confident of his church’s ministry capability. He forwarded the request to his benevolence committee. This committee was a team representing a cross section of the church, and together they used spiritual gifts such as helps, mercy, and administration in their benevolence work. They had an application form, they knew what resources were available, they were familiar with their ministry guidelines, and they were equipped in personal witnessing. They were, in short, prepared for benevolence ministry. Through the efforts of this local church and other Christian groups, a family not only had their Christmas restored, they heard the good news of Christ.

What Is a Benevolence Ministry?

The Merriam Webster Collegiate Dictionary defines benevolence as “the disposition to do good, an act of kindness, or a generous gift.” Benevolence ministry is all of this and more, because it carries with it the intent to share the gospel. You may have heard it said that it is difficult to speak to someone about the gospel when the stomach is growling from hunger. Through benevolence ministry we seek not only to share the gospel, but to quiet the growling stomachs of hunger, still the chattering of teeth in the cold night air, or warm the stiff bones of those sleeping on concrete city sidewalks.

The purpose of benevolence ministry is to provide for the less fortunate in tangible ways, through food distribution, food service, clothing, counseling, referrals, and the sharing of hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. When you think of benevolence ministry, think of simple acts of kindness that have a special intent—to honor God and meet the needs of an individual or family, while allowing you to minister out of your relationship with God. In today’s society, with its ever-changing and challenging views and morals, it is difficult to find examples of simple acts of kindness. Many people are turning to the church in their community not only to hear of God, but to see His handiwork in the kind acts of His people.

How Do We Plan a Benevolence Ministry?

Teamwork is key to an effective benevolence ministry. Consider using a team leadership model; it will allow you to broaden the base of the ministry from the beginning. Ideally, you will need someone with the gifts of mercy, helps, administration, and/or intercession to run the ministry on a consistent basis. It will be more likely that a number of individuals who each possess one or more of these gifts will volunteer to be part of a leadership team long before one person with all these gifts comes forward. Additionally, by using a team-based approach, the support and encouragement that the team will develop will help to sustain the ministry during difficult times.



Often we see people at the church door asking for a handout or even demanding emergency assistance. Our response, more frequently than we care to admit, is the addition of more stringent guidelines or barriers in an effort to protect the precious resources that we are trying to give away in the name of our Lord. Ministering from a gift-based team approach will supply true desire, right motives, and a willing attitude.

What Are the Goals?

1. Demonstrate the love of Christ from *first* contact
2. Provide food, clothing, shelter, and physical assistance
3. Provide Bible-based counseling to all who desire it for substance abuse, family problems, financial problems, and any other spiritual problems
4. Serve as a liaison for those helped into a local Southern Baptist church
5. Provide referral service to other social service providers

What Services Should We Provide?

Early in the planning process, determine the core services that you are equipped to provide. There is nothing wrong with starting out small and adding additional services over time. One way to determine the core services that you can provide is to survey the congregation and develop a listing of the resources available within the church. Also, check with church staff, such as the secretary, and find out what requests for assistance they typically receive.

Examples of core services include:

- Food for homeless and transient individuals and families
- Emergency food for local individuals and families
- Clothing for families and individuals
- Mailing address and message center service
- Biblical counseling and support groups

What Sources of Help Are Available?

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)—Contact the local department of social services or human services agency (www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ofa).
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Supplemental Food Program—Contact local department of health (www.fns.usda.gov/wic).
- Navy-Marine Corps/Air Force Relief Societies—Contact for active duty military, military dependents, and retired military (www.militaryinfo.com/casualty/htm).
- Community Food Dispersal Locations—Contact local United Way (www.unitedway.org).



How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

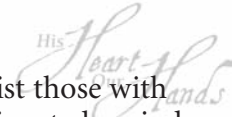
The first contact with a person or persons in need is critical. Always remember to treat people with respect and dignity. Smile; show that you have the joy of Christ in your life. Devise a form that can be duplicated and cataloged for follow-up and tracking of the ministry. Include the questions listed below, as well as other questions your particular ministry would like to ask.

1. **“What is your name?”** Be sure to give your name and then call them by their name(s).
2. **“What is your address?”** You may want to ask if they have a picture identification. This can be helpful in referral efforts later, but it should not be mandatory for receiving help. In fact, it may provide a ministry opportunity for you by assisting them to get an identification card.
3. **“What is your phone number?”** If they do not have a home phone number, ask for a contact number. Also, ask if the person whose number they are giving you has granted permission for their number to be used in this way.
4. **“What is your spouse’s name?”**
5. **“What is your date of birth?”** This could be helpful in follow-up through referral to a Sunday School teacher and care group leader who could add them to their class prospect file.
6. **“What is your need?”** Try to record their response as accurately as possible.
7. **“Have you gone anywhere else? If so, where? What was the outcome?”** Remember to be patient; they may have had a negative experience somewhere else. Remind them that you are trying to help and that you do not want to refer them to an agency that they have already visited.
8. **“How many people live with you? What is their family relationship to you? What are their names and dates of birth?”** This will be important in determining the amount of food supplies needed or the shelter referral you may use.

After you have gathered this information, explain what steps you are going to take and give them a time frame if they have to come back. Assure them that you are going to help as much as you possibly can.

General Policies

1. All church organizations, committees, staff, and individuals should abide by all policies and procedures.
2. The leadership team or the designee should administer the ministry.
3. All requests for assistance should be submitted in writing.
4. Under no circumstances should cash be distributed from food funds to meet assistance requests.
5. Among clients, there should not be multiple adults in the same household all requesting food or energy assistance. Determine which adult family member is designated to request assistance.



6. The intent of the ministry is to be a onetime or short-term resource to assist those with immediate needs. Persons submitting more than one request within a designated period of time (say three or six months) or individuals with an ongoing need should be referred to other community agencies with sustaining resources.

Try to remove as many barriers as you possibly can for the individuals that you seek to help. Many of them have been turned away or blocked in their search for simple necessities of life. The kindness you show will be rewarded and the obstacles you remove may very well be windows of blessing opening up for you.

How Do We Evaluate the Ministry?

You will need to decide whether you are going to evaluate on a monthly, quarterly, or yearly basis and frame your evaluation accordingly. Some questions you might ask are:

- How many individuals or families have we assisted to date?
- What types of assistance have we rendered?
- Were there needs we could not meet?
- What could we do in the future to meet those needs?
- Has the gospel been shared effectively?
- How many professions of faith have been made?
- How many referrals have been made to area churches?

Whether you intend to minister from a local church setting or a regional center, always remember the purpose of benevolence ministry: to share the gospel while meeting the needs of people. Don't think of your ministry as just limited to handing out food, clothing, or money; it is participating in the work of spreading the gospel. Keep these thoughts in mind as you evaluate the ministry.

Campgrounds

While a mission group working with Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries performed a concert at a campground, the gnats were extremely bad. One summer missionary watched as a teenage girl fought with the gnats while trying to enjoy the music. As the girl got up to leave, the summer missionary went to her and shared her gnat repellent. They sat together for the rest of the program.

When the staff member asked her what she thought of the concert, the girl responded, “I learned for the first time that God loves me individually.” Further conversation led to the young girl accepting Jesus as her Savior.

A music ministry and a sensitive volunteer in a campground ministry setting made the difference between a fun stay in the mountains and a life-changing experience for this young girl.

Who Needs Campground Ministry?

Campgrounds—sites where people go for recreation while living in tents, trailers, motor homes, or vans—are popular with people of all ages. Because campsites rent for less than motel rooms, camping can provide recreation and an inexpensive getaway for people. People of all economic classes enjoy the outdoors and love to camp out. Some people rent a camping spot while in town to attend a fair or festival. Other people favor campgrounds because of the convenience to nearby fishing, hunting, and hiking areas.

Most campers share a desire to relax. While some just want a weekend of enjoyment, others are trying to get away from highly stressful lives. Although people may go to a campground to “get away from it all,” many campgrounds lack recreational and social programs. In such campgrounds, young people with time on their hands can become a problem. Nighttime can be especially empty for people who suddenly find themselves without television, radio, or human companionship. And sadly, tragedy can strike at a campground. Campers fall ill, become victims of crime or accidents, or get bad news from home.

In addition to the campers, many campgrounds hire summer staff members to care for facilities and run programs. Staff who are Christians need fellowship and nurture. Those who are not Christians need to hear the gospel just as much as campers do.

Campground ministry gives your church the opportunity to minister and witness to a broad cross section of society through the common themes of relaxation and nature.

What Is Campground Ministry?

While campers may need help with many things, the basis of campground ministry is recreation and worship offered in an outdoor setting. Due to the nature of camping, a minimum schedule for a campground ministry should be Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. The following activities have been found successful in witness and ministry.

Worship Service. Services should not be more than 30 minutes long. These should be widely promoted and open to people of all denominations. Dress will be casual. If it is not possible to conclude with a public invitation, offer individual counseling at the close of the service. The audience can participate through Scripture reading and music. Services should be held at a time convenient to campers, such as 9:30 to 10:00 a.m. The camp manager may have some insight into what time would be best for services. Be flexible so most of the people will have an opportunity to worship. You may need to hold a separate service for employees.

Worship Walk. In a worship walk, campers come into contact with God through nature. Linger briefly at the starting place for latecomers by talking individually with those who have arrived. During the walk, parables that suggest messages for today may be taught at selected locations. You may want to pray and use Scripture at each stop. The book of Psalms contains many passages about the glories of God found in the natural world. Also, many stories from the life of Jesus involve plants or animals. A camper who is worried about the bills waiting for her back home may be moved by seeing birds and flowers while hearing Jesus' assuring words of His care for us (see Matt. 6:25-34).

Campfire Service. Lead a sing-along. As an introduction, ask campers to tell where they are from. Present testimonies or ask the audience to share theirs. Use puppets, magic, special music, and a five-to-ten minute devotional with Scriptures and prayer. Issue an invitation. If an invitation is not allowed, tell campers you will be available to discuss spiritual needs following the service. Friday and Saturday nights are especially good nights for campfire services.

Family Evening Entertainment. Free entertainment is usually quite popular at campgrounds. You could offer musical ensembles, youth choirs, puppet shows, or dramas. An associational or church creative arts team can lead this activity. Do not make the performance completely religious. About two-thirds of the performance should be wholesome secular entertainment and one-third should be spiritual. Have volunteers who will mingle with the crowd and share Christ with interested people at the end of the performance.

Musical Drama. Distribute free tickets. The campground may offer free facilities. If you have to rent space, you might take up an offering for expenses. Enlist quality Christian folk or rock groups to perform. Gospel or popular music with a message is suitable. If people will be coming on a drop-in basis, an upbeat variety show would be better than a storytelling drama.

Day Camp. Day camp is usually for children ages four to 11. While adult volunteers are needed to share testimonies with parents, youth can help conduct the actual day camp. Hold the day camp three to five days a week for one and a half to two hours. See "What Sources of Help Are Available?" on page 101 for lists of curriculum.

Sand-and-Surf Clubs. These are children's Bible clubs conducted at a beach, a pool, or a shady setting. The same materials used for day camps can be used in this setting. Craft ideas may need to be modified taking wind, weather, or sand into consideration. You can offer sessions for 45 minutes one day a week, or five days a week for one and a half to two hours. Include parents when possible. Again, have adult volunteers available to talk with parents.

Parents Night Out. This ministry could also take place at the church. It gives parents a break while their children enjoy fun activities with other children. Children who may never have heard

the gospel can hear it through Christian volunteers taking time to provide child care in the campground.

Recreation. Games and other fun activities, like sand sculpting or making kites, can open doors for volunteers to talk with parents about Christ and Christian principles for family life.

Mobile Recreational and Witnessing Unit. A church bus or trailer with an awning can serve as a setting for music, drama, puppets, and recreation.

Free Water. Be careful that a booth for ice water distribution does not conflict with neighboring businesses. Print Scriptures on the cups and keep tracts available for all who stop. Provide umbrellas and chairs and at least some shaded area for people who need a break from the heat. Encourage visitors to remain for a time so someone may share the gospel with them.

Coffeehouse. After finding a location, such as a pavilion or recreation room, publicize the hours when the coffeehouse is open. Beverages may be offered at cost, but remember this is a ministry, not a moneymaking enterprise. Provide games and music and always have time for talking with people. You will want to be ready to share Jesus through actions, as well as words. Be prepared to help find resources for needs like food and overnight shelter.

Sunburn Unit. Use a booth or wagon as a sunburn unit. Offer liquids and sunburn medications. If possible, have a nurse at the unit. Other volunteers can give aid and help in witnessing. Distribute health or survival kits to each patient upon departure. Include a New Testament or tract in the kit.

Creative Arts. Use these as stand-alone ministries or as components of the preceding activities: puppets, illusionists, music, clowns, mimes, sports clinics, object lessons, chalk talks, dramas, and multimedia presentations.

Chaplaincy. Chaplains can respond to crises with camp staff and visitors, plus provide support to management. Chaplains should be able to respond appropriately to emergencies and should be knowledgeable about community services. You may even be allowed to have a chaplain in places that prohibit worship services.

One-on-One Evangelism. In most public campgrounds, the giving away of materials is limited. You can, however, send out individuals or teams of two to begin conversations with people. A natural starting point is the beauty of God's creation. A recreational approach works best. Equip volunteers to develop relational bridges over which they share the gospel.

How Do We Plan a Campground Ministry?

1. **Choose leaders.** Select a person or group of persons to take the lead in the ministry. At this point, it may be one person with a passion for this type of ministry or several people interested in exploring the possibilities.
2. **Gather information.** The campground manager or park superintendent is key to a successful campground ministry. Discuss needs with them. What kind of people visit the campground? How long do they stay? Is there a peak camping season? What

recreational and social needs do they have? Is someone already providing structured worship? Are there other ministry needs your church could meet? What emotional and physical needs do campers have? Also, find out what limits would be put on your ministry and what resources the campground would make available to you.

3. **Brainstorm.** The group should brainstorm ideas of possible ministries that would meet the needs discovered in your survey.
4. **Find resources.** List resources you would need for a ministry. Include resources the campground has, as well as church and associational resources. What things are you lacking, if any? Brainstorm ways to secure those resources as well.
5. **Choose a ministry.** The type of ministry you choose should be based on expressed needs of the campground staff, resources, and most of all, God's leading. Prayer is a vital part of this and every planning step.
6. **Write a ministry proposal.** Outline your project: time limits, responsibilities of the church and campground, activities, audience, as well as any other facts the campground staff and church would need to know. Share your proposal with any church leadership who would need to approve it. If they have not already been a part of the surveying and planning teams, make the pastor and missions leadership aware of your work up to this point.
7. **Present your proposal to the campground staff.** Make an appointment and visit the campground director or owner three months before the starting date of the ministry. Provide a written description of the ministry and verbally share ideas with the manager. Spend time listening to what the manager has to say. Be flexible—the manager could provide valuable advice on different aspects of your project. Obtain permission from the owner or superintendent to conduct the ministry.
8. **Prepare volunteers.** Recruit and train volunteers for the ministry, making sure they understand the purpose of the ministry. Training should include education about the types of campers they will meet, as well as needs they can expect to encounter. Include the camp rules and expectations. Witnessing training is a key element in volunteer preparation. You may wish to have a separate witnessing training session in order to focus on this vital ministry skill.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

Several materials can be used for day camps, sand-and-surf clubs, and parents night out. Check the catalogs of all of the entities listed below for more materials on recreation, crafts, games, and working with children.

North American Mission Board

4200 North Point Pkwy.
 Alpharetta, GA 30022-4176
 (770) 410-6000 (main switchboard)
 To order materials, call 1 800 448-8032.
www.namb.net

NAMB produces numerous resources for ministry with children, such as *Sharing God's Special Plan with Children*, *MissionKids*, and others. See Appendix A for more information on NAMB's resource materials for ministry with children.

Woman's Missionary Union

100 Missionary Ridge
 P.O. Box 830010
 Birmingham, AL 35283-0010
 (205) 991-8100 (main switchboard)
www.wmu.org

Friends Club, available from WMU, is particularly suited for use with children (ISBN 1563092980). To find out more about this and other materials produced for children's ministry by WMU, check out www.wmystore.com.

LifeWay Christian Resources

127 Ninth Ave., N
 Nashville, TN 37234
 (615) 251-2000 (main switchboard)
 To place a phone order, call 1 800 448-8032.
www.lifeway.com

TeamKID, *KidTrek*, and Vacation Bible School materials produced by LifeWay Christian Resources are well suited for daytime or weeklong ministry with children. Visit a local LifeWay Christian Store or their Web site at www.lifeway.com.

Association of Resort/Leisure Ministries

Eric Spivey, President
 P.O. Box 1887
 Ridgeland, SC 29936

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

Publicity

Ask permission of the camp manager or superintendent before promoting the ministry. Use fliers, banners, calling cards, newsletters, and camp visitation. All publicity should include the time, place, and sponsor of the ministry. When distributing any kind of flier, tract, or other printed material in a campground, always go back later to clean up any of your material that may have been dropped on the ground. If your activities cause a mess in the campground, it will not be appreciated and you could even lose the privilege of serving in the campground. Conversely, respect and concern for the beauty of the camp will be appreciated.

Responsibility

Implement the ministry as you described it to the campground staff. Keep all of your promises. Follow up on professions of faith, recommitments, and people interested in more information or further contact. Write thank-you notes to people involved in the ministry. Keep your church, association, and state convention officials abreast of how your ministry is going.

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?

If the campground has a peak season, hold an evaluation session after the season has ended. If the camp is busy year round, schedule at least one time during the year (preferably more at the beginning) to evaluate your progress.

The best way to evaluate the ministry is to ask for feedback from a variety of people—camp manager, staff, campers, as well as ministry volunteers. Also, ask the following questions:

- What needs did we meet?
- What needs did we encounter that we did not meet?
- What resources will be necessary in the future to meet those needs?
- How many campers made professions of faith? Were they channeled into a local church for discipleship?
- What was the best thing about the ministry?

Carpe Diem

Jon and Laura awoke to a cold, dark house and knew the ice storm the night before had taken out the power lines to their home. As they ventured outside that morning, they found that not only was it dark in their home, but their entire neighborhood was without power. Having only moved in a few weeks earlier, they had yet to meet most of the people living around them. Wondering how long it might take for the power company to get to their remote community, they sat down to eat a breakfast of cold bread and butter. The sudden realization that they could heat water on their gas grill, which thankfully had a full tank, led to the birth of an idea. They went out and invited all of their neighbors to join them for a hot lunch. Firing up the grill they made coffee and put a big pot of soup on the grill to heat. Over cups of hot coffee and soup they had many opportunities to share their faith with their newly acquainted neighbors.

In a major metropolitan area, a sudden rash of robberies in convenience stores staffed by East Indians had everyone on edge. A local Baptist congregation saw a unique opportunity for ministry. Members went to each of the convenience stores in their part of town and offered to sit in the store with the clerks until the robber was arrested. Their efforts opened doors for ministry with the store clerks, but also became a witness to their community as a whole.

These are two examples of Christians “seizing the day.” Carpe Diem ministries are ministries of the moment. If we fail to act when they appear, that opportunity for witnessing to the power and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is lost for all eternity.

Who Needs Carpe Diem Ministries?

At some point everyone will need someone else to step into his or her world and meet a need that has arisen in his or her life. Often in these kinds of moments, the people to whom you will minister will not have expressed the need or know it has gone unmet until you step in and provide God’s touch in the situation. This unexpected touch is what makes Carpe Diem ministries so important and opens so many new doors to witnessing to our Lord’s saving grace. This is also what makes “Seizing the Day” such a difficult proposition; you must learn to notice and respond to ministry opportunities before people express a felt need for ministry.

What Are Carpe Diem Ministries?

Carpe Diem ministries are as varied as the daily events of life. Like Jon and Laura, you may find yourself in the midst of a community without power and in need of a hot cup of soup. “Seizing the Day” in your community may mean funding a reward to find a killer or sitting with a store clerk to dissuade a robbery. Reaching out to a family coping with the death of a loved one without the benefit of Christian friends will bring you into contact with persons desperately seeking answers to questions that only the good news of Jesus Christ can answer. Your presence at such a time will create many opportunities to openly explain your hope of eternity through the grace of Jesus Christ amid the certainty and nearness of death.

How Do You Plan for Carpe Diem Ministries?

Unlike other ministries outlined in this guide, Carpe Diem ministries do not lend themselves to a specific set of plans. Since you can't seize the day until the day arrives, you can't have a specific plan of action laid out. There are however, some things you can do to prepare your congregation to be ready to step in when a opportunity to seize the day presents itself in your community.

1. Discover the resources available in your church.

You will have to act fast when an opportunity for ministry arises, so you need to find out now where the resources are in your congregation. Does someone have extra space where a family whose home has burned might stay for a night? Do you have a mechanic who could respond to a stranded traveler? Could your education building become a substitute school building if your local school building was suddenly shut down due to contaminated water? Who in your congregation can feed extra mouths on short notice? Image the myriad of opportunities that may arise and seek out the people in your congregation who may be able to step in and "Seize the Day."

2. Prepare yourselves to share the gospel.

When Jesus encountered people in need, He not only met their need but He introduced them to the truths of God. Likewise, you must be prepared to express the truths of God to persons you encounter while "seizing the day."

3. Heighten your sensitivity to events on your community.

Remember that Carpe Diem ministries are ministries of the moment. If you miss the moment you miss the opportunity to bring the gospel to bear on the situation. Thus it is imperative that you be diligent in seeking to stay in touch with things happening in your community. Develop a communications chain so that members can contact the appropriate person when they discover an opportunity for ministry. This is where you will find it helpful to have given your members a list of the resources you have identified in your congregation. Have someone responsible for reading the newspaper each day specifically looking for news of your community. Some have found a multitude of opportunities by reading the obituaries and reaching out to the families of those without a church connection.

4. Pray for guidance.

Ask God to bring to your attention opportunities in your community as they arise. Seek God's direction when you look for ways to step in to situations that arise. Trust God to show you the resources available in your congregation and how you might use them to "seize the day" when an opportunity for Carpe Diem ministry arises in your community.

How Do You Begin Carpe Diem Ministries?

You begin with a commitment to seek out opportunities for “seizing the day” and a willingness to step out and offer the resources you have identified. Carpe Diem ministries are not something you advertise. You don’t put up a sign saying, “Open for ministry.” You simply start responding to events. You will discover that, like the mechanic who begins to hear the miscue in every engine he or she passes, the more you reach out to “seize the day,” the more you will notice opportunities in your community.

How Do You Evaluate Carpe Diem Ministries?

It is difficult to evaluate a ministry for which you can’t develop a specific design like Carpe Diem ministries. You will, however, notice signs that your attempts to “seize the day” have met with success. Your first indication will come from the excitement your members will express as they take part in making a difference in people’s lives. There will be an increase in the number of people identifying new opportunities to touch lives at a moment’s notice. More members will be volunteering their own abilities as resources for Carpe Diem ministries. You will also discover that your church is becoming better known in your community as you reach out and participate in events that are significant to the life of your community. People in the community will become resources of information about ministry opportunities as they see you “seizing the day” and impacting their community. Most important, you will see your witnessing encounters increase as your members become more involved in the lives of the citizens of your community. As a result, people will be won to Christ who might never have encountered a Christian through the normal events of everyday life.

His Heart-Hands
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Chaplaincy and Public Safety Agencies

A volunteer chaplain was riding with a police officer when they received a call to a traffic accident. There was a fatality and the chaplain went with the officer to notify the deceased man's family. The chaplain, who was also a pastor of a local church, realized he had visited the home during an outreach visit. He offered to tell the family about their loved one's death. After they left the home the officer said, "Reverend, I sure am glad you were along for this call!"

Who Needs a Public Safety Chaplain?

Law enforcement, emergency medical agency and fire department personnel, their families, and the community all need spiritual guidance, support, and counseling. Public safety personnel face dangerous situations in which they must make split-second decisions. They must see tragic events unfold and deal with the most violent, selfish aspects of human nature. Their families must cope with the possibility that their loved one may be hurt or killed on duty. Families can suffer stress from the terrible things their loved one experiences on the job. A chaplain can bring spiritual comfort and support to all these situations.

The community also needs the chaplain's services. Victims of crime or accident, as well as mentally unstable or suicidal individuals, may need counseling. The chaplain may bring a family news that a loved one has died in a fire or shooting.

But why is a chaplain needed where local churches of every denomination exist? A chaplain may serve some people who already have a church affiliation, but most will not. Of those who belong to a church, their pastor and fellow church members may not understand the needs. The chaplain who rides with a police officer or goes on a call with a fire department sees and understands what a family goes through.

What Are the Qualities a Chaplain Needs?

A chaplaincy ministry is different from many other forms of ministry-based evangelism in that each public safety organization has the right to establish its own guidelines for a chaplaincy program, or to decide if they will use chaplains at all. A church cannot begin a public safety chaplaincy ministry without the approval of those agencies. Some departments may prefer to have officers within that organization serve a dual role as employee and chaplain. Most will want a chaplain to be recognized in the community as a minister, not a lay volunteer. For those who prefer to have a chaplain from outside the organization, the following guidelines can be helpful.

- The chaplain must be first and foremost a person of God and endorsed as an approved and experienced denominational representative. (A prospective chaplain may apply for endorsement through the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team of NAMB.)
- The chaplain must have a strong faith in God, spiritual maturity, and love for the people whom God created.

- A chaplain must live an exemplary life, because that is the criterion agency personnel will use in accepting the chaplain.
- Once approved by the department, a chaplain is considered a representative of his or her denomination, but must be willing to be ecumenical in service. In other words, a chaplain can identify himself or herself as Southern Baptist, but it should be the goal of the chaplain to promote the kingdom of God. A chaplain should be open to working with people of all faiths.
- A chaplain's continuance is based on him or her remaining in good standing within the endorsing denomination.
- A chaplain must recognize that he or she serves at the pleasure of the public safety agency.
- The chaplain has several biblical role models: the Old Testament prophet who brought God's Word to the people; the Good Samaritan who assisted a stranger in need; and Jesus Christ, whose life bore witness to the truth and love God wants each of His children to know and practice.
- A chaplain counsels as professionally equipped and makes referrals when needed.
- The chaplain's role is to offer spiritual support, not to "play policeman" or interfere with the duties of the safety officers.
- A chaplain must behave in a morally upright manner.
- Confidentiality is crucial to a successful chaplaincy ministry. Information the chaplain obtains should not be released to news media, insurance agencies, or attorneys.

What Are the Duties of a Chaplain?

A chaplain should always do the following:

- Know and follow all agency protocols and procedures.
- Refrain from publicly criticizing the agency and its actions, employees, and fellow chaplains.
- Stay in contact with the dispatcher and be on call.
- Report to the officer in charge when arriving upon a scene.

A chaplain may be asked to do any or all of the following. Specific duties should be developed with the agency authorities in charge of appointing and supervising the chaplain.

- Ride with officers.
- Attend roll calls or other department meetings.
- Counsel agency personnel, especially after stressful events.

- Visit homes, hospitals, and funeral homes in the event of illness and death among agency personnel.
- Act as liaison between the department and the religious community.
- Make the public and safety agencies aware of any religious scams or frauds in the community.
- Counsel community residents after major traumas such as fires, explosions, or natural disasters.
- Counsel troubled youth and their families.
- Counsel and minister to people attempting suicide and to families of people who have committed suicide.
- Make referrals of persons in crisis to the clergy of their choice.
- Make regular reports to the agency they serve.
- Serve in ceremonial functions such as funerals and graduations.
- Attend training activities within the agency.
- Plan religious services and/or educational programs for the agency and community.
- A police chaplain will make arrangements for counseling with incarcerated people and their families in emotional, family, or spiritual matters when asked to do so. The chaplain will not act as a liaison between police, courts, and boards for the incarcerated.

What Are the Steps in Becoming a Chaplain?

The following steps relate to a public safety chaplain. Those wishing to serve as chaplains in hospitals, correctional facilities, and nursing homes should check with those entities about their chaplaincy programs.

1. Get acquainted with the agency.

- Make an appointment with the top administrator of the public safety agency. (If you know someone at the agency, express your interest in being a chaplain. Perhaps that person will introduce you to the administrator.) Be prompt, courteous, and interested. Depart when the allotted time expires.
- Expect to undergo a criminal background check.
- Express your interest in helping the agency and its personnel to achieve its mission.
- Ask if a chaplaincy program already exists. If so, get the name and phone number of the coordinator and contact that person.
- Request permission to spend a shift with agency personnel. This could mean riding with police officers in a patrol car or spending time at a fire station waiting to go on a call with an engine.

- Suggest another appointment with the administrator after you have visited personnel in the field. After you have seen the community the way they see it, you may have a better understanding for how you can be of assistance.

2. Get acquainted with people in the department.

- Before you start riding with personnel, visit the station and find out when the shift starts and the name of the commanding officer for that shift.
- Visit a second time, shortly before you start your ride-along, and introduce yourself to the officer in charge. Accept instructions and do not be surprised if you are asked to sign a waiver releasing the agency and municipality from legal liability.
- If you are dealing with law enforcement, a night shift might be a better time to start getting acquainted with officers.
- Remember that personnel are concerned for your safety. On a scene, ask where you should stay and stay there. Do not get in the way.
- Let personnel learn about you and your genuine concern about them. Then, you earn the right to learn about their problems, joys, and concerns.
- Do not make promises you cannot keep.

3. Meet more people and increase your influence.

- Stop by on a regular basis, daily if possible, and speak with personnel. Remember what is going on with them, such as family matters, and express your interest and concern.
- Recognize that it will take time to win the trust of personnel, and this will be done one-by-one. Do not expect instant rapport or respect because you are a Christian.
- Arrange to spend time with individuals. Some will be easy to get to know and others will be a challenge. Each will test you to see if you are genuine in your concern and commitment.
- Ask personnel how you can help them. Express appreciation for them talking with you and allowing you to spend time with them.
- Leave your calling card and instructions to contact you.
- When possible, and if it will not interfere with a scene, speak to personnel and offer help.

4. Assess what you have learned.

- After a few weeks of getting to know the agency and its people, look for patterns of interest and concern. Where could a chaplain make a difference?
- Put this information in writing. Also, include how a chaplaincy program would minister to the whole community. Suggest the amount of time (say one night a week as well as being on call) that is needed to serve as chaplain. Include the pros and cons of a chaplaincy ministry.

5. Present the program.

- With much prayer, present your vision for this outreach ministry to your church leaders. Seek their understanding and support. If needed, obtain permission to pursue this ministry. Remember that a chaplain represents the church, as well as the agency.
- Make an appointment to see the administrative head of the agency. Share your vision for this program. Include how it would minister to officers and serve the community.
- Be specific and open about how the ministry would be implemented. Cover issues like time spent, on-call availability, reporting, and evaluation.
- Leave a copy of the outlined program for the administrator. You can expect that several people in the agency, and perhaps municipal government, will review the program and may have questions.
- If you are approved, you should be issued a form of identification and announced to agency personnel as the chaplain. Remember, this is the beginning, not the culmination of your efforts. You will really have become a chaplain when you have won the respect and trust of those you serve. This will happen as you embody Christ's love in the hard places of their lives.

6. See www.namb.net/evangelism/cev for Internet information about chaplaincy.

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Criminal Justice

When Kenny was arrested for possession of a controlled substance, he was a 25-year-old high school dropout who couldn't keep a job. He had a troubled past; he and his siblings had endured abuse from their parents who were drug abusers with their own history of run-ins with the law. Kenny was an angry, rebellious young man and the 10-year prison sentence he received did nothing to change that. He got into frequent fights with inmates and security personnel. The more he was punished for fighting, the angrier and more combative he became. There seemed to be no hope for Kenny.

Then, a friend invited Kenny to a revival being held in the prison. At first he resisted, but then decided to go just to "see what was happening at the meetings." When he heard the message of Jesus' love, his heart was touched and Kenny trusted Christ as Savior.

After his profession of faith, Kenny's anger and resentment began to fade. In time, his life completely changed. Now, as his prison term draws to an end, he wonders what will happen to him when he is released, and how his family will react to him now that he is a Christian.

Who Needs a Criminal Justice Ministry?

The highly publicized decline in the violent crime rate in the United States should not lull Christians into believing that there is no great need for criminal justice ministry. The prison population in the United States has more than tripled since 1980.¹ The United States may soon surpass Russia as the country with the highest incarceration rate.² The Sentencing Project reported that there were 682 inmates for every 100,000 U.S. residents in 1999 (second behind only Russia's 1998 incarceration rate of 685 per 100,000),³ compared with 313 inmates per 100,000 people in 1985.⁴

The number of inmates alone is not a complete reflection of the scope of need. Almost every inmate in a correctional facility has family members and other loved ones who are hurting. Do not forget staff, victims and their families, and law enforcement professionals and their families. Anyone involved in the criminal justice system provides an opportunity for ministry.

What Is a Criminal Justice Ministry?

The present justice system in the United States is based on retributive justice. It is built on determining guilt and setting punishment. A new paradigm for a justice system is presented by Howard Zehr in *Changing Lenses*. The new paradigm, restorative justice, focuses on making things right and restoring relationships between violator, victim, and community.⁵ Criminal justice ministry, with its roots in God's desire to redeem and restore relations between God and humankind, seeks to show people that reconciliation and new life are possible through Jesus.

You will find that opportunities to share Christ are plentiful in this ministry. One of the things to remember, however, is that relationships are an integral part of the ministry. These relationships will enable you to share Christ. Through relationships, credibility is established and the people who receive your ministry efforts will see you and other ministry workers as authentic.

But, what exactly does a criminal justice ministry encompass? Your community needs assessment (see Chapter 6) will show you the specific needs in your community, but here are some examples that will give you an idea of what a criminal justice ministry can involve.

- Support groups for crime victims
- Child care for parents visiting family members in prison
- Mentoring for inmates
- Special music and seasonal programs in jails and prisons
- Aftercare programs for both men and women
- Tutoring inmates (adult reading and writing, general equivalency diploma [GED], and English as a second language)
- Bible studies and worship services in jails and prisons
- Discipleship groups studying *MasterLife*, *Experiencing God*, *Survival Kit*, and *Making Peace with Your Past*
- Volunteer chaplains for youth or adults in jails or prisons
- Volunteer chaplains for police and sheriff offices or departments

While you will want to address needs of people currently in prison, do not forget those on probation or parole. Also, look for ways to minister to law enforcement professionals and their families, victims and their families, and the families of inmates.

How Do We Plan a Criminal Justice Ministry?

1. **Pray.** Ask God to give you a vision of the opportunities for this ministry. Be sensitive to God's leading and timing for all ministry efforts.
2. **Meet with interested persons.** The purpose of your meeting will be to discuss the interest and possibilities for beginning a ministry. This kind of forum allows others to share their experiences and vision.
3. **Create a task force.** Your task force should be composed of church members who have an interest in establishing and directing such a ministry. Balance the task force with people from different backgrounds and different interests. This would also be a good time to discover the resources the church has to offer.
4. **Conduct a survey.** You can probably glean a lot of information from the community needs assessment described in Chapter 6. You may feel a need to gather more information. With the help of experts in this area, the task force can develop a survey form to identify specific needs. It should also identify what others are already doing so that you will avoid duplication of efforts.
5. **Choose your direction.** After compiling survey results, allow ideas for the ministry to take shape. Then, the task force can begin to see which ministry or ministries your church is suited to conduct.

6. **Develop ministry strategies.** Once the ministry or ministries have been identified, develop ways to begin and continue your efforts.
7. **Plan your ministry.** Consider including other churches in your ministry efforts or working with a church or churches with an existing criminal justice ministry.
8. **Train volunteers.** It is vital that persons be trained to do this ministry. Conduct training at the church or the institution. In most cases, volunteers must have certain training before entering prisons or jails to conduct ministries. Besides personal witnessing training, volunteers should know the rules and regulations of the facility and what is expected of them.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

The correctional facility chaplain is critical to developing a criminal justice ministry. It would not be an exaggeration to call the chaplain the gatekeeper of any ministry efforts that take place in the prison. Work with the chaplain in all phases of ministry, especially in planning and scheduling the ministry.

The manual, *Leading Criminal Justice Ministry: Bringing Shalom*⁶ is an excellent resource for developing a criminal justice ministry. LifeWay Christian Resources also sells discipleship materials such as *MasterLife*, *Survival Kit*, and *Experiencing God*. The chaplain would be your guide in choosing which materials to use.

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

When your volunteers have been trained and your resources gathered, contact the appropriate people. If your ministry takes place within a jail or prison, contact the chaplain or other staff person who serves as the liaison between you and the facility. Set a date to begin.

If your ministry takes place outside the facility, publicize your ministry. For example, if your church has decided to sponsor a support group for crime victims, publicize the time, date, and location of the first meeting. Even with publicity, you will want to contact professionals such as probation officers, law enforcement personnel, law enforcement chaplains, and counselors to let them know about your ministry.

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?

Evaluation is an important but often overlooked step. If the ministry is going well, it seems unnecessary. If the ministry seems to be floundering, people may not want to face the causes of the difficulties. Without evaluation, however, there is no way to know what needs to be continued and what needs to be changed.

Either conduct the evaluation in a group setting or survey individuals. With both approaches it is vital to include all persons involved in the ministry, not just church members. Are hurting people receiving Christ? Are they being nurtured? What does the facility chaplain have to say about the ministry? Other staff? Inmates and their families? Is anyone being left out of the ministry efforts?

Do not be discouraged by initial setbacks; ministry-based evangelism in any setting is challenging. Learn from mistakes and from successes. The more you learn, the better ministry you will have and the more effective you can become in reaching persons for Christ.

Notes

- ¹ “National Inmate Population of Two Million Projected for 2001” [published online] (Washington, D.C.: The Sentencing Project, 1999 [cited 27 September 2000]). Available from www.sentencingproject.org.
- ² *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (March 15, 1999), p. A-3.
- ³ “Fact About Prisons and Prisoners” [published online] (Washington, D.C.: The Sentencing Project, 1999 [cited 27 September 2000]). Available from www.sentencingproject.org.
- ⁴ “Americans Behind Bars: U.S. and International Use of Incarceration 1995” [published online] (Washington, D.C.: The Sentencing Project, 1999 [cited 27 September 2000]). Available from www.sentencingproject.org.
- ⁵ Howard J. Zehr, *Changing Lenses: A New Focus for Crime and Punishment* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1990).
- ⁶ Betty Hassler, *Leading Criminal Justice Ministry: Bringing Shalom* (Nashville: LifeWay Christian Resources, 1998).

English as a Second Language (ESL)

Young Nora Chen and her family arrived in Mountain Home, Ark., from China on Christmas Eve 1994. They enrolled in an ESL class at the First Baptist Church. Through the ESL ministry they received help with school enrollment, shopping, transportation, and they learned how to speak English.

The children were taken to church almost every Sunday and four of the five have accepted Christ and been baptized. Nora took a special interest in the Bible and started attending the Bible drill program sponsored by the church. In 1998, as a seventh grader and having been in this country only three years, Nora placed second in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Bible Drill contest. She missed first place by one point. In 1999 Nora won first place in the contest, competing against 50 youth from 26 Arkansas churches.

Who Needs ESL?

Each year immigrants move to the United States (U.S.) and Canada. Additionally, several million internationals visit for business or pleasure.¹ More than 490,000 international students enrolled in colleges and universities during the 1998-1999 academic year in the United States.² Approximately 45 percent of immigrants do not speak English well enough to communicate with native English speakers.³

Because of this language barrier, immigrants, visitors, and international students often have trouble finding employment, adjusting to U.S. or Canadian culture, communicating at schools, banks, and stores, reading instructions or signs for information, and coping with daily tasks.

Other immigrants speak English well enough to communicate, but they want to improve their English pronunciation and learn more about idioms and slang. Many permanent immigrants seek to become U.S. or Canadian citizens. These immigrants often need citizenship classes to help them prepare for the citizenship test.

Where do these immigrants live? Most live in large cities where there are more job opportunities and universities, but some immigrants can be found in almost every community, no matter how small.

What Is an ESL Ministry?

English as a second language is frequently referred to as conversational English. Ability to converse in English is the focus of ESL. Although the shape of the ministry can differ widely, the basic idea of an ESL ministry is native English speakers (in this context that means no or little accent) conversing with immigrants. The Bible is used in the teaching situation.

Other aspects of an ESL ministry can be relationship-building, such as hosting internationals in Christian homes, having parties and fellowships, mentoring, and teaching skills such as shopping and driving. These aspects will depend on what type of immigrants attend your ministry. Refugees

who have just arrived in the country will have different needs from a doctoral student who wants to make American friends. (See MAP 12 for detailed information on working with international students and MAP 18 for information on refugee resettlement.)

How Do We Plan an ESL Ministry?

NAMB offers a 16-hour workshop that provides extensive training in how to plan and begin an ESL ministry. Here is a brief overview of the planning steps.

1. **Pray.** Enlist prayer support from concerned Christians. Ask them to pray for teachers and other volunteers, as well as potential students.
2. **Find your audience.** Determine where immigrants and/or internationals live and work in your community.
3. **Engage church leaders.** Share the need for conversational English classes with the pastor (and other appropriate church or associational staff) and get their support.
4. **Decide on funding.** Determine with the staff person how much money the ministry will need to get started. You will need money for books, teacher training, and classroom materials.
5. **Obtain approval.** Seek church or associational approval or support so that they will view the ministry as part of their work. A conversational English ministry can relate to the church's On Mission Team, education ministry, WMU, missions committee, or other appropriate group.
6. **Choose a director.** This person, with the help of other workers, is responsible for enlisting and securing training for teachers, enrolling students, and organizing the ministry. Experience has proven that the ministry rarely starts or lasts long without a director.
7. **Enlist workers.** Enlistment includes teachers and other volunteers, such as hostesses or child care workers. Usually, the only qualifications to teach in a volunteer ESL ministry include the following: a sense of Christian calling to help in the ministry; ability to read, write, and speak English well (no or little accent); and completion of the 16-hour Conversational English Workshop.
8. **Plan workshop.** Contact a NAMB ESL Literacy Missions Associate and set the dates for the basic teacher training workshop. For names of NAMB trained and certified workshop leaders, contact the person responsible for literacy missions at your state Baptist convention office or the Church and Community Ministries Evangelism Unit of NAMB. Components of the workshop include:
 - Helping the church see ESL ministries as missions
 - Organizing the ministry
 - Assessing a student's English proficiency
 - Language teaching theory and methodologies
 - Preparing an ESL lesson plan for beginner, intermediate, and advanced students

- Helping ESL students with English pronunciation
 - Using the Bible as an ESL text
 - Cross-cultural understanding
 - Preparing one's personal Christian testimony
 - Witnessing to those of other faiths and cultures
9. **Train teachers.** Use the 16-hour workshop for training. Volunteers who do not receive a minimum of 16 hours of training are usually the first to drop out of the ministry. The assumption, "If you can speak English, you can teach it," is not true!

What Sources of Help Are Available?

- *Literacy Missions Conversational English Workshop Manual* (ISBN 0840088736), available at LifeWay Christian Stores or by calling 1 800 448-8032; fax (615) 251-5983. This manual is used in the 16-hour Conversational English Workshop.
- *English Bible Lessons from the Bible: Book of Mark*, available at LifeWay Christian Stores or by calling 1 800 448-8032; fax (615) 251-5983.
 - Book 1: Student Edition Textbook (ISBN 0840088663)
 - Book 2: Student Edition Textbook (ISBN 0840088671)
 - Book 1: Teacher Edition Textbook (ISBN 0840088655)
 - Book 2: Teacher Edition Textbook (ISBN 084008868X)

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

Within a week of the workshop, the director and other workers will need to meet and decide the following:

- Location of classrooms
- Day or days of the week to offer classes
- Books and other materials to order
- Promotion to enlist students
- Child care needs
- Other details

After these details have been worked out, enlist students using the ideas given in the workshop. Nurture the ministry with ongoing support and recognition for teachers and students. Keep the sponsoring church or association informed about the needs and successes of the ministry. The information gathered in the evaluation times (see below) can help shape your reports.

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?

Talk with teachers, students, and other volunteers. How does each group feel about the ministry? What parts of the ministry are going well? What could be done to improve things? Are there widely differing viewpoints? This could show some misunderstandings you will want to remedy. Communication is key for the ministry to go smoothly.

[MAP 7 English as a Second Language (ESL)]

[New Sources]

What Sources of Help Are Available?

North American Mission Board

- Literacy Missions Conversational English Workshop Manual (ISBN 0840088736), available at LifeWay Christian Stores or by calling 1 800 448-8032; fax (615) 251-5983. This manual is used in the 16-hour Conversational English Workshop.
- English Bible Lessons from the Bible: Book of Mark, available at LifeWay Christian Stores or by calling 1 800 448-8032; fax (615) 251-5983.

Book 1: Student Edition Textbook (ISBN 0840088663)

Book 2: Student Edition Textbook (ISBN 0840088671)

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Book 2: Teacher Edition Textbook (ISBN 084008868X)

Another way to evaluate the ministry is through numbers of students, numbers of teachers, professions of faith, baptisms, and new church members.

Another way to evaluate the ministry is through numbers of students, numbers of teachers, professions of faith, baptisms, and new church members.

Notes

¹ “Commerce Report Predicts Record Number of International Travelers to the U.S. in 2000 Through the Year 2003” (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce Tourism

Industries, 2000 [cited 5 October 2000]).

Available from tinet.ita.doc.gov.

² “International Education Factsheet” (Washington, D.C.: NAFSA: Association of International Educators [cited 29 September 2000]). Available from www.nafsa.org/advo/facts00.html.

³ Edith McArthur, Kwang Kim, and Mary Collins, “Participation of Adults in English as a Second Language Classes: 1994-1995,” *Statistics in Brief* (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, 1997), p. 1.

Families in Crisis

News reached a local Baptist church that the mother of one of the church families had died. As the events of the day unfolded, the church learned that this woman's family—one of the most active in the fellowship—had been short on food and funds for several months. Her husband had lost his job and severance pay had run out. Like many families, their savings account could cover days, but not the weeks or months that family financial counselors recommend.

Church staff and members asked themselves, “How could we be in constant contact with someone and miss such a need? Why wouldn't people close to us make us aware of a crisis in their lives?” They wondered how they could make sure something like that never happened again. And, if they had overlooked such a crisis in one of their own church families, what crises had they missed in the families they were trying to reach with the gospel?

They asked such questions over and over again, but answers were sorely lacking. No one could believe it had happened, but it had.

What Is a Family in Crisis?

A family crisis may be difficult to define and different churches may have different definitions. Your church's definition should be shaped by the larger church body, not a small group of leaders.

What one family may shrug off, another family would collapse under. Rather than attempting to classify events into some sort of “crisis list,” you may wish to regard any serious interruption in daily routine or the expected norm as a potential source for family crisis. If you have ever taken a stress inventory which lists life events capable of causing stress, you have an idea of what could be considered a family crisis—death, accident, illness, job termination or transfer, divorce, house fire or natural disaster, lawsuits, custody battles, and so forth. All such events interrupt ordinary life.

These interruptions could even be from sources of joy, such as a childless couple suddenly offered the opportunity to adopt twins. As happy as such an event would be, adding two babies to a household could certainly be perceived as an interruption to routine! Such a couple would need the church's help. So would a person awaiting a heart transplant who is suddenly notified that a donor heart has been found. Think of all the things a church might be called upon to do to help that person at such a critical time.

What Is a Crisis Ministry?

A crisis ministry reaches the churched and unchurched alike in your community. As ministry-based evangelism, it should be part of your church's strategy for reaching the community with the gospel.

The exact actions taken in a crisis ministry are determined by the type of crisis the family is facing. The couple mentioned above who are adopting twins might need a group of experienced mothers or babysitters to help in the first weeks, perhaps even to spend a few nights with them.

They could be given diapers and formula, bottles, and other immediate necessities, and then given a baby shower to fill other needs soon after the adoption. Church members could locate baby furniture for them, and others could make dinner for the family.

The family mentioned at the beginning of this chapter would need a very different ministry—money for necessities, emergency food, someone to help them apply for government assistance, financial counseling, help in finding a new job, and grief counseling.

A crisis ministry includes church resources—funds, abilities of members, and counseling—but it also includes knowing how to refer people to other types of help beyond the church's scope of resources. It always includes prayer.

As we mention prayer, it is also necessary to mention confidentiality. The fact that a family is receiving crisis ministry from a church does not mean that everyone in the church should know the nature of the crisis. Some crises, such as death, fire, or automobile accident, are obvious. Other crises, such as a person discovering a spouse is having an extramarital relationship, are not obvious and should not be revealed to the entire church body. Always check with the family before sharing any details with anyone, even with a prayer group. (If your crisis ministry is managed by a team of volunteers, there will of necessity be some sharing with them.)

Witness is always a part of crisis ministry. That witness comes through loving actions and offers of help, and it also comes through an appropriate verbal witness. There are many good community agencies that offer support to families in crisis; however, your church can also offer the gospel to people who are at a point of need in their lives.

How Do We Plan a Crisis Ministry?

1. Do everything with prayer.

A crisis ministry reaches people when they are most vulnerable. You have power to help a family, as well as power to harm by making mistakes. Besides your own prayer, it would be good to ask the entire church to pray for this ministry and to develop a prayer group to support your efforts.

2. Decide how to find families in crisis.

As seen from the opening story, it is not enough to sit in church and wait for families in crisis to reveal their needs. The church must look for people in crisis. Your church could compile a list of potential “crisis causers” or “crisis triggers.” Teach members to be watchful for families, both inside and outside the church fellowship, who are experiencing these.

Churches must be intentional in this ministry. Church members can be reminded of what Paul said in 2 Corinthians 1:3. The passage suggests that every situation that produces a need for comfort in the lives of Christians is potentially an opportunity to pass that comfort on to another person.

3. Survey your community.

The community needs assessment in Chapter 6 explains how to find community resources you can use in a crisis ministry. This is the beginning of a community network that will be very important to the success of your ministry.

4. List your resources.

MAP 2 describes a benevolence ministry, which can help both church members and people from the community. What benevolence resources does your church have? What other resources are at your disposal? These could include counseling services, people with particular experiences and skills, and support groups that meet in your church. Do not overlook community resources.

5. Train volunteers.

You may decide to use a team approach to your ministry. All such volunteers should learn the ministry guidelines and procedures. Since many people in your church may be called upon to help in a crisis, it would be good to have some churchwide training on dealing with people during a crisis. Personal witnessing training is another important component.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

Referrals will be an important part of this ministry. Check with your associational director of missions or associational evangelism ministries director for Christian counselors (both personal and financial), doctors and dentists, funeral directors, and social workers who could help families in crisis. (Be careful, however, that when you refer families to professionals who charge for services that you do not give the impression you are just “sending business” to them. Try to get services donated when possible, without abusing the professional’s generosity.)

During your community needs assessment (see Chapter 6), you should locate community agencies ranging from child advocacy groups to legal aid offices. These agencies exist to help, but sometimes can have a lengthy application and approval processes. A friend who knows those processes and who will help the family through paperwork and interviews is very helpful.

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

Begin your ministry one family at a time. Notify local fire departments, law enforcement agencies, hospitals, and other helping agencies that your church has resources to help families in crisis. Explain what your church can do and in what situations you would refer families to more long-term help.

You may find that assigning a team of helpers to a family is the best approach, especially if there are multiple needs as there were with the family in our opening story. Whichever ministry approach you use, include at least one person who will talk to the family about spiritual needs. All ministry volunteers, however, should keep in mind that everything they do and say is a form of witnessing and should be prepared to share their faith with the family.

Once the immediate crisis is past, follow up with the family. Sometimes, a family can hold together during a crisis, only to fall apart later from the delayed effects of stress. Continue to pray for the family and keep a caring relationship with them.

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?

Someone in the ministry should have the responsibility of keeping a tally of families helped, what type of help was given, resources dispensed, and referrals made. Also, keep track of witnessing encounters, professions of faith, recommitments, baptisms, and families who join the church.

Numbers alone, however, will not tell the whole story. Talk with volunteers and families. Was the ministry adequate? Did anything make them uncomfortable? Were promises kept? What are the best things about the ministry? What could be done better?

Health Care

His street name was Frijoles. He had spent many nights on the streets and under bridges, a result of his years in pursuit of the next drink of alcohol. When he showed up at the Good Shepherd Ministry of First Baptist Church in Oklahoma City with a cut on his arm, he instantly became the center of attention. He explained that a local bartender had sewn the cut with a sewing needle and cotton thread. What else could be done, since Frijoles had neither money nor medical insurance?

For Tom Mitscher, the pastor at Good Shepherd, this incident represented a God-sent opportunity. What better way to reach out to street alcoholics than to provide medical care for their diseases? Mitscher did not stop at just thinking about the opportunity. A few weeks later he led a doctor, a nurse, and two medical students to hold a medical clinic at the same downtown bar where Frijoles had been sewn up. Not much medical care was provided on the first night, but spiritual care in Jesus' name was abundant.

More than two decades later, the Good Shepherd Medical/Dental Clinic continues to provide both medical and dental care for the needy people of Oklahoma City. However, the clinic has outgrown the bar!

Who Needs a Medical/Dental Ministry

The United States has a vast need for health care. Over 44 million people have limited access to health care because they have no health insurance.¹ Many of these people are children, for whom early health care is a prime factor in physical and mental development. Poor or nonexistent health care in childhood can affect them throughout life. Also, poor people in the United States do not have much hope of obtaining even the simplest dental care.

Medical/dental clinics reach people who through poverty or other life stresses have little or no other medical and dental care. Many people unreached by traditional missions methods can be reached through the relationship they build with medical/dental ministries. In the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, for instance, medical/dental clinics are used to start new Bible studies and missions.

Medical/dental clinics are a powerful form of ministry-based evangelism, caring for both the body and the souls of those in need.

What Is a Medical/Dental Ministry?

Medical/dental clinics have been a part of Southern Baptist ministry-based evangelism for over four decades. Most of these ministries began as groups of local Christians felt God's leadership to fill obvious health needs. Most of the ministries have some or all of the following traits:

- Staffed by community volunteers

- Open only once or twice a week with weekends being the most common times of operation (a few are open full time)
- Provide care to people without health care insurance
- Use such facilities as churches, storefronts, houses, Baptist centers, mobile units, and sometimes the outdoors
- Dedicated to sharing the good news of Jesus Christ through the spoken word, as well as through healing actions

How Do We Plan a Medical/Dental Ministry?

Once you have determined that your community needs a medical/dental clinic ministry, begin to pray for God's direction. Also, ask Him for the necessary volunteers and resources.

Your next step is to hold an awareness meeting. Issue invitations as broadly as possible, since God will likely send resources from many places, sometimes unexpected ones. Select a steering committee for planning from the people who attend the awareness meeting.

The Planning Process

Do further investigation into the exact medical and dental needs your ministry should meet. You have likely already gathered information through the community needs assessment in Chapter 6. Gather more in-depth information, including interviews with potential patients. Your fact-gathering will build further relationships with people and agencies with whom you will need to work, such as doctors and dentists, ambulance services, firefighters, social workers, public health workers, and community service agencies. Also, gather demographic data from city, county, or state health departments and other sources.

Create and document your ministry's mission statement, goals, and action plans. This written purpose statement will guide the development and growth of the clinic.

Make a site visit to an existing clinic ministry. Seeing a working clinic will help you immensely. You can obtain a copy of a directory of Southern Baptist medical/dental ministries by calling the Church and Community Ministries Evangelism Unit at (770) 410-6360.

Decide what to do about practical matters such as facilities, a timeline for beginning the clinic (it often takes 18 months or more to begin a clinic ministry), insurance, referrals, internal governance, laboratory and radiology services, and staff recruitment.

Choose which services you will offer. Remember that it is usually better to start small than not to start at all. The medical/dental services will dictate what types of equipment and medicines you must have. It is probably best not to even keep certain medications such as tranquilizers and narcotics, since the presence of these drugs could increase the chance of break-ins. Your medical/dental staff is best equipped to make decisions about which pharmaceuticals to stock.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

Your local public health department is crucial to the success of your ministry. They need to not only be aware of your work, but convinced of its quality and its role in actually helping the community. Your public health department has pharmaceuticals, as well as health programs, that would be beneficial. Some public health department resources include immunizations for childhood diseases, skin tests for tuberculosis, and antibiotics for sexually transmitted diseases and other infections of importance to public health.

Pharmaceutical companies have specific programs to help indigent patients with medicines. Usually a doctor must verify to the pharmaceutical company that individual patients meet certain criteria for help. Once this application process is completed, the company provides the medicine to the patient free of charge. (This is an area where a social worker would be of great help.)

Some community agencies have funds to help people buy needed medicines. Your clinic social worker or other staff person will do a great service to patients by getting to know these agencies and their programs.

Local doctors and dentists may be willing to share samples of medicines. Ask for the medicines you specifically need, and have one of your staff members pick up the medicine from the donors.

Work with pharmacists to purchase large orders of medicines. See if the pharmacist will sell them to you at cost or help you learn how to order them from the manufacturer. Order the least expensive types of medicines that will meet your needs.

Let doctors, dentists, hospitals, and medical associations know of your needs for equipment. Much is available, if you persistently ask.

People are your most valuable resource. Besides members of your congregation, you can find volunteers among retirees, professional organizations, and local health science schools. Students are eager to practice new skills and many are willing to work. In return for their help, give them good supervision and an opportunity to learn and practice their skills.

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

Publicity

Tell the community agencies and health providers you surveyed that you are opening your clinic. Explain hours, location, and fees (if any). You may also wish to visit those potential patients you surveyed in the planning stage. Word of mouth will be a powerful publicity tool.

Fees

It is probably best to charge a nominal fee (perhaps \$5 or less). A small fee may help deter people who come in more as spectators than as real patients. A small fee also helps the patients feel some ownership of the ministry and helps preserve their self-respect. Some clinics use a sliding fee scale, while others ask for a donation toward the ministry, and still others have patients work a certain number of community service hours. Make exceptions for those patients who truly cannot pay anything.

Staff

Have your staff in place: dentists, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, lab technicians, and dental hygienists. You need enough volunteers so that people can rotate and avoid burnout. Remember, these are people who likely already have jobs in the health-care field and do this work many hours a week in addition to the clinic hours. Be sensitive to the fact that non-Christians may volunteer to work in the clinic. They need to hear about Jesus, too. In addition to the verbal witness you give to them and to patients, your actions will speak volumes. No matter how crazy or demanding things get, strive to be a channel of God's love to everyone.

You will need many volunteers besides health providers, everyone from history-takers to cleaning crew to social workers. Usually, people have other issues in their lives, such as abuse or poverty, that have caused them to be without the resources to afford health care. A social worker is invaluable in addressing those needs.

In addition to these staff positions, you will need a medical/dental director and a spiritual director. The medical director's job is to see that good health care is being practiced. The spiritual director's job is to see that good spiritual care is being provided. This can be done through witnessing training, group prayer with volunteers, Christian videotapes and other materials in the waiting room, and in-home visits with patients. The spiritual director can also be considered the chaplain. Besides providing spiritual care to patients, the spiritual director needs to be sensitive to the spiritual needs of volunteers, both Christians and non-Christians.

Governance

Many medical/dental clinics find it best to incorporate as a separate 501(c)(3) entity. This allows the clinic to receive contributions without paying taxes on them. It allows donors to receive tax credits for donations and it provides some legal distance between the clinic and its sponsoring organization. See Appendix F for a full discussion of whether your ministry should become a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. (Clinics not incorporated often report to the sponsoring church through a committee.)

Liability

Malpractice liability is a concern of many people considering this type of ministry. The best solution is an umbrella policy for the ministry. These policies provide coverage for the clinic, as well as any sponsoring organization. These also insure the volunteer and employed staff while they work at the clinic. This type of policy commonly has limits of \$3 million to \$5 million.

Each health care professional must have a current state license, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) registration number, state narcotics number, and malpractice liability insurance. Documentation and other appropriate background checks should be kept in clinic files.

If your clinic is incorporated separately from the church or association sponsoring the ministry, it might be wise to lease space from the sponsor for a token amount. This also helps provide legal distance between clinic and sponsor.

Also, health care students must be supervised appropriately by people willing to accept responsibility for their work.

Referral Network

It will be impossible for your clinic to provide all the medical care a patient needs. At such times, you will need to make a referral. Collaborate with hospitals, other clinics, laboratories, emergency rooms, and specialists to have a referral network in place when it is required.

Growth

A medical/dental ministry is a long-term commitment. In comparison to some other ministries, it takes a long time to plan and implement. It takes time to make a place for itself in the community. However, the time invested is worth it because the ministry is incarnational—it is the love of Christ physically present in your community. Even as your ministry begins, you need to be prayerfully searching for ways to grow in terms of resources, facilities, staff, and services offered. In everything, the clinic steering committee, directors, and staff should be open to discovering more and better ways to share the gospel as they minister.

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?

The medical records your clinic keeps will indicate the numbers of people helped and the services they received. But numbers only tell part of the story. Periodically, ask questions such as:

- How many patients visited the clinic more than once?
- Did patients refer others to the clinic?
- What was our staff turnover rate?
- What problems have we encountered?
- How could we do things better?
- Which of our services seem to have helped people the most?
- How many professions of faith have been made?
- How many referrals to area churches have been made?
- How many patients have joined local churches?

Notes

¹ William S. Custer and Pat Ketsche, *Health Insurance Coverage and the Uninsured: 1990-1998* (Washington, D.C.: Health Insurance Association of America, 1999), p. 1. Also available from www.hiaa.org.

His Heart-
Our Hands

His Heart-
Our Hands

Homeless

Beth is a mentally ill person living on the streets. She refuses to take the medicine that would help her lead a more normal life. Her small government check is not enough to meet her needs. Sometimes, Beth's mental condition worsens and she must be hospitalized. When her condition improves, she is released and back on the streets again. Family and friends are powerless to do anything to stop this cycle. Beth needs a caring group of people to bring hope to her life.

Who Are the Homeless?

Beth is only one of thousands of homeless people in the United States. Some live on the streets, but others live in automobiles or boxes, under bridges, in railroad cars, or doubled up with relatives who can scarcely afford to keep them. Many live in shelters. Some live in shacks so run down they cannot be considered fit for human occupation.

How many people are in this condition? Getting an exact count is impossible due to the living arrangements of homeless people. The most recent estimate suggests that 700,000 people are homeless on any given night and up to two million will be homeless at some point during a year.¹ A 1994 White House study found that about 7 million U.S. adult residents had been homeless at some point in their lives as of the latter half of the 1980s. "Recent studies confirm that the number of persons who have experienced homelessness is very large and greater than previously known or acknowledged."² These people come from all socioeconomic classes, all races, and all ethnic groups. Forty percent of homeless men are military veterans.³ In Canada's largest city, Toronto, emergency shelters for the homeless took in an average of 6,500 persons each night in 1997.⁴

Homelessness is no respecter of persons. The traditional idea of homelessness is that of the skid row alcoholic or derelict, those hunched in doorways and abandoned buildings, people carrying signs saying "will work for food," and those sleeping on sidewalk grates on city streets. While these certainly are true depictions of homelessness, they are far from the complete picture.

The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act defines as homeless any person who "lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence."⁵ This narrow definition recognizes only the literally homeless—those on the streets, in shelters, or within a week of eviction. This definition works better for urban areas than it does for rural areas. The rural homeless seldom have shelters to go to, instead living in the places listed above as well as in caves or tents in the woods.

Besides these homeless people, there are the travelers who go from place to place subsisting on odd jobs, or those who are rarely seen or counted because they make do in a different location every night. Also among the homeless are men, women, and youth who will sacrifice their morality by "shacking up" for a night, a week, or a month in order to avoid living on the street.

Why are these people homeless? Sometimes it is due to bad choices, but it is also due to misfortune, illness, and inequities in our society. About one-fourth of all homeless people suffer some form of severe and persistent mental illness. Others are physically ill or disabled.

The most common contributors to homelessness include:

- Poverty
- Addiction
- Mental illness
- Lack of affordable housing
- Unemployment
- Underemployment
- Physical abuse
- Physical illness
- Choice

It is important to understand the causes and needs of the homeless before planning a ministry. The needs of each group of homeless vary, and so will ministry techniques. But with each group, you should understand that there are physical, social, and spiritual dimensions to their needs. To be a homeless person is to be lonely, even in a crowded shelter. To be homeless is to be caught in a downward spiral unless some intervention is offered.

While homeless people are neither more nor less sinners than any other group, they are often marginalized, ignored, or even despised. Your ministry efforts can help homeless people by offering shelter and resources, but also by treating them with dignity and offering them hope through Jesus Christ.

What Is a Homeless Ministry?

You have a number of choices when it comes to homeless ministry because the needs are so great and the populations are so varied.

Clothing Ministries

Most Christians are willing to share clothes with homeless people, but communities need a distribution point. Keeping an ample supply of clothing on hand is rarely a problem. Clothing ministry can be a labor-intensive effort; a number of volunteers will be needed to clean, sort, size, and distribute clothing. Counselors should be trained to share the gospel with clients.

Clothes Closet—This ministry provides a source for clothing. The church or other distribution location supplies a room where members bring clean, usable clothing. People in need receive clothes. The garments most needed by homeless people are durable work clothes. Also needed are socks, shoes, underclothes, and warm winter apparel.

Swap Shop—While similar to the clothes closet, a swap shop attaches a low cost to clothing. Many needy people do not want a handout and are happy to purchase clothing or swap one item for another. This concept helps protect the homeless person's dignity.

Clothes Drives—Churches can find out what is needed and collect clothing for a nearby shelter. This need will vary from season to season. Items should be clean, usable, and suitable for the season, as most shelters do not have storage room for out-of-season clothes. Coat or blanket drives make excellent winter projects. Work pants and shoes are high demand items. Gospel tracts can be placed in the pockets of donated clothing items.

Laundry Services—Homeless people usually have a limited supply of clothing and very few opportunities to do laundry. A church can furnish a washer and dryer or provide transportation to a local coin laundry. Clean, neat clothing often means the difference between acceptance and rejection when applying for work.

Hygiene Ministries

Shower Facilities—Personal hygiene is a pressing problem for homeless people who lack access to shelters. Many churches have shower facilities within their buildings and can make these available periodically to those in need. The best approach is to designate times and provide minimal supplies such as soap, towels, razors, and shampoo. Special ministry relationships often come from meeting this need.

Haircuts—Many dedicated Christian barbers and cosmetologists are willing to give time to cutting hair as a ministry. Local barber and beauty schools will often cooperate by donating haircuts or providing these at a low cost.

Hygiene Kits—Prepare personal hygiene kits containing soap, disposable razors, combs, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and New Testaments. The kits may be distributed through your local shelter or to needy people who come to your church for help.

Feeding Ministries

MAP 11 gives detailed advice on beginning a food pantry ministry and applying for Southern Baptist hunger funds.

Food Pantry—A pantry ministry dispenses food to needy people. Because homeless people rarely have a place to cook, items must be ready-to-eat foods such as canned meats and stews, small boxes of cereal, soups, and pudding and fruit packs.

Soup Kitchen—A soup kitchen is an organized effort to provide hot meals for a specific group. The best location for a soup kitchen is where the recipients frequently pass by. A soup kitchen can be very flexible in approach, offering one or more meals daily. Meals can also be served weekly, monthly, or on special occasions such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Easter. To implement this ministry you will need volunteers, food resources, knowledge of other meal programs being offered, and good planning. As with all hunger ministries, check your local health regulations as part of your planning process.

Bag Meals—At a designated time and place, recipients are given meals in paper bags. Because of its simplicity and low cost, this service can be carried out with only a few volunteers. This ministry can grow rapidly in areas frequented by homeless people. The meal can be eat-in or takeout.

Frozen Dinners—This ministry can be linked with a Wednesday evening fellowship supper. Extra food is prepared, packaged in individual servings, and frozen. When a hungry individual comes to the church, a frozen dinner can be quickly microwaved while a volunteer or staff member counsels the client.

Established Ministries—Many communities have rescue missions doing a good job ministering to the needs of homeless people. These are worthy of your volunteerism. You can cook and serve at a local mission. Most missions are thrilled to have such an association with local caring churches.

Extended Fellowship Suppers—This ministry idea is based on Wednesday evening fellowship suppers. The church invites those in the community who are without resources to enjoy this meal. The reward in such a ministry is not only feeding the hungry, but also the fellowship, association, and ministry opportunities afforded church members as they come to know needy people face-to-face.

Vouchers—A church choosing this ministry will arrange a voucher system with a local grocery store. The church will give a voucher redeemable only for certain kinds of foods or a prescribed bag of food. The same arrangement could be made with a local café.

Doughnut Stop—Coffee and doughnuts can be offered as a morning snack for homeless people. These products are inexpensive and frequently donated for good causes. The availability of a counselor adds a personal touch to this outreach and provides an easy witnessing opportunity as people come and go.

Hunger Offerings—Southern Baptists observe World Hunger Sunday each year. All church gifts are collected and pooled to generate millions of dollars that go directly to feed hungry people. Churches can even apply for these funds to help meet local hunger needs in their communities.

Health Ministries

If you consider a health-related ministry, you will want to read MAP 9 on medical and dental clinic ministry. It contains detailed advice applicable to the ideas below.

Medical Clinic—A clinic can be established independently or in cooperation with other churches. Generally, health concerns, first aid, and health education are part of this work. Counselors make a valuable contribution to the clinic by offering spiritual aid.

Dental Clinic—A dental clinic can provide a vital ministry to homeless people who generally lack resources and options for dental care. Several working models have been established for this ministry. Mobile dental clinics are at work in some areas, making this ministry widely available.

Tuberculosis Clinic—Tuberculosis (TB) is a major health concern for the homeless. Although TB is easily arrested, early detection remains a critical link in treatment. A TB clinic could be open as few as two days a week. A medical director and a nursing staff are often enough for this setting. Check with local health officials for pertinent guidelines, rules, and laws.

Optometry Clinic—Another gap in wellness for the homeless is eye care. Providing eye exams and glasses can be a meaningful ministry. An eyeglasses drive, which gathers used glasses for repair and redistribution to the needy, is another way to gather resources for this ministry.

Prescription Medications—Prescription medicines are seldom an option for homeless people since they usually have meager finances. Some medicines are available through physicians at times. Churches may choose to pay for prescribed medications at a local pharmacy. Full pharmacy ministries have been established in some locations to meet this great need. This is a rewarding and friendly way to meet health needs.

Shelter Ministries

You should be aware that shelter ministries are the most difficult and costly to begin and maintain. Adequate space is a must. Bedding and routine hygiene supplies must be available. You will need a large group of reliable volunteers and the cooperation of your neighbors. Zoning and insurance must be considered. Yet, churches led to provide a shelter ministry will be rewarded as they participate in the lives of homeless people.

Overnight Shelter—Churches must have facilities for feeding the homeless and space where they can sleep. Beds or cots are important for comfortable rest. Ideally, the church should have a shower, washer, and dryer. A sizable group of volunteers is essential. Check neighborhood restrictions before beginning this work. Counselors are very effective in this setting and chapel services help to meet the spiritual needs of homeless guests.

Inclement Weather Shelter—Floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, and freezing weather call for the use of this shelter. Although this ministry can offer more elaborate care, simple pallets on the floor can meet the need.

Rotating Shelter—A rotating shelter is provided by a group of cooperating churches or agencies. The location of the shelter is rotated among the cooperating hosts so that no single church or group carries the burden alone. The rotation usually takes place at one-week intervals. Each sponsor is responsible for meals, cots, counseling, and staffing, as well as the meeting of spiritual needs when it is their turn to be a shelter. It may be necessary to provide transportation to and from the shelter.

Transitional Housing—This ministry provides subsidized apartment-style housing to homeless people, allowing individuals to get jobs and minimize expenses. Some churches will use existing church properties. Others may rent a nearby apartment for this special ministry. Some churches already own houses in their neighborhoods that are suitable for transitional housing. At a specified time, the stabilized person or family will take responsibility for getting their own housing. For the greatest chance of success, screen prospective clients carefully.

Disaster Relief—This ministry is for those suddenly homeless due to fire and other personal tragedies. Churches may monitor police-band broadcasts and send volunteers to the scene to offer immediate help. The church provides a fully furnished apartment for the disaster victim or family, allowing them time to get reestablished. The church continues to minister to the family during this recovery period. Some churches permit the family to keep all furnishings.

Specialized Shelters—These shelters meet unique community needs, such as shelter for battered women, homeless children, evicted families, convalescents, stranded travelers, as well as other groups with specific needs.

Housing—Many communities now have government-owned houses. These may be leased (or bought) at very low prices to qualified groups with approved-use plans. The houses may be used for meeting the needs of homeless people. Explore availability through the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Support Ministries

Support ministries meet specific needs. A support group, for example, is made up of people with a mutual problem or personal issue to resolve. Just listening to the needs and hurts of another can be a great help. Ministry is also done through caring and by sharing godly solutions for life's problems.

Homeless Church—This ministry begins as actual worship services for homeless members of the community. Some churches do this in their own building at some time other than the regular Sunday service.

Mentors—Mentoring programs partner a homeless person or homeless family with a willing church sponsor. The intention is to provide one-on-one training in hopes that the homeless individual will become a believer, grow in discipleship, and become a stable member of society and the church as they gain employment and housing.

Addictions Support Groups—Addiction continues to be a major problem among the homeless population, and nothing indicates that trend is likely to end soon. Support groups can successfully deal with spiritual issues and other aspects of addiction and recovery. A knowledgeable Christian facilitator is needed to establish an addictions support group. Addicted people need to hear that God is able to help them overcome their problems. Several working models exist that are spiritual in nature and effective in helping clients address important personal issues (see MAP 24).

Homeless Support Groups—A church provides a weekly meeting place and a Christian facilitator to guide a discussion group in which homeless people can address important issues they face in their daily lives. This counseling approach must be redemptive in nature and avoid becoming a gripe session.

Adult Reading and Writing—Many homeless people have low literacy levels. Excellent materials and training for beginning and conducting an Adult Reading and Writing ministry are available through NAMB. These resources are geared toward evangelizing the client as he or she learns to read. (See MAP 1 for more details.)

General Equivalency Diploma (GED) Training—Most people lacking a high school diploma are willing to earn their GED. Many churches are successfully tutoring students through GED outreach programs. This ministry requires a long-term commitment and reaps tremendous benefits for both church and student. This work requires a working relationship with the local school board for evaluating and testing students. Volunteers can help tutor students.

Reading Room—A church can provide a quiet, nonthreatening place that offers homeless people respite from the daily problems they face. Among those problems are not having a place to be and lacking a place to spend time. Inspirational Christian magazines and books should be provided, along with employment ads and phone access. The availability of a counselor in this setting is important.

Mail Room/Message Center—Because homeless people have no address, a church can allow them to receive mail at the church address. This service affords homeless people the dignity of doing personal business in a more normal manner. A message center can be set up at the church switchboard to take telephone messages for homeless people who use the church address.

Job Bank—This ministry can be as complex as becoming a job development and resource center seeking potential placement of clients, or it can be as simple as helping someone fill out a job application and taking messages from potential employers.

English-as-a-Second-Language Classes—A small percentage of homeless people are immigrants trying to establish themselves in a new geographical area. Many have limited use of English. To function effectively, all must learn to speak, read, and write English. Teaching English as a second language may be most appealing to churches with international groups among their memberships. MAP 7 is devoted to describing English-as-a-second-language ministry.

Chapel Services—Volunteer regularly to conduct or participate in worship services at a local homeless shelter. Shelters generally welcome Christians to assist them in different aspects of their ministry. Homeless people are usually very receptive to the gospel message.

Hotel Reps—Become an activist among local hotels. The sheets, towels, blankets, and bedspreads hotels discard are often still in usable condition. Encourage the hotel to donate these items to you for use in shelters or for distribution to homeless people.

Recycling Projects—Large amounts of money can be generated when an entire church undertakes a recycling project. The recycled items can include anything from aluminum to paper. These funds can be rotated from one ministry to another as homeless people are helped.

How Do We Plan Our Ministry?

With church members committed to praying for you, conduct a community needs assessment as described in Chapter 6. Seek God's direction before embarking on any new ministry venture. It is okay to start small and add ministries as your knowledge, confidence level, and pool of volunteers grows.

As you plan, list your needed resources in the categories of people, facilities, items, and funds. Where are the gaps? Do not be afraid to go before the church or missions groups and ask for help in obtaining those resources. If unsolicited resources are provided, consider how you could use these. For example, someone may give you a coffeemaker, although that was not at all what you wanted. Rather than turn it down, brainstorm ways it could be used: a coffee and doughnut ministry, refreshment time in a support group, fellowship time before a worship service, or as part of a soup kitchen. Resources should not dictate your ministry, only God's leading should do that. But resources can expand the possibilities.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

- Your community needs assessment should have unearthed agencies and organizations that can help you minister to the homeless.
- This guide has chapters devoted to specific ministries, like a medical/dental clinic, that can help the homeless.
- Both NAMB and LifeWay Christian Resources have witnessing training materials, as well as Bibles and Scripture portions (see Appendix A for a list of NAMB's evangelism resources).
- Churches and your association may donate good used magazines and books for a reading room or chapel ministry.
- Brantley Baptist Center can provide consultations, information, and training (201 Magazine Street, New Orleans, LA 70130, (504) 523-5781, or *brantleycenter.com*).

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

When you have selected your ministry and gathered resources, train your volunteers in personal witnessing and in relating to the homeless. Help them know what to expect and how to be good ambassadors for Christ to the homeless.

Explain your ministry to community agencies and professionals working with the homeless. Include law enforcement and the fire department, as they will often be the first to know of people who are suddenly homeless. This goes beyond publicity, as you will also be explaining the limits of your ministry. You will do this, not to discourage people from referring the homeless to you, but to avoid confusion and unmet expectations. Emphasize what you are equipped to do for homeless people. Be sensitive to the fact that these networking conversations with community officials are also a witness to them.

Publicize your ministry if it is something “open to the public,” like a soup kitchen. If it is a mentoring or other one-on-one ministry, large amounts of publicity may not be necessary. Whatever ministry you begin, you can count on word to spread among the homeless population. They will tell each other not only of the resources you offer, but the manner in which you treated them. Your Christlike kindness to one homeless person may be a witness to others.

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?

Some numbers you will want to know are:

- Number of meals, hygiene kits, clothes, and other items distributed
- Number of individuals and families served
- Number of people attending worship services or support groups
- Number of people moved from the streets to temporary housing

- Number of people moved from temporary quarters to permanent housing
- Number of professions of faith and baptisms

As we discussed at the beginning of this chapter, numbers, while helpful, can be hard to obtain and do not give the whole picture. You will want to discuss how the homeless people respond to volunteers. How do volunteers respond to homeless people? What is the church's attitude to the ministry? Does the ministry have a good working relationship with other churches, community agencies, and organizations? What is going well, and what could be done better?

Notes

- ¹ "How Many People Experience Homelessness" (Washington, D.C.: National Coalition for the Homeless, 1999 [cited 27 September 2000]). Available from nch.ari.net/numbers.html.
- ² *Priority: Home! The Federal Plan to Break the Cycle of Homelessness* (Washington, D.C.: Interagency Council on the Homeless, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1994), p. 21.
- ³ "Who Is Homeless?" (Washington, D.C.: National Coalition for the Homeless, 1999 [cited 29 September 2000]). Available from nch.ari.net/who.html.
- ⁴ Philip Alston, "Hardship in the midst of plenty," *The Progress of Nations 1998* (New York: United Nations Children's Fund, 1998), p. 29. Available from www.unicef.org.
- ⁵ "Federal Definition of 'Homeless'" (Greensboro, N.C.: National Center for Homeless Education at SERVE [cited 27 September 2000]). Available from www.serve.org/nche/FedDefin.htm.

His Heart-Hands
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Hunger

As an intake worker for an associational food ministry, Janet was used to hearing sad stories from the people she interviewed. After talking with them and reviewing their bills and income, she determined whether or not they were eligible for emergency food assistance.

Today was a typical day: four women whose husbands were out of work; a 70-year-old woman raising her grandchildren because their drug-addicted mother ran away; a woman who was living in her car after fleeing an abusive husband; and then an unmarried teenager with three children. Her last client of the morning was a man with a doctorate. He had moved across the country to take a promised job, but the job had not materialized. He was almost in tears when he took the bags of food. “People like me aren’t supposed to have to do this,” he said as he left.

Janet felt compassion for each person who came to the food ministry, both those who seemed content to be dependent and those who were shocked to find themselves in need of help. She also felt grateful for the opportunity to share Christ’s love with each client, whether that sharing was through reading a Bible passage, praying, telling the person about the forgiveness available in Christ, or handing the person a bag of food decorated with “Jesus loves you” stickers. She knew that each word and action, in the context of an evangelistic ministry, had the potential to change a person’s life.

Who Needs a Hunger Ministry?

Each year 10 million people in the United States experience hunger; up to 36 million face the threat of hunger.¹ Even families with a full-time wage earner are not exempt, because full-time work at minimum wage does not guarantee an escape from poverty. Welfare reform has not always made the situation better. According to recent research done by Tufts University, more than two-thirds of all states have implemented policies that will worsen the situation of poor families.² Very young children, the elderly, the homeless, and the sick are especially vulnerable to hunger.

These statistics, while bleak, also represent a tremendous opportunity for Southern Baptist churches to minister to the hungry in Jesus’ name.

What Is a Hunger Ministry?

A hunger ministry is any ministry that addresses physical hunger. One of the most effective community hunger ministries is a food pantry or emergency food source within a church, Baptist center, or associational office. There are many other options, however. Sack lunches for homeless people, after-school snacks for children, hot meals for the homebound, soup kitchens, and vouchers for grocery stores are all hunger ministries.

By meeting someone’s physical need, opportunities are created to address their spiritual needs. Many people have come to know Christ through hunger ministries. In Amarillo, Texas, a hunger ministry gave birth to City Church. That church and the pastor, Don Lane, continue to feed the hungry in Jesus’ name.

How Do We Plan a Hunger Ministry?

1. Find your place of service.

After you have identified hunger as a need in your community, review which community groups or agencies are already servicing the hungry in your area. What gaps exist that your church could fill? Base your ministry on this information.

2. Find resources.

After deciding what type of hunger ministry you will conduct, look for corresponding resources. Your resources will be people, facilities, and food supplies.

- Groups in the church such as WMU, Sunday School classes, men's groups, and senior adult fellowships are all sources of volunteers. Encourage individual participation from all interested church members.
- Look for facilities you can use rent-free or for a nominal cost. Some ministries, such as a voucher program, do not need facilities. Other ministries, like a food pantry, require at least one room for food and another room for interviewing clients. Many food pantries start out in churches or at associational offices.
- Network with all church members for food sources. A church food drive can help stock shelves in the beginning, but you will need more food than just your church can provide. Church members with connections to bakeries, grocery stores, food wholesalers, and restaurants could help find sources of free or inexpensive food. Community food banks sell food by the pound at very inexpensive prices.
- Look for revenue sources such as community grants. Apply for NAMB hunger funds. Also check with your association for possible funding.

3. Plan witnessing.

Decide how witnessing will be handled. Scripture portions should be written on an easy-to-read level. Small cards written by children or Bible verses written on grocery bags and decorated with drawings or stickers may be noticed quicker than a tract placed inside a bag. When presenting a verbal witness and an invitation to accept Christ, do so in a private place. Interviews should also be done privately, even if the space is a borrowed office.

4. Plan your follow-up ministry.

Will clients be referred to churches or will volunteers make home visits?

5. Decide how you will keep records.

This will be vital for your evaluation, especially if you are using hunger funds.

6. Apply for funds.

Decide the dollar amount you will need to start the project. Request that amount from your local association or contact your state convention church and community ministries staff for information on availability of hunger funds.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

NAMB's Church and Community Ministries Evangelism Unit administers the Domestic Hunger Funds program. This program represents 20 percent of monies contributed by Southern Baptists to the World Hunger offerings. Every dollar given to this fund is used to feed the hungry. No hunger funds are used to cover any administrative costs.

The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention also has educational and promotional material on world hunger and domestic hunger.

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

The following plans are for a food pantry or emergency food ministry.

1. **Be culturally sensitive.** For example, some ethno-cultural groups would prefer rice instead of potatoes. Do not offer Muslims canned pork.
2. **List needed items.** (See the following lists.) Divide the list among mission education groups, Sunday School classes, and others who want to help. Ask each group to supply the items listed. After the pantry has been stocked, ask the groups to take turns restocking it monthly. Provide groups with a list of special items needed. Emphasize that with some items, several small packages would be more helpful than one warehouse-sized package.
3. **Purchase additional food as needed.** In addition to joining the local food bank, develop a contact with a wholesale food distributor or grocery store.
4. **Label storage shelves.** Arrange food items in an orderly manner. Stock only basic items that are in good condition. The food pantry should not be the place for church members to dispose of their odd items. Some useless items that have actually been donated to food pantries include capers, pickled pigs feet, and generic caviar.
5. **Plan to discard outdated items.** Write dates on labels. Discard unused items on a regular basis. This is particularly important for items like baby food.
6. **Divide large bags and boxes of food into smaller containers.** Macaroni, rice, grits, meal, and dried beans can be frozen for 24 hours, then placed in plastic milk cartons or other containers. These items will then keep for quite awhile on the shelf.

Suggested items for a food pantry

- Nonfat dry milk
- Canned vegetables
- Pancake mix (complete)
- Shortening or oil
- Baby food
- Tomato sauce
- Canned tuna, salmon, mackerel, and sardines
- Vienna sausage, stew, and other meats in pull-top cans
- Canned fruit and fruit juices
- Macaroni, noodles, or other pasta
- Salt
- Rice
- Dried beans and peas
- Instant potatoes
- Biscuit mix
- Soups (dried or canned)
- Paper goods such as towels, toilet paper, and facial tissues

Suggested emergency grocery packages

When preparing grocery packages, think about the ethno-cultural background of the recipients. Also, consider their age and living conditions. People without cooking facilities would benefit from precooked, canned, or packed food.

- One 48-ounce can of orange or grapefruit juice
- Two boxes of cereal or one box of pancake mix (complete)
- Four macaroni and cheese dinners (complete)
- One pound of dried beans
- Four 16-ounce packages of dried milk
- One box of crackers
- Three cans of meat
- Two packages of cornbread or biscuit mix
- Four cans of soup

- Four cans of vegetables (yellow and green)
- One pound of noodles or spaghetti
- Two cans of pork and beans
- Two cans of tomato sauce
- Two cans of fruit
- One package of toilet paper
- \$10 credit voucher for eggs, bread, and milk

How Do We Evaluate the Ministry?

Evaluating your ministry serves as a progress report which will inspire and encourage your church's continuing participation. If your ministry receives hunger funds from NAMB, there will need to be a quarterly report about use of those funds.

Some items to include on your evaluation form:

- Number of people served
- Level of user satisfaction with the ministry
- Church member participation
- Number of volunteers
- Personal testimonies of volunteers
- Networking opportunities with other evangelical groups or community resources

Also, include witnessing information such as professions of faith, baptisms, and Bible study groups started. You will find that creating a simple form to list data will help the evaluation process. It will also be a valuable record of the ministry's growth.

Notes

¹ Gary Bickel, Steven Carlson, and Mark Nord, *Measuring Food Security in the United States 1995 - 1998 (Advance Report)* (Washington, D.C.: The U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1999), p. 1. Available from www.ers.usda.gov/whatsnew/issues/foodinsecurity/index.htm.

² "Are States Improving the Lives of Poor Families?: A Scale Measure of State Welfare Policies" (Medford, Mass.: Tufts University Center on Hunger, Poverty and Nutrition Policy, 2000 [cited 29 September 2000]). Available from www.tufts.edu/centers/hunger/pub/statesimproving.html.

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International Students

Maria was a young South American woman studying at an American university. Intelligent, ambitious, and independent, she seemed to neither want nor need any friends among the American students. Still, one Christian gently persisted in building a relationship, despite cultural differences and a few setbacks. Finally, Maria accompanied the student to her home for the weekend. She asked questions, seemed interested in everything, and was very respectful to her host's family.

After the visit, she confided in her American friend that in the several years she had lived in the United States while going to school, that was the first invitation she had ever received to an American home. That visit opened the door to Maria attending church services with her new friend. Although Maria did not accept Christ while at school, she heard the gospel presented and felt the love and acceptance of a Christian friend. Seeds were planted that may one day reap a harvest in Maria's life.

Who Are International Students?

During the 1998-1999 academic year, 490,933 international students studied in the United States, enrolled in almost every college and university.¹ Many of them bring spouses and children with them. When they come, they know that they may not return to their homeland for a year or more because of the expense of travel. In order to get the most from their time in the United States, they may stay for years to obtain advanced degrees.

When they arrive, students are often met by Americans operating under the assumption that the United States is the greatest country on earth and that the student is thrilled and even humbled by the chance to study here. It is often assumed that the student will never want to leave. The truth can be very different.

Although students are happy to gain an education here, they can be terribly homesick for family, friends, their own language, familiar food, and even their own weather. Missionaries are not the only ones who cope with culture shock. Students may have unrealistic expectations of the United States and may be put off by the behavior of Americans. A frequent lament from international students is that Americans have a superiority complex and that they have no time for making real, deep friendships. A ministry to international students can help them weather the initial shock of coming to the United States and can help them find friends.

Some students come from countries that are on tense diplomatic terms with the United States; this makes them potential targets for harassment or may simply make them feel isolated. Christian acceptance and love can make all the difference in how their sojourn in America turns out.

Many students come from countries that are closed to any type of evangelistic activity. When these students come to know Christ and take their faith home with them, they are taking the gospel into places where missionaries cannot hope to go.

What Is International Student Ministry?

There is not one single type of international student ministry. Rather, the ministry is shaped by the needs of students. In all ministries, Christians need to keep the following things in mind.

- Listening is important. The initial trust level may be very low. The student may even say things to shock you to see how you will react. There can also be huge cultural differences. While there is no need to take abuse, do not show surprise, hurt, or shock by what the student says or does.
- Remember that the student is your equal. Do not be patronizing or condescending. Do not assume that the student thinks the United States is superior to all other countries. You are an ambassador for Christ, not for a country or political system.
- Learn about the student's culture. Do not base what you know on television reports or stereotypes. One church member was embarrassed when he asked a woman from an Asian country if she ate monkey meat on a regular basis "back home." The student patiently explained that monkeys were very rare in her country and they could not afford to kill the few they had in order to eat them. She mentioned her favorite foods were poultry and beef.
- Do not make unnecessary negative comments, even when they are true. One international student was offended when a well-meaning Christian lady said, "There are a lot of poor people in your country, aren't there?" The student shot back, "Yes, much like all the poor people living in your cities and homeless shelters!"
- Respect the student's beliefs and dietary laws. If a student cannot eat meat cooked in butter, do not try to slip it past him or her. You do not have to become an international chef, but it is thoughtful to give a student choices of food and beverage.
- Provide wholesome activities like picnics, sports and other games, and Christian music performances.
- Be humble about the material blessings you have. Some international students come from wealthy homes; many others do not. Express gratitude to God for your belongings, but do not show these off.
- Speak in a normal tone of voice. People tend to talk louder to someone who is not fluent in English, as if shouting will make them understand what is being said. Avoid American slang.

Host Family

If the Baptist Collegiate Ministry or the college already has a host-family program, encourage your church to participate. If a host-family program does not exist, your church or Baptist Collegiate Ministry may want to start one.

English as a Second Language

An English-as-a-second-language ministry can reach both international students and their families. NAMB offers a 16-hour workshop to train people to begin and continue an ESL ministry. See MAP 7 for detailed information.

A Phone-Home Program

Some students do not have telephones. Many have difficulty being understood by overseas operators, and a few may not know how to use a telephone. Also, it takes a lot of quarters to make an international call from a pay phone. Offer international students access to your church, Baptist Collegiate Ministry, home, or business phones. Help them place their calls. Most will want to pay for the charges; if so, accept it. Because of their cultures and customs, they may be insulted if you do not allow them to pay.

Driver Education

Some students can afford cars and will want to purchase one. They will need and appreciate help in learning safe-driving skills and local traffic laws. They may need help in applying for a driver's license. Once they have cars, they will need help learning how to get around the area.

Shopping Assistance

International students need to understand U.S. currency and how to shop for the best buys. Most are not familiar with U.S. products and labels. Students may need a ride in order to go shopping or may need to learn how to use public transportation.

Family Ministry

Relatives who have come to the United States with a student may feel isolated while the student is at school all day. Provide child care and adult care at your church. A mother's day out program is feasible once you have earned the family's trust.

Recreation

Most international students approach their studies seriously and have little free time. Occasional outings to nearby attractions, however, will be appreciated. These are good ministry projects to plan during term breaks.

Tapes

Share audiocassettes of Christian music and videos such as the JESUS video. Do so in a friendly way. The students may wish to share music cassettes from their countries with you in return. This can give you a better idea of their culture and an opportunity to appreciate new types of music.

Scripture Distribution

Bibles and Scripture portions are available in several languages. (See “What Sources of Help Are Available?”)

Goody Bags

Welcome bags or Christmas goody bags are always needed and appreciated. These can include things like maps, cookies, coupons to area businesses, pens, key rings, and New Testaments. Check with local businesses, especially those owned by Christians, to see what items they give away to promote business.

Student Banquet/Reception

Functions like teas and banquets provide excellent opportunities for social interaction. These events provide a fun way for church members and American students to meet international students. A potluck dinner at which international students bring dishes is a way for them to share their cultures.

Christmas Visitor

Lifeway Christian Resources offers a program through local Baptist Collegiate Ministries, churches, and associations by which international students visit other parts of the country during the Christmas season.

How Do We Plan an International Student Ministry?

1. **Pray.** Ask your church to pray with you for God’s leading as you explore ministry possibilities.
2. **Find international students.** To find international students, contact your local college’s international student affairs office, foreign student faculty advisors, or Baptist campus ministers. You may also contact your state convention’s student department. Word of mouth can also be helpful. If you make contact with one international student, that student will usually know others. When contacting anyone about international students, state your intention to befriend the students and offer your assistance as an individual or as a group.
3. **Determine need.** Needs can be discovered in interviews similar to those conducted in the community needs assessment described in Chapter 6. Personal observations and discussions with students will also help.
4. **Envision ministries.** Now that you know needs, what ministries is God directing you to undertake?
5. **Prioritize ministries.** Select two or three high-need projects that have a high probability of success in God’s power. Remember, it is okay to start small and branch out later.

6. **Decide on resources.** Include in your resource list people, facilities, materials, and finances. Who will fund the ministry? Do not forget things like food for volunteers, equipment, curriculum materials, and project supplies. This last item could range from craft supplies for a day camp for children of international students to picnic tables for a cookout.
7. **Consult with others.** People on the local, associational, and state levels can help you as you embark on your ministry efforts. Find out who has experience with international students and seek their advice.
8. **Train volunteers.** Volunteers should be enlisted, trained, and incorporated into the ministry based on their spiritual gifts, Christian maturity, and ability to mesh with the ministry. Training issues should include:
 - Cross-cultural sensitivity—Resources can be obtained from the Multicultural Evangelism Unit at NAMB and from the International Mission Board.
 - Witnessing—See Appendix A for a list of evangelism resources available from NAMB.
 - Basic Tenets of World Religions—Resources can be obtained from NAMB’s Interfaith Evangelism Team. These resources include Belief Bulletins and Closer Look brochures on various world religions.
 - How to Develop a Ministry Plan—Resources, consultations, and networking can be obtained from the Special Ministries Evangelism Unit of NAMB.

The resources mentioned above can help you with obtaining appropriate training and more information can be found at www.namb.net.

Consider the following questions:

- What is my role in the ministry?
- What do I do if a student asks personal favors (borrowing money, a job reference, etc.)?
- What do I do after I lead a student to Christ? What is the next step?
- What if the student asks a theological question I cannot answer?

For help in answering these questions, call your local association or the Special Ministries Evangelism Unit at NAMB.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

Bibles and Scripture portions in English and other languages are available from the American Bible Society and the International Bible Society (addresses provided below).

American Bible Society
1865 Broadway
New York, NY 10023

International Bible Society
P.O. Box 62970
Colorado Springs, CO 80962-2970.

Resources and training for English-as-a-second-language ministry are available from NAMB. See MAP 7 for details.

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

Publicity

Publicity could include posters, fliers, or other announcements placed in dormitories, student centers, libraries, bookstores, and ethnic restaurants close to campus. Word of mouth is also effective.

Sensitivity

Listening is a wonderful way to begin building relationships with international students. Allow them to talk about things that interest them and ask questions about things that puzzle them. Learn about their countries. Do not pretend to understand something if you do not, but feel free to talk about things you have in common, such as love of family. These commonalities can give you opportunities to talk about how your relationship with Jesus shapes all aspects of your life.

Tenacity

For many cultures, friendship is a long-term commitment. The students may be put off if you introduce them as your “friends” right after meeting them. Such “friendship” to them would be very shallow. Do not expect instant results, and do not give up too quickly. Cultivate your relationships and be patient.

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?

Ministry to groups of students can be evaluated with questions like, “How many attended our event?” and “How many professions of faith were made?” Ministry to individuals can be harder to evaluate. One of the best ways of knowing whether a ministry is effective is whether the international students continue to interact with you and bring friends to meet you. If that is happening, you have received a strong indication that the ministry is meeting their needs. If that is not happening, you may wish to ask some international students with whom you have a good relationship for suggestions on improving the ministry.

Notes

¹ “International Education Factsheet” (Washington, D.C.: NAFSA: Association of International Educators [cited 29 September 2000]). Available from www.nafsa.org/advo/facts00.html.

Latchkey Children

Each afternoon when the final bell rang, Johnny, a quiet 6-year-old, boarded the school bus. His destination was Russell Baptist Center. Once there, he called his mother, a single parent, to tell her he had arrived at “Bible School,” his name for the center. At the center were volunteers who helped Johnny work on his reading and spelling skills. His grades began to improve after he started attending the latchkey ministry. If it had not been for the center, the 6-year-old would have spent his afternoons home alone while his mother worked to support the family.

Johnny’s mother appreciated the support the center gave her family. She and her children began attending the Russell Baptist Mission, which met in the center on Sundays. Her two older sons joined the mission and were baptized. Jesus’ love, His Word, and His concern were shown to this family through the latchkey ministry and they responded to that love.

Who Are Latchkey Children?

A latchkey child is one who comes home from school and enters an empty house where there is no one to care for him or her. The term “latchkey” refers to the habit many people have of hanging a house key around a child’s neck so the child won’t lose it.

Several dynamics are at work to create latchkey children. Latchkey children often come from low-income homes and frequently from single-parent families. By saving on the high cost of child care, low-income parents can afford the basics such as food and rent. Even affluent neighborhoods have latchkey children if after-school care for older children doesn’t exist. Dual-career parents, single-parent families, lack of extended family to act as caregivers, and poverty or the fear of it contribute to the presence of latchkey children.

Rather than criticize parents for allowing children to stay at home alone, the church can embody Christ’s love by ministering to the needs of both parents and children. In a mobile, fragmented society lacking in extended families, the church can be a source of stability and support.

What Is a Latchkey Ministry?

A ministry for latchkey children addresses the needs of home-alone children: safety; emotional, spiritual, and physical health; academic learning; and socialization. To meet these needs, a ministry can provide nutritious after-school snacks, tutoring, wholesome recreation, and time with other children. In keeping with ministry-based evangelism, these offerings would all contribute to the children’s spiritual well being. Through the care they receive in the program, they will experience Christ’s caring love for them.

The hours after school, but before parents come home from work, is the time when latchkey children need a directed program. A ministry could include all or some of the following:

- Time for doing homework
- Snack

- Guest speakers or teachers to talk about nutrition, safety, and communication skills
- Field trips to interesting and educational places in your community
- Games and crafts
- Bible study or devotional time

If your ministry draws a large number of children, consider dividing the time. After snack, one group could begin with homework while another did crafts or played games. At designated times, small groups could switch activities.

When designing your ministry, remember to make activities age-appropriate and varied. Games can be both indoor and outdoor, competitive and cooperative, with or without equipment. Activities away from the program location, such as field trips, are enjoyable, but must be thoroughly planned. Give parents and children plenty of advance notice, obtain parental consent, and have adequate insurance.

This is the basic design of a ministry for latchkey children, but there are other options.

- **Tutoring Children and Youth.** See MAP 26 for guidelines for this program.
- **Extended Families.** A church family or group (such as a Sunday School class) can become a kind of surrogate extended family for a latchkey child and his or her parents. They could offer child care or other practical help. This type of relationship can open doors to share Christ with both parent and child.
- **Support groups.** Working mothers often face stress and guilt. A support group can offer Christ-centered, comprehensive parenting programs that cover discipline techniques, communication skills, and understanding of a child's needs in an accepting, nonjudgmental environment.

How Do We Plan a Latchkey Ministry?

Begin with assessing needs. Chapter 6 describes in detail how to conduct a community needs assessment. If your church has already done a comprehensive survey, gather data from those findings. You will still need further information. With a group of church members, survey apartments, trailer parks, subdivisions, and schools. Ask questions such as:

- Would an after-school program be helpful to the family?
- Would the children attend a church-sponsored after school program?
- Would the children need transportation to the program if it were not in their neighborhood?
- Does the family attend a church?
- What activities would they like in an after-school program?
- What are the names of parents in the home, their home address, and telephone number?

- What are the names, ages, grades, and schools of children in the home?
- Do the children attend day care or stay with relatives after school?
- Do the parents work outside the home?
- What time do the parents arrive home after work?

If, after assessing needs, your group decides a latchkey program should be started, list needs and resources. What resources already exist? What new resources could be obtained? Use the following questions and suggestions to guide your decisions.

1. **What type ministry can the church offer?** Will this be a church wide ministry or a ministry performed by one group of members?
2. **What funds are available?** Could church groups or ministry volunteers help by providing funds for materials, snacks, and transportation?
3. **Will preregistration be required?** If so, how will it be conducted?
4. **Will the ministry be located in the church or near the children's community?** Possible locations include the church, a tent provided by the church, a member's home or backyard, or a community center.
5. **Will transportation be needed to shuttle volunteers to the ministry site or to pick up children after school?** What insurance is needed to cover transportation of children? What type of permission slip will be used?
6. **What materials are needed?** Consider the following:
 - Snacks
 - Sports equipment
 - School supplies
 - Games
 - Craft supplies
 - Health items such as tissues, first aid kit, antibacterial hand gel
 - Publicity materials—posters, flyers, registration forms
 - Scripture and other Bible material written on the appropriate level

What Sources of Help Are Available?

Many sources of help are available for meeting the needs of your latchkey ministry. For devotional or Bible study material serving both spiritual and recreational purposes, see the following list of materials.

North American Mission Board

4200 North Point Pkwy.
Alpharetta, GA 30022-4176
(770) 410-6000 (main switchboard)
To order materials, call 1 800 448-8032.
www.namb.net

NAMB produces numerous resources for ministry with children, such as *Sharing God's Special Plan with Children*, *MissionKids*, and others. See Appendix A for more information on NAMB's resource materials for ministry with children.

Woman's Missionary Union

100 Missionary Ridge
P.O. Box 830010
Birmingham, AL 35283-0010
(205) 991-8100 (main switchboard)
www.wmu.org

Friends Club, available from WMU, is particularly suited for use with children (ISBN 1563092980). To find out more about this and other materials produced for children's ministry by WMU, visit www.wmystore.com.

LifeWay Christian Resources

127 Ninth Ave., N
Nashville, TN 37234
(615) 251-2000 (main switchboard)
To place a phone order, call 1 800 448-8032.
www.lifeway.com

TeamKID materials produced by LifeWay Christian Resources are well suited for weekday ministry with children. Visit a local LifeWay Christian Store or their Web site at www.lifeway.com.

Curriculum and other materials can be recycled resources such as older LifeWay literature, as long as it is generally current and seasonally appropriate—spring literature used in spring and Christmas activities at Christmas.

Web sites also offer a variety of helps. See www.kidsplace.org. Or, visit www.netministries.org and follow "Kids Links" for excellent children's materials available on the Internet.

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

By now, you have completed the initial phases: surveying, planning, and obtaining materials. Begin the actual ministry by publicizing what you offer. Use posters, fliers, and registration forms in schools, mobile home parks, subdivisions, apartment communities, and anywhere else you

found your possible participants. Include the following information in all publicity materials:

- Name and description of your ministry
- Who sponsors the ministry
- What age children are eligible to attend
- Times and days of operation
- Location
- Costs, if any
- Registration requirements, if any

Consider holding an open house a week or so before the ministry begins. Invite prospective families so that parents can see the facilities and meet volunteers. Including a couple of games or other sample activities can help break the ice with both children and parents.

Be sure that all volunteers know how to share the plan of salvation on a level that children will understand. See information on *Sharing God's Special Plan with Children* in Appendix A.

How Do We Evaluate the Ministry?

Periodically, evaluate how the ministry is going. Ask:

- Did the children's schoolwork improve?
- Did the ministry reach the targeted areas?
- How effective was the outreach?
- Did children or their families attend church as a result of the ministry?
- Did any children or parents accept Christ as a result of a witness received through the ministry?

His Heart-
Our Hands

His Heart-
Our Hands

Migrant Families

In 1968, a young man was desperately looking for help to cope with his brother's illness. Lack of medical insurance and limited income from migrant labor made the situation unbearable. Then he met Reverend Rafael de Armas, minister to migrant workers and their families in Terrine, Fla. De Armas became "a friend in need" to the young man and his family.

On October 20, 1968, the young man surrendered his life to the Lord. Later, God called him from the agricultural fields to full-time work in the Lord's harvest. God also provided him with opportunities to complete his formal education. The young man responded, and in time he became an outstanding denominational leader in Southern Baptist life. He is Miguel de la Cruz, a missionary and director of migrant ministries for Florida. How differently his life might have turned out if a Christian had not been there at a crucial time to witness through loving ministry.

Who Are Migrant Workers?

It is a myth that most migrant workers are "undocumented people coming from Mexico." New immigration laws make it almost impossible for undocumented persons to work in the United States. Therefore, most migrant families are U.S. citizens willing to work for low wages. Boyd Little, of William A. Little and Sons, growers based in Alabama, said: "The migrant folks that come in and help us are all American citizens who were born and raised in south Texas."¹

Thousands of migrant or seasonal workers crisscross the United States each year to work in the fields. They also work in canneries, packing houses, and processing facilities. They may be Anglo, African-American, Hispanic, Haitian, or any other ethno-cultural background. There are both single adults and families working long hours at low wages, with few or no benefits. Says Mr. Little: "Without doubt they are the hardest working people we know."²

Some migrants are already Christians and they need fellowship, nurturing, and Christian growth. Many migrants have not heard the good news of Jesus Christ in a meaningful way. Migrant ministry is a way for them to hear that good news in a context of love and acceptance.

What Is a Migrant Ministry?

A migrant ministry is any ministry which focuses on some aspect of migrants' needs—physical, social, educational, as well as spiritual. Keep in mind that most successful ministries allow for mutuality. In these ministries, migrant persons are not only the recipients of gifts, but they also contribute to the ministry. These exchanges are possible when the sponsoring church or group approaches the ministry with an open mind and a non-paternalistic attitude. Recipe exchanges, joint cookouts, use of migrant leaders in worship services, and an exchange of language teaching are just a few examples of mutuality. Handouts may open doors, but as elements for maintaining a ministry these may create dependency at best or become dehumanizing at worst.

Remember, when ministering to migrants, men, women, and children may have different needs. When designing your ministry, do not overlook any of these groups.

Ideas

- 1. Assistance with legal issues.** Do not dispense legal advice unless you or someone in your ministry is a lawyer. Refer migrants to a Christian legal aid service if one is available. Also, work with public legal aid agencies or secure a lawyer willing to work pro bono. Other ways to assist with legal issues are filling out paperwork, driving the migrant to appointments, or going with them to court to show friendship and support.
- 2. Health ministries.** Health ministries can range from driving a migrant to a doctor's appointment to setting up a medical or dental clinic for migrants. Again, unless you or someone in your ministry is a health care professional, do not dispense medical advice. Instead, help the person to obtain the best medical care possible. Hygiene kits help the migrant maintain good health. Be careful, however, in the way you give such kits. You want the kit to be seen as a loving gesture, not an insinuation that the migrant is unclean. Lotion, sunscreen, lip balm, cologne, and new combs and hairbrushes make the kits a little more like gifts. Kits for girls could include hair ribbons, ponytail holders, and small mirrors.
- 3. Literacy ministries.** What type of literacy ministry you have depends on whether English is the heart language of your migrant group. This guide contains ministry action plans for adult reading and writing (see MAP 1) and English as a second language (see MAP 7).
- 4. Mentoring for school children.** MAP 26 covers tutoring children and youth, but your ministry may need to mentor children in other ways. You can provide school supplies or transportation to school. You could have parents from your congregation go with migrant parents as they enroll their children in school. MAP 13 describes how to conduct a ministry to latchkey children. Be aware, however, that migrant children often have to babysit younger siblings so parents can work. This leaves little time for schoolwork. Frequent moves to different regions make it difficult for migrant children to get a consistent education. Sensitivity in this area will make your mentoring ministry more effective.
- 5. Food distribution.** It is a tragic fact that some of the people who harvest America's food struggle financially and may go hungry themselves.³ A food distribution ministry that includes non-food items like paper products and hygiene items can be a great blessing, if done correctly. Make it the opening of your relationship to the migrant community, but not the limit of your relationship with them.
- 6. Neighborhood Bible Clubs.** This is a Bible-based activity for children. See MAP 13 for a list of appropriate curriculum materials for children.
- 7. Transportation ministry.** The guidelines for a transportation ministry (see MAP 25) will also, with some adaptation, work for a migrant ministry.
- 8. Fellowships.** Get-togethers offer migrants and church members a chance to meet. At first, you may find a location other than the church to work best, as some migrants may be intimidated by a church setting. Some fellowships could be just for the migrants

with church members hosting. Or, if there is an existing church mission or congregation of migrants in your area, you could arrange a fellowship between them and your migrant group. This would allow the migrants to meet Christians from their own people group in a low-stress setting.

9. **Sunday ministry.** You should offer migrants the opportunity to attend your worship services and Sunday School. They may do so and become members of your congregation. See Chapter 4 for a good example of how one church ministered to migrant workers. For those migrants who are unable or uncomfortable with the idea of attending a church, bring worship services to them. Besides a regular Sunday ministry, you could also bring special events, such as your Easter drama or a living nativity scene, to the migrant community.

How Do We Plan a Migrant Ministry?

Before you begin in-depth planning, decide if there is a real need. Most likely, it is the visible presence of migrant workers in your area that will motivate you to start a migrant ministry in your church. Or, perhaps you were surprised during your community needs assessment to discover a migrant population in your locale.

Either way, this ministry begins with the pastor's understanding and support. If you are not the pastor, talk to the pastor about your vision. Recruit prayer partners and pray for God's guidance. Review what Chapter 4 says about the importance of prayer in launching a ministry-based evangelism effort. Then, take the following steps.

Acquire basic knowledge

- Visit the migrant and seasonal workers' office in your county or the county agricultural extension agent to find out the ethno-cultural characteristics of the migrant workers in your area.
- If the same type of migrant workers travel throughout your state, contact leaders of other ministry-based evangelism efforts with migrants in other counties. Ask for their feedback on what the migrants are like and what they need.
- Identify agricultural growers in your area who are Christians. Talk to them about your project. Approach non-Christian growers with professionalism and conviction.
- The crew chief is an important person in migrant life. He is usually a migrant himself and is responsible for the other workers. He knows the workers well and it is his job to keep work smooth and productive. The crew chief has the trust of the grower and more power than an ordinary work foreman. Identify migrant crew chiefs and learn about basic needs experienced by migrant workers in the camp.

With all the people you meet, make it clear that your intention is to serve the migrants in a Christlike way, not to disrupt their work. The crew chief, as well or perhaps even more than the grower, will likely thwart any efforts that he feels cuts down on the workers' efficiency.

Identify resources

Resources and planning have a circular relationship. If you plan your ministry down to the last detail and then start looking for resources, you may be disappointed to find the resources you need are not available. But, if you base your ministry on resources, you will spend a lot of time looking for resources you may or may not use, and you could limit your ministry. So what can you do? Prayerfully decide the main focus of your ministry. (Many people have found it helps to start small and work up to a more encompassing ministry as they gain experience and credibility.) Then, look for resources that specifically support your main focus. For example, if your ministry is tutoring migrant children and youth, you should look for resources that would help in this area rather than spending the bulk of your time looking for medical or legal resources.

- Consider resources available at your church, association, or state convention office. These could include, but are not limited to, personnel, space, transportation, materials, and funds.
- Identify medical, educational, and cultural resources in your county available to migrant families. Again, your community needs assessment will be a big help. These resources could include free clinics, general equivalency diploma (GED) programs, public libraries, and museums. If English is not the primary language of your migrant group, look for resources available in their heart language.

How Do We Begin a Migrant Ministry?

At this point, you have prayerfully assessed the need, decided what focus your ministry will take, and begun the process of gathering resources. Consider the following steps as you begin the ministry.

Publicity

- Distribute fliers in English and any other language spoken by migrants. Place them in restaurants and stores frequented by seasonal workers.
- Utilize public service announcements through local television, radio, and newspaper outlets.
- Mail information to growers and community agencies that work with the migrant population.
- Briefly visit with crew chiefs and growers. These are not the same visits you did when gathering information in the planning stages. This visit is to publicize details of the ministry.
- All publicity should include time, date, and location of ministry, what will be offered, who is eligible (children, adults, elderly), and who is sponsoring the ministry.

Record keeping

While sheer numbers are not a reflection on the quality of your ministry, these are important to the evaluation process. See the section below on evaluating your ministry. Use the questions listed as the basis for your record keeping.

Volunteers

As the ministry progresses, look and listen for clues as to what kind of training volunteers need. They might express a need for more witnessing training or a better knowledge of how to refer migrants to other helping agencies. Periodically, you should acknowledge the efforts of volunteers.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

Many sources of help are available for meeting the needs of your migrant ministry. For outreach materials in the predominant language of the migrant group, check the catalogs of LifeWay Christian Resources, NAMB (see Appendix A), and WMU. Also, check these catalogs for resources in understanding the dominant religion and culture of the people groups comprising your migrant population, as well as witnessing helps.

You may wish to order Bibles and Scripture portions in the migrants' dominant language. The American Bible Society offers a wide range of Bibles and Scripture portions in English and various other languages. (See MAP 12 for address information.)

Of course, you have more sources of help than books, magazines, and videos. Check with the director of evangelism ministries at your associational and state Baptist convention offices. The Church and Community Ministries Evangelism Unit at NAMB also can help you in your ministry-based evangelism efforts.

How Do We Evaluate Our Migrant Ministry?

At the end of the working season, answer the following questions and present answers to your church. This will ensure the type of continued support you would like the congregation to give for future efforts. Use the following evaluation questions.

1. How many individual migrant contacts were made during this season?
2. How many professions of faith? Baptisms? Referrals to other churches?
3. How many volunteers from the church were involved? How many from other churches?
4. What is the general attitude of the congregation to migrant ministry? Were migrant workers welcomed if they visited the church?
5. Were ministry resources sufficient?
6. Is it feasible to continue this ministry?

Notes

- ¹ Boyd Little of William A. Little and Sons in personal correspondence with Donoso Escobar, Church and Community Ministries Evangelism Associate at NAMB.
- ² Boyd Little.
- ³ "Farm Workers," *Rural Migration News*, 6:3 (Davis, Calif.: Migration Dialogue of University of California, Davis, 2000 [cited 3 October 2000]). Available from migration.ucdavis.edu//RMN-Archive/jul_2000-06.html.

Nursing Homes

Corrine had been a faithful member of her church for over 50 years. She taught Sunday School, sang in the choir, and even served as WMU president. The church was her life, her family. Following surgery for a broken hip, her church ministered to her with phone calls, flowers, visits, and notes. Her church's love gave Corrine hope for the future. When Corrine was transferred to a nearby nursing home, she remained a part of the fellowship because her church did not forget her. They continued to love her and remember her.

“My church has not forgotten me,” Corrine was able to testify. “They make all the difference in the world!”

Who Needs a Nursing Home Ministry?

Many people enter nursing homes because they live alone and have few family members to provide assistance on a regular basis. This fact helps explain why many nursing home residents have few or no visitors. Some also suffer from declining mental and physical abilities. Because the U.S. population is aging, nursing home populations are expected to increase. This trend means the need for ministry to nursing home residents will grow as well.

What Is a Nursing Home Ministry?

A nursing home ministry is an effort to help nursing home residents and their families as well as employees of the nursing home. Most nursing homes offer many opportunities for ministry. For example, you can conduct activities, show care and support, and build relationships. While many people in nursing homes are Christians, many are not. How sad to think that some people have lived 75 or 80 years and never had the gospel presented to them in a meaningful way. Residents who are believers, like Corrine in our opening story, need love and Christian fellowship. Residents who are not Christians need love and the opportunity to learn about Jesus through a caring ministry.

Unfortunately, many people avoid nursing home ministry. Some find nursing homes depressing. Others have had a bad experience with a loved one in a nursing home. Many find that nursing home residents remind them of their own impending physical decline and mortality. Some people have simply never spent much time with the aged and do not know how to cope with their limited sight and hearing or other physical and mental frailties.

When a volunteer looks past those issues, however, he or she finds that few people are as grateful for ministry efforts as nursing home residents, or as appreciative of visitors.

There are three groups that are the focus of nursing home ministry: residents, staff, and families of residents. Among residents, there are two approaches to ministry: reaching individual residents and reaching groups.

Individual Residents

Many residents may have difficulty hearing and have some level of confusion. Strokes and other illnesses make it hard for some residents to speak. Do not assume that a resident who cannot speak is incapable of understanding what is being said. With all residents, a ministry of presence is helpful. Conversations should be warm and encouraging, volunteers should be willing to listen, and movements should be calm and unhurried.

Friendly Visitor—This is a great need in almost every nursing home. A conversation about a resident's childhood, family, church involvement, or school may reveal an interesting life. (Reminiscences about the past have actually been found to help residents keep their mental acuity.) Some volunteers concentrate on helping new residents feel welcome in their new surroundings.

Letter Writing—Write letters for a resident with arthritic hands or palsy. Many residents have out-of-town friends and family with whom they want to correspond.

Notes—Write a weekly note to the resident. One church has a “nursing home resident of the week” and publishes the person's name, address, and other information in the church newsletter to encourage church members to write.

Reading Aloud—Read Bible verses, devotional material, magazines, books, or letters to residents.

Room Decoration—Residents spend hours looking at the walls of their rooms. A potted plant, a card, a picture, or a family photo in a frame can spruce up the surroundings. The volunteer can bring a family photo so the resident can display photos of their “adopted family.”

Intergenerational Visitors—Residents love contacts from all ages. The presence of a teenager, child, or baby can fill them with pleasure. Prepare children for the physical and mental limitations of some residents so they will not be afraid. This ministry also helps young people see that older people are like themselves, needing love and friendship, capable of humor, and eager for interaction with all age groups.

Errands—Since many residents cannot leave the facility, volunteer to get things they want or need.

Meal Times—Assist at meal times. Most nursing homes need extra people to help feed residents or encourage them to eat more. They will usually be glad to offer training to volunteers.

Activities—The activity director would probably welcome offers of help. Give one afternoon or evening a week to help the director with scheduled activities.

Outings—Take residents on an outing, even if just a drive to admire spring flowers or Christmas lights. Always check the nursing home's policies and get permission before taking the resident out.

Music—Most churches have musicians who are willing to entertain residents by singing or playing instruments. Residents may enjoy singing along, especially if the songs are hymns or popular songs from their youth.

Flower Gardening—Bring flowers from a flower garden to a resident. Or, bring a flowering bulb in a bowl that can sit in a windowsill. The resident will enjoy watching the flower sprout and bloom.

Magazines—Collect and deliver magazines. The church may be willing to pay for subscriptions to large-print devotional magazines.

Pets—A cuddly cat or dog is probably second only to children in popularity with residents. Be sure to get permission before bringing in an animal and make sure the animal is calm and well behaved. A few people might be startled by the sudden appearance of an animal, so tell them that you have the pet with you.

Groups of Residents

Group activities can be very enjoyable for residents. These may include music and snacks. When serving refreshments, make sure of the dietary restrictions for residents. Diabetic residents, for example, have been known to eat birthday cake or drink sugary punch served by a well-meaning volunteer. The nursing staff can provide guidelines for food and drinks.

Parties—Nursing homes need celebrations. Monthly birthday parties or holiday theme parties can be fun and help keep residents oriented to time and seasons.

Music Groups—Coordinate children's choirs, youth or adult ensembles, or handbell choirs.

Dramas and Puppets—The nursing home is an excellent place to have a second showing of a drama or puppet show that was performed at church.

Movies and Slides—One church had a weekly ministry called "Sharing Our World" during which church members shared information about their travels—family vacations, mission trips, or group tours. The show should not last longer than 30 minutes. A good screen and sound system are necessary. Most libraries have a wide selection of free movies, especially classics that residents might enjoy seeing again.

Games—Group games or informal table games (dominoes, checkers, or chess) provide an excellent opportunity for visiting with residents.

Arts and Crafts—Choose arts and crafts that can be done in 30 minutes or an hour. Choose those that do not require a lot of items or a lot of time to set up.

Cassette Tapes—Audiocassettes offer so many options for both individual residents and groups. For the visually impaired, there are books on tape. Worship services and music on tape are also popular.

Worship Services and Bible Studies—These two activities are the most common for churches to conduct in nursing homes, and these are probably the most difficult to do well. Effective services are planned well and are coordinated and led by a team committed to a weekly time. Each volunteer must understand his or her role, and the service should be adapted to residents' capabilities and needs—hearing and sight limitations, for example. Involve residents as much as possible in planning and leading services. One resident may choose hymns, another may play the piano, while others may read Scripture or lead in prayer.

Nursing Home Staff

Nursing home staff are frequently underpaid and overworked. They, too, are dealing with personal issues, such as grief at the death of a resident or frustration at their inability to do more for residents. Christian groups who come into the nursing home intent on ministering to residents often overlook the needs and feelings of staff. You can minister to them in the following ways.

Appreciation Moments—Get a list of all staff members in the nursing home. Choose one or two a week and learn their names. Write notes of appreciation or stop them in the halls to thank them for their work.

Recognition—Invite staff members to be recognized in a special worship service at your church. A good time to do this is during National Nursing Home Week (the week following Mother's Day). The church may host a luncheon or banquet in honor of the nursing home staff.

Treats—Send a platter of cookies or small gift bags of candy to go in the employee break room. Add a card with the name, address, and phone number of your church and the words, "We appreciate you!"

Residents' Families

Families of nursing home residents are the most difficult to reach of these groups, but they have a great need for support and understanding. Many family members feel guilty, angry, and/or frustrated when they place a loved one in a nursing home. They may have been told they are dishonoring their parents by placing them in a nursing facility. Most have a great deal of financial and emotional stress. Before a person enters a nursing home, often the family gives the needed support for that person to live at home. This changes when the loved one enters the nursing home. The staff then become the source of essential care and family members take a supportive role. This shift can be a big adjustment. Your church can minister to all these needs using methods like the ones described below.

Support Groups—Support groups, workshops, or seminars can help family members cope with guilt and grief, as well as help them learn about financial and medical issues related to their elderly loved ones.

Respite Care—Even with paid nursing home staff present, many family members feel the need to stay with their loved one as much as possible. Churches can offer respite care for these families by offering to sit once a week with their loved ones.

Contact—Church members can stay in touch with family members, giving support and encouragement.

How Do We Plan a Nursing Home Ministry?

1. Decide who will lead.

Who is interested in this ministry? The church's On Mission Team, WMU, men's ministries, or church council may initiate a nursing home ministry. Or, it may begin with just one or a few

people who feel called to reach nursing home residents. Whoever leads the ministry should have the support of the church behind them.

2. Decide on the need.

If your community needs assessment indicates a need in nursing home ministry, you may have already determined your area of ministry. If not, make an appointment with the director of nursing, the activities director, or the social worker for the nursing home. Ask what needs your church could help meet. Consider residents, staff, and families of residents. Although you may ultimately decide to minister to only one of these groups, knowing all the needs will help you make the wisest decision.

3. Survey church members.

Begin with people in your congregation who have loved ones in nursing homes. Consider starting your project in those homes with those residents. Knowing specific people will help in the beginning and you will certainly want to minister to those in your own congregation. Then you may have the opportunity to expand your ministry to others. Always look for opportunities to share the gospel with the lost.

4. Recruit volunteers.

You may want to use the recruitment strategies identified below.

- Start with an informational meeting which interested people can attend with no obligation to participate in a ministry. Share what you have learned and what needs you plan to meet. Place a note in the church newsletter, make announcements, and mail out cards to encourage interest in the meeting.
- From your meeting, recruit a pool of volunteers. Decide with them exactly how to conduct the ministry and how often they will visit the home. Set a target date.
- Provide training. A hospital chaplain, pastor, associational church and community ministries director, or nursing home staff member can help lead this training. Include personal witnessing training, understanding the aging process, how to work with nursing home staff, and how to be a good listener.

5. Find resources.

You will have gathered some idea of what resources are needed in the early planning stage. Finalize your list of needs as well as a list of potential sources of help.

6. Contact the nursing home.

Work closely with the nursing home in planning your ministry. Check with them about the appropriateness of your start date and all other days when you plan to do any group activity.

What Sources of Help Are Available

Associations

- The Alzheimers Association, 919 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1100, Chicago IL 60611-1676, 1 800 272-3900; (312) 335-8700; fax (312) 335-1110; www.alz.org.
- American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (AAHSA), 901 E St., NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20004-2011; (202) 783-2242; fax (202) 783-2255; www.aahsa.org.
- American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), 601 E St., NW, Washington, DC 20049; 1 800 424-3410; www.aarp.org.

Publications

- Haugk, Kenneth C. *Christian Caregiving: A Way of Life*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1985.
- Jakes, P. David. *The Decision is Yours: Help for Senior Adults and Their Families With Housing Options*. Nashville: Lifeway Press, 1995.
- Mace, Nancy L., Peter V. Rabins, and Paul R. McHugh. *The 36-Hour Day*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999.
- Manning, Doug. *The Nursing Home Dilemma: How to Make One of Love's Toughest Decisions*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986.

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

A meaningful nursing home ministry involves building relationships. Genuine love for the resident will communicate more than all the right words.

A good relationship is built on faithfulness and trust. The volunteer should go to the nursing home once a week, twice a month, or at least once a month. Whatever the frequency, the person should be committed to keeping promises to visit. Volunteers should not assume that because residents are old that they will forget an appointment. The volunteer's visit may be the high point of the resident's week and they should not be disappointed.

Commitment builds trust. Besides visiting regularly, the volunteer should honor promises. It is better not to make a promise than to make one that cannot be kept.

Emphasize quality over quantity. Residents can have overwhelming needs. A church may not be able to minister to every need, so the ministry should concentrate on doing a few things well.

It is best for volunteers to wear name tags, especially if a whole group of volunteers arrives at once. Volunteers should learn the names of residents as well, keeping in mind that some residents will enjoy the friendliness of being on a first-name basis, while some will prefer the respect of being called "Mr." or "Mrs."

When conducting programs, volunteers may be tempted to arrive just in time for the program to begin, conduct the program, and leave quickly. The fellowship and relationship-building, however, occur before and after the program. The group should arrive early and stay afterward to greet people individually.

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?

Seek feedback from volunteers, residents, and nursing home staff. Should activities be added? Should other activities be changed or dropped altogether? How do the residents respond to the volunteers? How does the nursing home staff respond to the volunteers and the ministry activities? How many residents, staff, or family members are receiving Christ? How are they being disciplined? What can be done in the way of training to better equip volunteers?

Keep in mind that nursing home ministry can be challenging for volunteers. It may bring up issues they have about their elderly relatives or their own aging process. Either during or after evaluations, give volunteers time to discuss their feelings. With sensitivity on the part of ministry leaders, the nursing home ministry can be a blessing to volunteers, as well as to residents and staff.

His Heart-Hands
Our

His Heart-Hands
Our

Pregnancy Care Alternatives

Alex, a young Christian who felt trapped by her pregnancy, thought abortion was her only choice. She found the bondage of the abortion experience far more severe than she had imagined or been told it would be. Her trip to the abortion clinic was anything but the simple procedure described to her. Although her Christian upbringing had taught her that abortion was murder, she went through with it—no one was there to give her an alternative. Six years of guilt and anguish passed before Alex was able to recommit her life to the Lord and find peace.

A pregnancy care center could have made all the difference in Alex's decision to have an abortion.

Who Needs a Pregnancy Care Center?

This ministry is for any woman who believes she is pregnant and wants a free pregnancy test, handled with confidentiality. It is also for anyone involved in a crisis pregnancy at any time. Young people who need counseling about abstinence can benefit from the ministry as well. Women and men who are suffering from the trauma of the abortion experience also need the counseling a center provides.

What Is a Pregnancy Care Center?

A pregnancy care center is a place of ministry in a separate location from the church. It is a place of nonjudgmental and unconditional love offered to people who are hurting and fearful because of a crisis pregnancy or postabortion trauma. A pregnancy care center is equipped with personnel trained to meet the physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of those who come for help. It is a place to provide awareness and educational materials about abstinence and sexually transmitted diseases. Some pregnancy care centers even provide abstinence counseling to the community through local schools.

An important point to remember is that in a pregnancy care center, the gospel is presented in a nonthreatening environment with receptive participants.

While many denominations and ecumenical groups operate crisis pregnancy ministries, there are many benefits available in a Southern Baptist pregnancy care center. These benefits include:

- Assistance from the Alternatives for Life Ministries office of NAMB. This assistance includes free training, low-cost manuals, consultations, referrals, and counseling support for new directors.
- As a certified NAMB pregnancy care center, you are included under the umbrella of the Church and Community Ministries Evangelism Unit of NAMB.
- You may work through associations and state conventions for budget assistance.
- You may request hunger funds for baby formula or food for hungry families.
- You have the cooperative efforts of Southern Baptists at your disposal.

How Do We Plan a Pregnancy Care Center?

1. Pray

Ask for God's wisdom and timing. It may take a year or more to adequately organize such a ministry. Prayer will be needed as you plan your ministry and as you begin ministering to others.

2. Hold an interest meeting

Invite concerned people. Inform friends, pastors, and other church members of the meeting. Decide whether the center volunteers will only be from your church, local Southern Baptist churches, or from the larger Christian community. You may choose to show a video on pregnancy care centers.

3. Form a steering committee

Choose members from the interest meeting described in the previous step. Assign tasks and set deadlines for each task to be completed.

4. Survey the community

Chapter 6 outlines in detail how to conduct a community needs assessment. You will want specific information such as:

- Statistics on abortions, teen pregnancies, and illegitimate births. You can obtain these from your state and county health departments. The figures will indicate the degree of need for a center.
- Number and type of abortions performed. Survey medical personnel and facilities for this information. You will use this data in choosing a center location.
- Types of other community pro-life efforts and Christian ministries to pregnant women. This information will indicate if another ministry to pregnant women is needed.

5. Structure the ministry

Once you have determined the need for a center, decide whether the center should incorporate. (See Appendix F for an in-depth look at the pros and cons of incorporation.) If you choose to incorporate, enlist an attorney. Then choose a name. A neutral name, such as Pregnancy Help Center and Women's Resource Center, will attract the general public. A name like Christian Crisis Pregnancy Center most likely will not attract non-Christians who also need the services offered at a Pregnancy Care Center. After the center is named, write a purpose statement and doctrinal statement. (See the manual *How to Build a Legacy for Life: A How-To Manual for Establishing a Pregnancy Care Center*, listed in "What Sources of Help are Available?" for samples of both statements.)

6. Choose center facilities

When choosing where to put the center, consider the following questions.

- Who is the group upon which you are focusing? What location would most likely attract this group? A neutral setting, away from the church, is more likely to attract the general public.
- Can women reach your facility using public transportation?
- Is it visible? Depending on the town or city, you might opt for a storefront or a busy shopping area. In a city, it is usually a good idea to have visibility. In a small town, however, visibility may not ensure client confidentiality.
- Does the facility have enough space? It should have at least one private bathroom, space for an office and two counseling rooms, a reception area, and a separate testing area, if possible. A large training room and storage space would be useful, as would a children's play area.

7. Determine operational needs

Such needs may include: furniture in the counseling rooms; office equipment such as desks, tables, photocopier, file cabinets, and typewriter; office supplies and forms for registration, scheduling, and records; toys for a children's play area; literature for clients; and pregnancy tests, cups, and disposable latex gloves. The center should have a telephone answering machine and at least two phone lines, one to serve as a hot line and one for the director's use.

8. Establish a list of resources for clients

A pregnancy care center cannot provide everything a client needs. Become knowledgeable about the following:

- Medicaid and public assistance
- Clinics and hospitals with free or reduced rates
- Children's services
- Programs for unwed mothers
- Childbirth classes, midwives, and birthing facilities
- Public and private housing
- Ministries for youth, college students, and single adults
- Adoption agencies, Christian counseling centers, drug and alcohol treatment centers, and day care centers
- Obstetricians and family practitioners who will accept patients on Medicaid, create a payment plan, and/or offer free services to one or two patients a year
- Information on sexually transmitted diseases, psychiatric and legal services, and education for pregnant schoolgirls

What Sources of Help Are Available?

North American Mission Board

NAMB's Alternatives for Life Ministries office will assign a trainer to conduct a 16-hour training seminar for volunteers two weeks before the center opens. To schedule training, call 1 800 962-0851 at least six months before the center is scheduled to open. Be prepared to give three possible dates for training.

The Alternatives for Life Ministries office can provide additional information and materials on establishing a ministry. Also, if your church decides it is not able to offer a pregnancy care center, you can request the sheet entitled "What Can I Do?" It describes other ways your church can minister to people experiencing crisis pregnancies. This sheet is also available on the Internet at www.namb.net/alternatives.

NAMB carries *How to Build a Legacy for Life: A How-To Manual for Establishing a Pregnancy Care Center* (ISBN 0840088647) and the video *The Heart of the Matter* (ISBN 0840088612). These may be ordered by phone at 1 800 448-8032 or by fax at (615) 251-5983.

Publications

Garton, Jean S. *Who Broke the Baby?* Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1998.

Cochrane, Linda, and Kathy Jones. *Healing a Father's Heart: A Post-Abortion Bible Study for Men*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1996.

Cochrane, Linda. *Forgiven and Set Free: A Post-Abortion Bible Study for Women*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1999.

Flanagan, Geraldine L. *Beginning Life*. Ontario, Canada: Firefly Books Ltd., 1996.

Lewis, Larry L., comp. and ed. *Proclaiming the Pro-Life Message: Christian Leaders Address the Abortion Issue*. Hannibal, Mo.: Hannibal Books 1997.

Rankin, D. Tony, and Richard Ross. *When True Love Doesn't Wait*. Nashville: LifeWay Press, 1998 (booklet).

Willke, John C., MD, and Barbara H. Willke, RN. *Why Not Love Them Both? Questions and Answers about Abortion*. Cincinnati, Ohio: Hayes Publishing Company, Inc., 1997.

LIFE CYCLE BOOKS, specializing in prolife and abstinence education materials. U.S. inquiries: P. O. Box 420, Lewiston, NY 14092-0420; Order by phone at 1 800 214-5849 or by fax at 1 888 690-8532. Canadian inquiries: 2205 Danforth Ave., Toronto, ON M4C 1K4.

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

1. Choose a board of directors

Nominate and elect a board of directors, men and women who represent a range of ages and occupations, including retirees, people who work at home, plus at least one minority in your community if possible. All board members must be committed Christians, must believe that life begins at conception, and must be willing to be involved actively in the center. Some churches place this ministry under the supervision of a staff minister who is dedicated to the center's cause and is supportive of its director.

2. Set policies and procedures

These should be in accordance with the purpose and doctrinal statements.

3. Choose the director

Hire someone who will execute the policies of the board of directors and its administration.

4. Enlist volunteers

The most valuable resource your center will have are volunteers. Enlist at least 25. Request that each area pastor ask for two to four mature Christian women of any age to consider volunteering as counselors. Also, advertise for volunteers in area church newsletters and/or your state Baptist paper. The center director should interview prospective volunteers.

5. Train volunteers

After a director has been hired and volunteers have been interviewed and enlisted, follow up the NAMB training course with your own in-house training. For two weeks, role-play center operations such as opening each day, practicing procedures volunteers learned, running tests, and filling out client forms. This practice will help eliminate and correct any potential problems in the center's operation.

6. Publicize the ministry

Rent a post office box for the center. If you plan to advertise in the yellow pages, inquire early in your planning about the deadline for submitting an ad. The day before the center opens, hold an open house (announce the open house and the ministry in your state Baptist paper beforehand). Keep in mind that part of publicizing the ministry is letting churches know about the needs of the center. Here is a partial list of needs that area churches and individuals can help fill.

- Volunteer counselors (see above points about enlistment and training)
- Advocates for the mothers
- Advisors with expertise in related fields
- Physicians and attorneys

- Services (maintenance, printers, advertisers, public relations)
- Office space, equipment, supplies
- Maternity clothes (new and good used)
- Newborn baby clothes and supplies
- Baby furniture
- Prenatal vitamins
- Childbirth coaches
- Breastfeeding information
- Financial assistance (to assist clients with groceries and housing)
- Job training for clients
- Resources such as books, films, and brochures
- Information on finishing high school or earning a general equivalency diploma (GED)
- Opportunities for further training
- Facilities for meetings, banquets, support groups

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?

If the center has clients, it is effective. However, you should still conduct monthly meetings to discuss problems volunteers detect. The director should always be accessible to volunteers so that problems can be addressed quickly.

If the center has no or few clients, reevaluate your operation. Determine what is preventing potential clients from using the center. Is it your location? Your name? Do your volunteers need more training?

As a final evaluation, tally the number of clients served, babies born, and people who have come to know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. NAMB's Alternatives for Life Ministries office can provide forms for this purpose.

Raceway

On her seventeenth birthday, Danielle attended a stock car race at Talladega Superspeedway in Alabama. While visiting with a young Christian woman, Danielle asked about the raceway ministry there. She indicated an interest in talking with someone about her relationship with Jesus. The Christian volunteer gave Danielle a New Testament and invited her to a gospel singing that Saturday evening. Another volunteer asked Danielle if she was a Christian. She replied, “I am a church member.” The volunteer explained the difference between being a church member and being a Christian. With that new understanding, Danielle accepted Jesus Christ as her Savior.

Who Needs a Raceway Ministry?

When you think of ministering at car races, the first people who probably come to mind are the fans. Avid racing fans have a kind of subculture—they do not merely attend races close to home, but they follow the circuit around the country. Some arrive early at the next race site and camp out. Before and after races the fans look for something fun to do. They enjoy quality music and entertainment.

The raceway world belongs not just to spectators, but to vendors and distributors, track employees and managers, drivers and their families, and the community around the raceway that is affected by the races and the associated activities.

Oddly enough, considering the opportunities for ministry and witness that raceways present, it can be difficult to convince some Christians that a raceway ministry is an acceptable activity for believers. Ministering at the raceway on Sunday takes church members away from worship services. Drinking and other secular behaviors common at raceways can repel people who feel Christians should avoid such environments. Instead of viewing raceway ministry in this way, believers should see raceways as great fields of souls “white unto harvest.” Could you imagine Jesus avoiding a raceway crowd because they were not spiritually pure enough for His company?

Besides the many prospects at a raceway, there are Christian drivers, staff, and spectators in the raceway world. They need and welcome fellowship with other believers.

What Is a Raceway Ministry?

Raceway ministries can occur on race day or during race week. These can complement ministries at resort hotels (see MAP 19), campgrounds (see MAP 3), or special events (see MAP 22). The ministry meets needs of drivers, spectators, and employees. By meeting needs, whether that need is a cup of cold water or directions to the closest hotel, volunteers can win the chance to be heard when they wish to speak of the gospel.

Raceway ministries take several forms. Here are some examples.

- Scripture distribution
- Worship at the raceway
- Worship services at local churches using Christian drivers for music, prayer, and Scripture reading
- Music—country western, bluegrass, gospel
- Films
- Performing arts—drama, puppets, clowns, mimes, illusionists
- Crisis counseling
- Infield witnessing, one-on-one
- Chaplains
- Tours
- Traffic control
- Refreshments—water or juice in cups with Scripture printed on them
- Welcome pack of maps, souvenirs, and a tract
- Child care for spectators, employees, pit crews, drivers
- Assistance in setting up camp
- Help for local merchants
- Volunteers working as officials and gate keepers
- Day camp for children
- Errand running
- First aid/sunburn station
- Christian drivers giving testimonies in local institutions like jails, prisons, halfway houses
- Church-sponsored sports awards banquets with emphasis on race ministries

All raceway projects share some elements—ministry and witness must be conducted in a non-judgmental way. Evangelistic approaches should be friendly, not hard sell, because volunteers are there to tell about Christ's love, not criticize raceway patrons. Christians involved in raceway ministries do not have to pretend to enjoy everything about the race world, but they must remember that they have entered a secular environment as ambassadors of Christ. Their words, vocal tones, and facial expressions will let raceway people know if they are loving or rejecting.

Also, volunteers should understand they are there to work, not watch the race. When recruiting volunteers, it is important to determine who actually wants to serve and who might see the activity as a lark. The latter category of volunteers should be helped to understand what will be expected of them. Unless truly interested in ministry and witness in a raceway setting, they should not be enlisted.

How Do We Plan a Raceway Ministry?

Try to start planning a year before the actual event, using the following steps.

1. **Enlist a team.** A successful raceway ministry requires the efforts of several people.
2. **Identify needs.**
 - To do this, you should attend a race at the raceway. Get a picture of the setting and the kind of people who attend.
 - Consult with your associational director of missions to see what, if anything, has been done or is currently being done in the way of ministry to this group. This will help you avoid duplicating efforts.
 - Talk to the raceway manager. What concerns, hopes, and goals does the manager have for the raceway?
3. **Check resources.** Consult with your associational staff and area pastors. What support could they offer? If pastors are hesitant to get involved, cultivate their interest. Take them to the raceway, introduce them to Christian drivers and employees, and talk about the opportunities for sharing the gospel with people who might never feel comfortable seeking out a church.
4. **Envision the ministry.** You know the needs and the resources. Now, with God's leading, envision the ministry you wish to begin. Write a ministry proposal or purpose statement. Include your purpose, the scope of the project, and who will be responsible for each part.
5. **Obtain all needed agreements and permissions.** This includes permission to use the pictures and testimonies of Christian drivers. Also, get permission to place publicity material at the raceway.
6. **Recruit and train volunteers.** Orient volunteers to raceway rules such as, "never enter the infield without proper permission," and "never accept volunteers from the audience to perform." You may wish to enlist Christian drivers or a representative of the raceway management to help in orientation. Also, provide personal witnessing training with an emphasis on sharing the gospel in a brief, yet personal, way.
7. **Involve local churches.** Ask church prayer groups to pray for the ministry. Enlist local pastors to lead worship services and Bible studies at the raceway, or to serve as chaplains. If you will use performing arts, check with area churches for individual performers as well as teams.
8. **Seek funding.** The money needed to conduct this ministry may be beyond your church's means. Check with your association or state Baptist convention office for funding. Also, check with Christians associated with the raceway and local Christian businesspeople.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

Short-Term Volunteers

Contact NAMB for short-term volunteers such as summer missionaries, mission teams, and retirees interested in missions activities.

Children's Materials

The following children's materials are available for day camp.

North American Mission Board

4200 North Point Pkwy.
Alpharetta, GA 30022-4176
(770) 410-6000 (main switchboard)
To order materials, call 1 800 448-8032.
www.namb.net

NAMB produces numerous resources for ministry with children, such as *Sharing God's Special Plan with Children*, *MissionKids*, and others. See Appendix A for more information on NAMB's resource materials for ministry with children.

Woman's Missionary Union

100 Missionary Ridge
P.O. Box 830010
Birmingham, AL 35283-0010
(205) 991-8100 (main switchboard)
www.wmu.org

Friends Club, available from WMU, is particularly suited for use with children (ISBN 1563092980). To find out more about this and other materials produced for children's ministry by WMU, check out www.wmustore.com.

LifeWay Christian Resources

127 Ninth Ave., N
Nashville, TN 37234
(615) 251-2000 (main switchboard)
To place a phone order, call 1 800 448-8032.
www.lifeway.com

TeamKID, *KidTrek*, and Vacation Bible School materials produced by LifeWay Christian Resources are well suited for daytime or weeklong ministry with children. Visit a local LifeWay Christian Store or their Web site at www.lifeway.com.

Raceway Ministries Specialists

The following contacts are good resources:

Special Ministries Evangelism Unit of NAMB

4200 North Point Pkwy.
Alpharetta, GA 30022-4176
(770) 410-6354
www.namb.net

Raceway Ministries

Frank Stark, Specialist
P.O. Box 56
Strafford, MO 65757
(417) 736-3073
raceway@dialus.com

The National Fellowship of Raceway Ministries

Jim McBride, President
9 E. Lookerman St., Suite 209
Dover, DE 19901
(304) 741-2488
delbaptasn@juno.com

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

Publicity

Before race week, check with the publicity director about the possibility of obtaining space in the official brochure or program under the general information section. List what your ministry offers. Place posters and banners around the raceway and in area stores. Place public service announcements on radio and television, and place ads in newspapers, including the Baptist state paper.

In addition to these publicity efforts, you should have personal publicity items. Race fans love to get souvenirs, so hat and lapel pins, racing patches, a schedule of races, a printed picture and personal testimony of a driver, and other items will be popular. Not only will these draw attention to the ministry, but these can spark a conversation between the ministry volunteer and raceway patron.

Record keeping

Decide how you will keep records and what data you will keep. Besides such things as number of volunteer hours given, professions of faith, and referrals to area churches, consider the number of tracts and publicity items distributed, number of people counseled by chaplains, number and type of creative arts performances, number of visitors to your booth, and so forth. Also, keep track of resources used and monies spent.

Communication

You should communicate with several groups: volunteers, church members and others supporting the ministry through prayer, and the raceway manager. Set up a system to communicate with volunteers. If ministry takes place in several different locations, have someone spot check each location. If the ministry project is spread out over several days (i.e., all of race week), contact the prayer group leader to report on praises and requests each evening. Let the raceway manager know how to reach you and be sure to communicate any changes. Remember, during race week the manager will be very busy.

Follow up

Devise a referral system for contacts. Use response cards, guest books, registers, or opinion polls to secure names, addresses, and phone numbers of participants. Local pastors or laypeople can disciple converts who live in the area. For prospects living outside your area, refer them to the associational director of missions for their area. Encourage patrons traveling the raceway circuit to seek out ministries at other tracks.

Clean up

At any event where people receive free literature, paper cups and napkins, or other giveaways, a certain percentage of it is likely to end up on the ground or in the stands. Police any area where your volunteers have served and make sure you are in no way adding to the litter problem at the raceway. Management and staff will appreciate your consideration.

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?

Evaluate the ministry on a daily basis during the event. Your opportunity to serve is brief, so deal with challenges and opportunities quickly. After the race, have an evaluation time with all the involved parties. Did you meet your purpose? How could the ministry be improved next year? Were volunteers used effectively? Was the budget adequate?

The records you kept during the event will help you determine how many witnessing encounters took place, how many professions of faith were made, and so forth. While these numbers are important, keep in mind during your evaluation that a large part of your ministry was planting seeds that may bear fruit in another place on another day. Your caring presence at the raceway counts the most.

Refugee Resettlement

The rebel soldiers stormed into the village just before midnight. With angry shouts and automatic gunfire they awakened the villagers. Going from house to house, soldiers ordered everyone into the village commons. Ten young men were selected at random and torn from the arms of their terrified families. They were marched out of the village at gunpoint. A few minutes after the men disappeared, their families heard shots. (Relief workers would uncover the mass graves months later.) Five teenage boys were forced to join the rebel faction and they marched from the village. Two soldiers dragged a young girl into a house and brutally assaulted her.

The survivors clung to each other and wept from fear and grief. They listened as the rebel leader warned that any future aid or sympathy given to rival factions in the civil war would be met with the same deadly force. When the soldiers left, they set fire to the village and promised to return.

As day broke, the traumatized villagers gathered what few possessions they could carry and fled across the border into a refugee camp in a neighboring country. The camp had no food or clean water, inadequate sanitation, and no hospitals or schools, but it offered safety from the rebels.

Who Are Refugees?

Refugees are innocent people who have been forced from their homes by war or persecution, as illustrated in this story. Because of a variety of factors—ethnicity, religion, race, politics—they cannot safely stay in their home country. Refugees differ from immigrants. An immigrant is one who chooses to move to another country because of employment or educational opportunities or to be reunited with family. A refugee has no choice in the matter, but flees to avoid persecution.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees defines a refugee as anyone who has “fled to another country because of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a social group, and who cannot or do not want to return.”¹

Simply watching the evening news will not give you a realistic picture of how many refugees exist. Worldwide, there were over 14.1 million refugees in 1999.² The United States resettled 85,006 refugees in 1999.³ Each of these numbers represents a person whose life has been devastated. Often, before leaving their homes, refugees have been brutalized. When they leave they lose possessions, jobs, homes, family members, and their sense of security. They take with them what they can carry. They also take the traumatic memories of the violence and oppression that caused them to flee and the emotional wounds that come from losing everything they held dear.

Once they reach a refugee camp, they may stagnate for years with inadequate food, shelter, medical care, and schools. Many will never be able to safely return home. The best hope for rebuilding their lives is resettlement in a new country.

While this is their best hope, refugees may spend years awaiting approval for resettlement and sponsors to assist them in their resettlement. No other people group is more in need of Christian love than refugees, and perhaps no other people group is more open to the gospel than refugees who are welcomed and received by caring churches.

What Is Refugee Resettlement Ministry?

There are two types of ministry with refugees. The greatest need is for churches to participate in the **Refugee Sponsors** program. Some churches, however, may feel that full sponsorship is beyond their ability due to their size or limited resources. Churches in states or regions not approved by the U.S. Department of State for refugee resettlement also cannot participate in the sponsor program.

Such churches still have an avenue of ministry called the **Refugee Friends** program. Before we look at both programs, let us examine the process of refugee resettlement.

When a conflict erupts in violence and persecution, refugees usually flee to an adjacent country. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees begins registering and processing the refugees. Resettlement is not the first choice in this situation. The best thing that can happen is for the conflict to be resolved so the refugees can return home. Sometimes this does not happen and the decision is made to resettle refugees in a third country.

Once the U.S. Department of State completes criminal background checks and health inspections on the refugees who have been recommended for resettlement in the United States, they are assigned to a resettlement agency in the United States. The resettlement agency then finds an American sponsor for the refugees before they can leave the refugee camp and come to the United States.

For most refugees, the process of healing and moving forward after the trauma and loss of the refugee experience begins in earnest only after a sponsor is found and their new lives begin in their adopted home.

The single greatest need among refugee populations is the need for a sponsoring church.

Refugee Sponsors Program

The Southern Baptist Convention's refugee resettlement ministry is under the auspices of NAMB in partnership with a resettlement agency called Church World Service. NAMB and Church World Service share a deep commitment to the local church and believe that the healthiest resettlements occur when local churches serve as sponsors.

When sponsoring refugees, a church will work with NAMB and a local refugee resettlement affiliate. The affiliate is a local organization with which NAMB partners to assist Southern Baptist churches with the sponsorship. The affiliate will explain what is involved in a sponsorship and what is expected of a sponsoring church.

Sponsoring a refugee family does not mean taking permanent responsibility for the family. A church sponsor can usually expect a family to gain independence and self-sufficiency after about three months.

Refugee Friends Program

Churches can minister to refugees in several ways through this program.

- Join another church as cosponsors of a refugee family.

- Individuals or families may participate in a family-to-family program where an American family is teamed with a refugee family to offer friendship ministries.
- As *Refugee Friends*, your church members can provide funds through NAMB's Refugee Resettlement Account. One hundred percent of these funds go to assist refugees in North America with essentials like medical needs, housing, food, and clothing.

How Do We Plan a Refugee Resettlement Ministry?

1. **Determine what need you can fill.** You have already seen that with 14.1 million refugees worldwide, there is a need for church sponsors. To find out what refugee populations currently need sponsors and where they are being resettled, contact the Immigration Ministries office at NAMB.
2. **Seek God's guidance.** Prayerfully share your concerns with your pastor, church staff, missions leadership, and church family. Ask them to join you in seeking God's will about a possible response to the refugee crisis.
3. **Hold an awareness meeting.** Good information is crucial to laying the groundwork for your church's involvement. The Immigration Ministries office at NAMB can provide awareness and orientation materials as well as help you secure a speaker from your own community. The awareness meeting is the time when your church will meet the staff person from the local refugee resettlement affiliate. The affiliate staff person will explain many of the expectations and details of the process.
4. **Secure church approval.** Effective sponsorship calls for the support and involvement of many people, including the pastor and the church's missions leadership.

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

1. **Communicate your commitment.** After your church votes to become a sponsor, contact your local affiliate agency. They will provide a simple information form for you to complete. A list of local affiliate agencies is available at www.namb.net/evangelism/mev/ccm/refugee.asp.
2. **Organize.** After your church votes to sponsor a refugee family, it must enlist and train volunteers to help with the resettlement. A resettlement task force is one suggested organizational structure. Request information from your local affiliate.
3. **Receive your assignment.** The Immigration Ministries office at NAMB will work with your church and the local affiliate in securing and assigning a refugee family to your church.
4. **Follow up.** The local affiliate is available and willing to help as your ministry to your refugee family progresses.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

Free Resources from NAMB

On Mission with God Among Future Americans—an introduction and overview of the ministry of refugee resettlement

Opening Doors to Refugees: A Guide to Enlisting Southern Baptist Churches as Refugee Sponsors—a guide for missions leaders in interpreting the ministry of refugee resettlement and enlisting churches as sponsors

From Refugee to Friend—an overview of the responsibilities of a sponsoring church and a sponsorship time line

Interfaith Witness Belief Bulletins—A series of bulletins on major world religions with witnessing guidelines

Other Print Resources

World Refugee Survey—an annual report on the world refugee situation produced by the U.S. Committee for Refugees, a non-profit, Washington-based organization that defends the rights of all uprooted people

Refugees—periodicals in magazine format produced by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees focusing on the latest developments among refugee populations worldwide

Web Sites

- Immigration and Refugee Ministries: NAMB: www.namb.net/ccm/refugee.asp
- American Refugee Committee: www.archq.org
- Immigration and Refugee Services of America: www.irsa-uscr.org
- Refugees International: www.refintl.org
- Refugee Service Center: www.cal.org/rsc
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees: www.unhcr.ch
- U.S. Committee for Refugees: www.refugees.org
- U.S. Department of State: www.usinfo.state.gov/topical/global/refugees

How Do We Evaluate the Ministry?

After your refugee family has become self-sufficient, take time to evaluate the experience. Ask questions like:

- What positive impact did the experience have on the church family?
- What positive impact did the experience have on the refugee family?

- How many members of the refugee family prayed to receive Christ? Have they been assimilated into a New Testament church?
- What should have been done differently?
- How can we strengthen the refugee ministry?

Notes

¹ “Refugees,” *USAforUNHCR Information* [cited 19 September 2000]. Available from www.usaforunhcr.org/info.html.

² “Refugee and Asylum Seekers Worldwide,” *Worldwide Refugee Information* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Committee for Refugees, 2000 [cited 19 September 2000]). Available from www.refugees.org.

³ “Country Report: United States,” *Worldwide Refugee Information* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Committee for Refugees, 2000 [cited 19 September 2000]). Available from www.refugees.org.

His Heart-Hands
Our

His Heart-Hands
Our

Resort Hotels

A security guard was on duty when a hotel guest went into cardiac arrest. The guard, who had already called 911, performed CPR and brought the woman back to life. She sat up and talked for a few minutes, only to then die in his arms. The guard was devastated.

Marc Johnston, the Resort Ministries Director of the Greater Orlando Baptist Association, arrived on the scene about an hour later and began to counsel the guard who was troubled over whether he had done all he could to help the guest. He expressed concern over how he would react if such a thing happened again. Additionally, he felt bad because he did not know how to tell the dying guest about Jesus.

The security guard was a Christian but was living a long way from the Lord. He was out of church and living a lifestyle that was not pleasing to God. God used the incident to help him recommit his life to God. Johnston and the guard prayed together and discussed many issues he was dealing with from a spiritual perspective.

Resort ministry is about much more than fun and games, although it takes place in a leisure setting. It is about sharing Christ's comfort with people in need.

Who Needs a Resort Hotel Ministry?

Resort hotels are located at beaches, mountains, historic areas, theme parks, cities, or any other location where people spend three or more days. Resort hotels cater to guests visiting the area for leisure or for work-related conferences or conventions. Guests may bring families or be alone. While resort hotel guests are busy visiting local attractions or attending conferences, they also spend a significant amount of time at the hotel. Through resort ministry, Christians may see people won to Christ.

In addition to hotel guests, a resort hotel ministry can reach hotel employees and managers. Many hotels provide activities for families and businesspeople and are often pleased to have additional activities provided free for their guests. Interacting with management and staff provides additional avenues of ministry and witness.

There are many ways to carry out ministry in resort hotels. Here are just a few examples that have been found to be successful in reaching people.

Chaplaincy

Chaplains are on call for crisis ministry to employees and guests. Chaplains should be able to respond to emergencies and they should be knowledgeable about community referral agencies. The community needs assessment (see Chapter 6) is a good way to gather this information.

Worship Services

- Obtain permission and space for a nondenominational Christian worship service for Sunday morning. This may be held in a conference room, ballroom, group dining room, lobby, or around the pool.
- Assemble a team of up to eight people. If only a few come, there will still be enough workers. You will need greeters, musicians (organist, pianist or other), someone to put up a poster in the lobby and hand out programs, speaker, and two or three people to visit the lobby, pool, and restaurant to invite people to the service. You will need a team of people so volunteers can alternate Sundays. In that way, no one must dedicate every Sunday to the ministry.
- Prepare programs with a local flavor if possible. For example, in Hawaii use references to Hawaiian history as sermon illustrations. Make sure program material and all other ministry components reflect joy and a positive spirit.
- Emphasize the worship experience rather than a denomination, although it is permissible to tell which church sponsors the service. A good length for a service is 20 to 30 minutes and a good starting time is between 8:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.
- Take up an offering. People generally want to give.
- Use upbeat, familiar hymns from song sheets, hymnals, or chorus books. Play music at least 10 minutes before the service. People will hear the music and come in. You may use recorded or taped music before the services. There should be some kind of special music each week.
- Promote services at a local church and offer to provide transportation. Remain after the hotel service for conversation and witnessing.
- Follow up with letters or printed cards to each person attending. You can use the guest book or name tags to collect names.

Day Camp

You can reach children and parents through a day camp for ages 4 through 11 offered at the pool, beach, lawn, or other designated area. Several sources for day camp curriculum are available (see “What Sources of Help are Available?”). Obtain local volunteers, volunteers from the state convention, or volunteers from NAMB. Conduct the ministry at a time and day when most children will be available. In some locations, one day a week may be enough. Other ministries may require three to five days, or just weekends.

Parents Night Out

This ministry provides parents a chance to enjoy the area without their children, while it gives children an opportunity to meet and have fun. The hotel may provide space in its facilities or a nearby church could host the event. Activities similar to day camp programs can be conducted for two or three hours. A small fee may be charged to cover the cost of the ministry. Some leaders suggest that parents will not send their children unless there is a fee.

Coffeehouse

A coffeehouse located in or near the hotel area can effectively reach teens, families, or young adults. Musical entertainment and snacks draw the crowd. Coffeehouses have been conducted in hotel recreation rooms, pavilions, tents, pool areas, nearby restaurants, and church fellowship halls. Stand-up comedy, secular and gospel music, posters, Scripture portions, testimonies, drama, and personal conversations are all ways to present the gospel. A late-night Bible study or worship experience could conclude an evening. Maintain a referral service for runaways and people on drugs, for homeless people needing food and lodging, for unmarried pregnant women, and for other emergencies.

Lifeguard Ministry

Where there is a concentration of beach or hotel pool lifeguards, consider ministering to them. You could visit them on the job with a gift of cookies and strike up a conversation with them. Show them that you are interested in them as people. They might welcome being invited to a hamburger supper at a nearby church. Some may enjoy competing in games such as volleyball. Be sure to have a devotional or Bible study. Let one of the lifeguards be in charge if possible.

International Ministry

The number of international tourists and hotel workers in this country increases by the day. Inquire about English-as-a-second-language needs in area hotels. NAMB's Church and Community Ministries Evangelism Unit has extensive training and materials available. See MAP 7 for a detailed description of an English-as-a-second-language ministry.

If there is not a need for a class, you can minister to internationals in several other ways. Worship services or any of the other ministries described here can be offered in languages other than English. Having a local language pastor serve as a tour guide provides witnessing opportunities. So does providing transportation to worship services at local language churches.

How Do We Begin a Resort Hotel Ministry?

- Pray and ask others in the church to pray.
- Select a person, committee, or organization in the church to take a leadership role in this ministry.
- Survey hotel facilities in your area. Determine whether people stay longer than three days and if they spend leisure time at the hotel. Obtain a list of activities that the hotel provides.
- Determine what other activities could improve the quality of the guests' stay.
- Meet with the ministry team to brainstorm ideas that can meet the needs of hotel guests.
- Study resource material on conducting hotel ministries.

- Prioritize ministry ideas.
- Determine what personnel, material, and financial resources are needed to carry out the ideas. Given the needs and the resources, what ministry ideas are most attractive?
- Write a ministry proposal after you select your ministry project. Describe the project, time limits, and responsibilities of both the church and hotel.
- Make an appointment and visit the hotel manager at least three months before the project start date. Provide a written description of the proposed ministry and verbally share ideas with the manager. Listen to his or her ideas. Be flexible. The manager can provide valuable advice about what to do and what not to do.
- Recruit and train volunteers for the ministry project. This includes training in the specific work as well as personal witnessing training. Include the rules, expectations, and desired outcome of the ministry.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

English as a Second Language

English-as-a-second-language materials and training can be obtained through NAMB's Church and Community Ministries Evangelism Unit. Check out MAP 7 for more detailed information.

Day Camp

The following children's materials are available for day camp.

North American Mission Board

4200 North Point Pkwy.
Alpharetta, GA 30022-4176
(770) 410-6000 (main switchboard)
To order materials, call 1 800 448-8032.
www.namb.net

NAMB produces numerous resources for ministry with children, such as *Sharing God's Special Plan with Children*, *MissionKids*, and others. See Appendix A for more information on NAMB's resource materials for ministry with children.

Woman's Missionary Union

100 Missionary Ridge
P.O. Box 830010
Birmingham, AL 35283-0010
(205) 991-8100 (main switchboard)
www.wmu.org

Friends Club, available from WMU, is particularly suited for use with children (ISBN 1563092980). To find out more about this and other materials produced for children's ministry by WMU, check out www.wmustore.com.

LifeWay Christian Resources

127 Ninth Ave., N

Nashville, TN 37234

(615) 251-2000 (main switchboard)

To place a phone order, call 1 800 448-8032.

www.lifeway.com

*TeamKID, KidTrek, and Vacation Bible School materials produced by LifeWay Christian Resources are well suited for daytime or weeklong ministry with children. Visit a local LifeWay Christian Store or their Web site at *www.lifeway.com*.*

Resort Ministry Specialists

The following contacts are good resources:

Special Ministries Evangelism Unit of NAMB

4200 North Point Pkwy.

Alpharetta, GA 30022-4176

(770) 410-6354

www.namb.net

Association of Resort/Leisure Ministries (ARIM)

Eric Spivey, President

P.O. Box 1887

Ridgeland, SC 29936

(843) 726-8294

lcm@islc.net

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?**Publicity**

Good publicity is crucial, as many other activities will compete for the time and attention of guests. Always give time, date, place, and sponsor of the ministry. Always get permission from the manager ahead of time when distributing fliers, banners, newsletters, posters, or when making personal visits.

Implementation

Follow the plan you showed the manager. Remain flexible and open to any needed changes. Keep all promises and exude a positive, joyful attitude. Any time you bring materials such as tracts or craft supplies, clean up your area of ministry. It is vital to the hotel's success that the surroundings be kept pleasant, neat, and attractive. You are there at the will of hotel management, so do your part.

Follow Up

Follow up on professions of faith, recommitments, referrals to churches, and requests for more information. Write thank-you notes to everyone involved in the ministry, especially management, employees, and volunteers.

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?

Ask volunteers, hotel employees and managers, and guests for feedback. What did they enjoy? What could be added or done better? What should be avoided in the future? For record-keeping purposes and reports to the church, include the following information.

- Number of people served
- Number and type of activities conducted
- Number of professions of faith and recommitments

Respite Care

Her recent divorce forced Miriam back into the workplace to support her family. But the only available day care for Angela—her youngest daughter who had cerebral palsy—was a half-day arrangement. When the Women on Mission group at Miriam’s church learned of her problem, five mothers who did not work outside their homes each volunteered to care for Angela one afternoon a week. The women’s kindness was a blessing and a needed support for Miriam. It gave five families a chance to know and love her daughter and it provided Angela a new group of friends.

Who Needs Respite Care?

Many families and individuals have ongoing caregiving responsibilities for disabled, chronically ill, or infirm relatives. Often, these families do not have friends or extended family who can help. These families may need respite care in order to complete daily chores like shopping, to attend to illness and family emergencies, or just to take a break.

Although respite care is primarily for the caregiver, it is beneficial also to the disabled family member who may have few or no friends outside the immediate family.

Families caring for disabled members often feel isolated and lonely. In their isolation, they often feel that they have “a cross to bear.” Our task as Christians is to make that yoke lighter, to offer, as Jesus told us, “a cup of cold water,” or, as Simon of Cyrene showed us, to help bear the cross. Respite care makes a difference in people’s lives.

What Is a Respite Care Ministry?

Available respite care is usually limited, expensive, or provided by professionals whom the family does not know. Think of a respite care ministry as giving a sabbatical to caregivers. It is a period of relief for families and individuals done free of charge by people the family trusts. Think of it also as a way of expressing Christ’s care and love for the helpless and burdened.

The following is a list of ways to provide respite care.

- A Sunday School class or a special volunteer group could stay with a disabled person for an afternoon, evening, or day when the caregiver needs to be away. Church youth could be trained as sitters for children with special needs.
- Families can train volunteers to care for disabled people in their own homes, providing respite for the disabled persons and their caregivers. The disabled person may seldom get out of the house and visiting a volunteer’s home could be a refreshing treat.
- Consider the church activities in which normal families engage—mother’s morning out programs, recreational programs, Vacation Bible School, church camp. How could you include families needing respite care in those same activities?

- Plan a retreat with components of worship, Bible study, recreation, and rest time for families needing respite care. Either have volunteers stay with the disabled relative while the family attends the retreat, or provide a quality retreat experience for the disabled relative as well. Have plenty of volunteers on hand so that families can focus on the retreat rather than caregiving.
- Families may say they do not need sitters, but may admit that their loved ones need companionship in the church. Form a volunteer group whose members will befriend the disabled family member.
- Have a parents' night out for families with disabled children. Volunteers trained to care for children with disabilities could keep children at the church for three hours (say 6 to 9 p.m.) while parents take a break. Children could watch movies, eat snacks, sing, do crafts, or play games designed with their abilities and disabilities in mind.

How Do We Plan a Respite Care Ministry?

As seen from the list above, respite care can take many forms. The ministry is most effective, however, when the needs of the recipient families are considered and the ministry is within the bounds of a congregation's capabilities. Reflect upon your church membership. Gather the following information. From this data develop a list of families who are interested in receiving respite care.

- Are there members who are caring for disabled or infirm family members in their homes?
- How can the church enable them to become more involved?
- Who takes care of the disabled family members when the caregiver needs to be away?
- Would they be interested in allowing people from the church to provide periodic respite care for their loved ones?

Be aware that many families caring for disabled or elderly family members may be as shut in as their disabled loved ones. They may not have attended church for several years. A respite care ministry is an excellent way to reach community residents who do not attend church. Church members who have similar problems may know other families needing respite care. Also, contact church members employed by agencies that serve families caring for disabled members, such as home health care agencies. Your ministry will be shaped by the needs you have determined, the programs already in existence at your church, and the human resources available. (Funding may be necessary for certain types of respite care expenses, such as salary for a day care or retreat coordinator. Tell church members of the funding need.)

Trust is a key ingredient in respite care ministry. Trust must be earned so that a family feels comfortable letting someone care for their loved one. Trust is earned by discussing and designing the ministry with them, not just offering it to them. It is important for families and respite caregivers to have clear expectations and for limits to be recognized.

Volunteers

Committed, well-trained volunteers are the most important resource for a respite care ministry. For volunteers, consider a Sunday School class, the youth group, and missions organizations. Many people want to help families who need respite care, but are scared because of their lack of experience in caring for a disabled or infirm person. Take those anxieties and fears seriously. The best way to address these is to provide thorough volunteer training. Families will want to know what kind of training volunteers have had and may be willing to serve as trainers. Church members who are health care professionals, special education teachers, and others with skills in these areas can also help train.

Training, relationships with the families, and gradually increased periods of caregiving help build confidence and competence.

Making Contact

It may be helpful to assign one volunteer, or a small group, to be the primary contact(s). The designated person or group can serve as a liaison between the family and the church, asking the family what their needs are and communicating these back to the church. Primary caregivers are often reluctant to ask for assistance or they become tired of asking. A good respite care ministry will alleviate that burden and enable the family to see that respite is normal and necessary.

Networking

Your congregation can join others engaged in respite care ministries. An association could sponsor respite care weekends at a church camp. Turn an unused parsonage into an associationwide respite home to provide daytime or overnight care. Or, offer use of the home to community agencies providing respite care service.

Know emergency information—who can be reached and how—if an emergency occurs. Family friends, professionals in your church, or community agencies can serve as an emergency network. This network would be used in cases when the respite caregiver is with the disabled person, but could also be of help when the family experiences a crisis.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

Publications

Publications that address church-based respite care are:

- Dean A. Preheim-Bartel and Aldred H. Neufeldt. *Supportive Care in the Congregation* (Goshen, Ind.: Mennonite Disability Services). Available from Mennonite Mutual Aid, Advocacy and Educational Resources, P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527, 1 800 348-7468, www.mma-online.org.
- Bill Van Dyken, “Respite Care and the Religious Community,” *Exceptional Parent Magazine*, July 1995, 25:7, 41-43. Available from Exceptional Parent Magazine, 555 Kinderkamack Rd., Oradel, NJ 07649-7368, 1 800 372-7368, www.eparent.com.

Organizations

Organizations that offer information on respite care are:

- Disabilities Awareness, Church and Community Ministries Evangelism Unit, North American Mission Board, 4200 North Point Pkwy., Alpharetta, GA 30022-4176, (770) 410-6348, www.namb.net/evangelism/mev/ccm.
- Discipleship and Family Development Division, LifeWay Christian Resources, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, TN 37234.
- ARCH National Resource Center for Respite and Crisis Care: Chapel Hill Training Outreach Project, 800 Eastowne Dr., Suite 105, Chapel Hill, NC 27514-2204, 1 888 473-1727, (919) 490-5577, fax (919) 490-4905, www.chtop.com.
- For congregations interested in cooperative community efforts in respite care, contact the National Federation of Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers, One W. Armour Blvd., Suite 202, Kansas City, MO 64111, (816) 931-5442, www.nfivc.org. Grant monies are sometimes available through a Faith in Action project to start interfaith caregiving projects in communities.
- Texas Respite Resources Network, P.O. Box 7330, 519 W. Houston St., San Antonio, TX 78207-3198, (210) 704-2794, fax (210) 704-2797, www.texasrespite.org, offers planning resources, models, and a bibliography of respite care training resources.
- American Association for Retired Persons, 601 E St., NW, Washington, DC 20049, 1 800 424-3410, www.aarp.org offers materials for people caring for elderly people.
- National Council on the Aging, 409 Third St., NW, Washington, DC 20024, (202) 479-1200, www.ncoa.org, offers materials for people caring for elderly people.

Local Agencies and Support Groups

Community-based agencies and support groups that work with disabled or infirm members can help with your church's research, program design, training, and implementation. Most of these agencies will gladly assist your congregation in beginning a ministry.

Respite care agencies may also provide assistance in beginning your ministry.

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

Now that you have determined the needs, planned the ministry, trained volunteers, and collected resources, it is time to begin. Contact the families in your church who indicated an interest in receiving respite care. Identify when the care is needed. Pair caregivers with families and encourage them to arrange a time of respite caregiving. Your commitment to make the ministry happen, to earn trust, and to form relationships will be a tremendous gift to caregivers. Through your care, they will see that the church cares and that God cares.

From the start, reassure families and volunteers that their questions and suggestions are always welcome. Gather volunteers to support each other, to share what they are learning, and to ask questions. During these meetings, volunteers can learn more about the particular disabilities or chronic conditions of the people for whom they care. They can explore the spiritual and biblical dimensions of their service, and they can pray together. Include time for reflection and renewal. Respite caregivers, like primary caregivers, may have to deal with profound questions and feelings about faith, hope, and love.

Provide opportunities for respite caregivers, primary caregivers, and the recipients to meet and celebrate the relationships that have evolved from the ministry. Holiday parties, summer picnics, or retreats can provide valuable times for evaluation, renewal, and celebration.

How Do We Evaluate the Ministry?

Evaluation is important to ensure your ministry is current and effective. Evaluation should take place at least once a year. Some things you might want to consider are listed below.

1. Have an annual appreciation event for volunteers serving in your ministry. As part of the invitation, include an evaluation form to be returned at the event or to be submitted prior to the event. Let them know you really want their input because they are the ones on the front lines in this ministry. Some things you might want to consider asking are:
 - a. Do you feel you have enough training to carry out this ministry? What kinds of training would you like to receive?
 - b. What problems are you facing for which you would like help?
 - c. Do you have the resources you need to carry out this ministry? If not, what resources do you need?
 - d. What suggestions do you have for improving this ministry?
2. Send a letter to each of your clients thanking them for the opportunity of serving them. Ask them if they have any suggestions about ways the ministry could be improved. Alternatively, you might want to ask your volunteers to ask these questions of their clients and then report back to you.
3. How many professions of faith have resulted from this ministry during the year? If the number is low, what could you do to make this ministry intentionally more evangelistic?



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 - b. What problems are you facing for which you would like help?
 - c. Do you have the resources you need to carry out this ministry? If not, what resources do you need?
 - d. What suggestions do you have for improving this ministry?

2. Send a letter to each of your clients thanking them for the opportunity of serving them. Ask them if they have any suggestions about ways the ministry could be improved. Alternatively, you might want to ask your volunteers to ask these questions of their clients and then report back to you.

3. How many professions of faith have resulted from this ministry during the year? If the number is low, what could you do to make this ministry intentionally more evangelistic?

Seafarers

After reading the New Testament for the first time, Doo, a young mariner from China, had some questions for Yun Yong, the minister to seafarers who had given Doo the Scriptures the previous day. As Yong answered the questions, he shared his own spiritual journey with Doo.

“Many young people in China have no faith. Their faith is like a plain piece of white paper,” Yong told Doo as they talked about faith in Jesus Christ. Toward the end of the conversation Yong added, “This paper of mine has been printed with the wonderful name of Jesus.” The two prayed together, thanking God as Doo prayed to receive Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. Doo is now determined to carry the good news of Jesus Christ to his family, friends, and others in China.

Who Needs Seafarer/Port Ministry?

A multifaceted ministry is needed to provide for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the many seafarers who are often at sea for months at a time, away from families and friends.

Some seafarers come from a strong seafaring tradition. Others are young curiosity seekers who will put up with dirty, tedious work for a short time just for the experience, then they will go on to better jobs. Many seafarers are Asian, Russian, and Hispanic youth who have taken jobs on flag-of-convenience ships. These are ships registered in a country that allows owners to take advantage of lower taxes and nonexistent or unenforced labor laws. While the pay on such ships is low, it offers a job, which may be more than the young person could find back home.

Regardless of the person or the reason for sailing, seafarers’ needs are basically the same. Seafarers live in a world where almost everyone tries to take advantage of them, a fact that makes them tend to be wary of strangers offering something for nothing. They are usually alien to the cultures, languages, and people of the ports where they dock. They are delighted to see a genuinely friendly face and find someone who can help them. Seafarers need to shop, write letters, enjoy recreation, and phone worried families. They need wholesome reading materials. Some need medical attention. They need to relax in a safe environment and make friends. Some may need counseling because of stressful conditions onboard ship. Many need legal and/or human rights assistance. More than anything, they need a solid worship experience and perhaps spiritual guidance. They need Christ as the anchor for their souls.

What Is a Seafarer/Port Ministry?

To understand port ministry, you must first understand the setting. Each port is different. Some are open; some are secured. In some ports, the docks are clustered; in others, the docks are scattered over several miles. Some ports cater to container ships, car carriers, and general cargo ships that are in port just a few hours, and some cater to bulk carriers that are in port several days. Others cater to cruise ships with hundreds of crew members. The most appropriate ministry should reach those crew members in port for just a few hours, as well as those who are ashore several days. With that in mind, here are some examples of effective ministry activities.

Friendship Evangelism

The best way to share Christ with seafarers is, first of all, to show them genuine friendship. Be interested in the young Filipino or the man from Peru or Croatia as a person. This is scriptural evangelism. Jesus cared for people. He was concerned about their problems, interested in their activities, excited about their joys, and brokenhearted over their lostness. Jesus talked to people about the things that interested them, and with love and compassion, won them to Himself at the appropriate time. Volunteers who work with seafarers befriend them and, at the proper time, share Christ with them. In many instances, they are able to win the seafarers to the Savior. No one is embarrassed; no one feels harassed; but Christ is honored and someone enters the kingdom of God.

Scripture Distribution

A Scripture distribution program should be well-organized and attractively presented. The seafarers should be drawn to it and made curious by it. Be sure to have materials available in the languages represented in your port. This is very important. Do not put out Russian Bibles if there are no Russian seafarers. Your goal should be to give every seafarer who comes in contact with you at least a portion of Scripture in his or her own language. This shows personal interest in the people you serve.

Good News Kits

A good news kit consists of three or four small items in a sealable sandwich bag—a disposable razor, a small bar of soap, a toothbrush, toothpaste, and a gospel tract (in seafarer's language if at all possible). Kits are easy to prepare and these provide an effective witnessing tool in addition to meeting the needs of the seafarers.

About 25 kits per ship will be needed to provide an evangelistic gift kit for each person on board. The kits will provide seafarers with something useful and gospel tracts that you can either read with them or encourage them to read on their own as the Holy Spirit leads.

Christmas Projects

At Christmas, choirs can present cantatas and other special programs for seafarers. Workers can invite seafarers into their homes and churches. This can be a rewarding form of evangelism. Keep an active file of hospitality families willing to have seafarers in their homes at Christmas or other seasons. Christmas visits usually include visiting the families' churches for Christmas programs.

Many port ministries send letters to the churches represented, asking that they fill shoe boxes with practical items such as shaving gear, socks, handkerchiefs, writing pads, ballpoint pens, deodorant, combs, toothbrushes, and toothpaste in October. They are asked to Christmas-wrap the boxes and get these to the port ministry by a specified date (usually around November 15) when Christmas distribution begins.

This Christmas project accomplishes two important things. First, it provides a Christmas celebration for seafarers, whose average age is 23, many of whom are from less-developed countries and have never been away from home before. Often frightened and lonely, they could spend Christmas

in the middle of the ocean without any kind of holiday celebration unless caring people provide them with something. Some seafarers have said they have never received gifts of any kind.

Second, handled properly, a Christmas gift can become a powerful evangelistic tool. Churches are encouraged to include New Testaments and gospel tracts in the packages. Many seafarers have been won to Christ on Christmas Day when they opened their gifts and read the material explaining the real meaning of Christmas.

Evangelistic Worship

It is easier to get seafarers to worship if there is an attractive, appealing center for worship. Worship service attendance should be voluntary. Brevity is essential. Seafarers have many things on their minds, they are tired, and their attention spans are short. A 30-minute service is very effective.

In the worship service, present Christ as effectively as possible. Lift Him up. Inspire the seafarers to want a relationship with God. As the Holy Spirit leads, point out their lostness and their need for the Savior. After the service, invite the seafarers for personal conversation about their spiritual needs and share follow-up materials with them.

Often, it is useful to have a bilingual service in English and Spanish or in English and one of the Asian languages, using the talents of volunteers from language churches in your area. Seafarers like to sing in English as well as in their own languages.

If you cannot have a bilingual worship service, arrange transportation to language churches for worship in the seafarer's language. Many language pastors may be willing to conduct special services for seafarers on their ships or at a ministry center. Linking seafarers with language congregations is a valuable way to witness to seafarers who do not know Jesus. This also helps Christian seafarers have fellowship with other believers.

Bible Studies

Sometimes, Scripture distribution may lead to an impromptu Bible study. At other times, a visitor may be able to provide materials for ongoing shipboard Bible studies. The Word of God can communicate the divine truth quickly and powerfully during these studies.

Home Hospitality

Seafarers are often away from their families for months at a time. They enjoy getting together with other families and being around children. A home visit is a special treat.

Counseling

Living aboard a ship for long periods of time can cause unusual stress. A call from home may bring bad news. Seafarers may be mistreated by ship management. Counseling requires delicate, sensitive, gentle, and capable handling. Some types of counseling require specialized training. While a listening heart is always welcome, a counselor should know his or her limitations and make referrals as needed.

Transportation, Shopping, and Tours

With little or no access to public transportation, seafarers have limited mobility. They may need to run errands, go shopping, or go sightseeing. Any help given to transport them is needed and appreciated.

International Telephone Calls

One of the first things a seafarer usually wants to do is call home. You should offer them a safe, convenient place to make phone calls at a reasonable cost. The news on the other end, good or bad, is an additional opportunity to minister.

Medical Assistance

When seafarers are sick away from home, they face the ultimate loneliness. Usually, their shipping agents attend to their hospitalization or outpatient care; however, they still need a friendly face. This is a wonderful opportunity to reach out to seafarers and show them you care about their physical condition as well as their spiritual condition.

Tape Ministry

The tape ministry has been an effective tool for reaching seafarers. Since many seafarers do not speak English, both audiocassettes and videotapes in their own languages can help.

Physical Needs

- Shopping for personal and family needs
- Clothing (such as a clothes closet ministry)
- Wholesome reading material
- Film processing, mail service, currency exchange
- Help with shipboard problems
- Asylum requests or reporting of human rights violations

Recreation

Activities like hunting, fishing, concerts, and sporting events minister to the physical and social needs of seafarers. Impromptu outdoor games like soccer are especially popular.

Interfaith Witness

- Evangelism among seafarers is never easy. The greatest problem is dealing with so many religious groups. People representing the major religions of the world arrive in U.S. ports daily. It is best to know the basic facts of the religion of the person to whom a witness is made.
- Share your personal testimony. Many times the length of your witness naturally depends on the way the seafarer responds. The Holy Spirit will lead in the presentation

to plant a seed or attempt to harvest. Be kind and patient.

- Invite seafarers to church. Often, they will accept the invitation out of curiosity. They may ask lots of questions. Be ready with Bibles and other materials in their language.
- In every type of evangelism, do the work with the right tools and with dignity, and leave the results to God.

How Do We Plan a Seafarer/Port Ministry?

1. **Pray.** Some Christians are afraid of being around ports and the people who work in ports because it is seen as a “rough” environment. But it is in the hard, lonely places of the world that you find so many people who need the Lord. Pray for the ministry planning, potential volunteers, cooperating churches, port authorities, and seafarers. Seek God’s direction.
2. **Learn the area and the people.** You must know which areas are off-limits to visitors and respect those boundaries. Learn where to get clearance, what kind of clearances are needed, where to park, when a ship can be boarded, and when it can’t. Some ports may only allow one person—recognized as a minister—to visit ships. An updated set of rules from the port administration is helpful. Network with shipping agents, port authorities, lawyers specializing in maritime law, and translators to find out how you can best minister to seafarers.
3. **Decide the scope of ministry.** Will your ministry be visiting ships or operating a ministry center? Will you have full-time paid staff, part-time paid staff, or all volunteers? Who will be the ministry director? (Whether paid or volunteer, a ministry director is essential.) Will you work with other churches or ministry groups? Will your ministry be only to seafarers or include the longshoremen, truckers, port police, and shipping employees who work at the port?
4. **Develop cross-cultural skills.** Most seafarers speak at least some English. Some seafarers can translate for shipmates. It is better, however, to speak simple English carefully and avoid slang, idioms, and churchy language. (For example, do not ask a seafarer if he or she is “washed in the blood of the Lamb,” as he or she will probably think you are talking about the blood of a physical lamb and wonder why you would ask such a question.) Repetition is often helpful. Nonverbal communication is very important, as is understanding cultural differences. Do not convey the idea that you are culturally superior. Remember that you are acting as an ambassador for Christ, not a country or political system.
5. **Learn to witness.** Every ministry to seafarers should include a statement of purpose clearly declaring that it exists to meet spiritual needs. Much of your witness will be planting seeds with nonbelievers; do not underestimate the importance of this. Some seafarers come from countries where there is little or no Christian witness. Some are from countries where being a Christian carries a high price. These seafarers are a world mission field at your door. You should also plan to offer fellowship and support to Christian seafarers. By embracing international Christians and making them a part of your church when they come to port, you testify to the inclusiveness and bigness of

God's family and the unity of the body of Christ. You encourage your fellow believers and show unchurched seafarers that Christianity is not just for Americans, but for anyone.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

NAMB has a variety of materials available for evangelism and on interfaith witness and understanding world religions (see Appendix A).

Organizations

North American Mission Board, SBC

Special Ministries Evangelism Unit

4200 North Point Pkwy.

Alpharetta, GA 30022-4176

www.namb.net/root/evangelism/dev/specmin/seafarer.asp

Port Ministries International

(Southern Baptist Fellowship)

Current President: Bob Loy

c/o Jacksonville Port Ministries

2700 University Blvd., S

Jacksonville, FL 32216-2557

(904) 727-6800

Fax (904) 727-6070 or 751-4294

www.portministry.org

An ecumenical organization to promote maritime ministry and provide information on training, grants, and so forth, is:

North American Maritime Ministry Association

237 Thompson St.

New York, NY 10012

(212) 533-6945

Fax (212) 533-6973

www.maritimeministry.org

A worldwide resource for legal research, education, advocacy, and assistance on seafarers' rights issues is:

Center for Seafarer Rights
Seamen's Church Institute
241 Water St.
New York, NY 10038
(212) 349-9090
www.seamenschurch.org/csr

Statistical information and analysis on seafarers is available from:

United States Department of Justice
Immigration and Naturalization Service
Statistics Branch
425 I St., NW, Room 4034
Washington, DC 20536
www.ins.usdoj.gov

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

Ship Visitation

Remember that with tight schedules and brief contacts, it is important to visit seafarers on their ships. Secure permission from the port authorities and from dock security, if required. Also, ask permission of the captain or the ranking officer. Visits at break times are especially welcome. Visits provide an opportunity to take magazines, Scriptures, and tapes aboard. Many times, seafarers will invite a ship visitor for lunch, tea, or coffee. This gives opportunities to minister to their needs and often to share the gospel with them.

Port Authority Handbook

If the port authority produces a handbook or other publication listing services available to the shipping industry, ask if your ministry may be listed.

Follow Up

Follow up on contacts through letters, phone calls, and newsletters. Referrals for ministry to the seafarers in their home countries can be made through the International Mission Board.

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?

- How many churches are involved in the ministry?
- How many seafarers have been reached?
- Of those, how many have made professions of faith? Been baptized?
- Do most crews want us to return?
- What is our relationship with the port authorities? How could it be made better?
- What further resources and training do we need?

Special Events, Fairs, and Festivals

In a desire to minister to people attending a sports event, a woman in Indianapolis dressed up as a clown and distributed Bibles on the streets during the event. Later, she got a job in the recreation room of an apartment complex. One evening a young man came in looking for her. He said he had heard that she was a Christian and he wanted to talk to her about God. He had brought a Bible with him, and after she shared the gospel with him, the young man prayed to receive Christ. When she asked him where he had gotten his Bible, he said he received it from a clown who was giving away Bibles downtown one day. She was that clown! She helped reap the harvest of seeds planted during a special events ministry.

Who Needs Special Events Ministry?

Any event that brings people together for entertainment, education, competition, enjoyment, or leisure can be a potential focus for special events ministry. Some events that fall in this category are:

- Parades
- Rodeos
- Carnivals
- State and county fairs
- Arts/crafts expositions
- Sports events
- Flea markets
- Historical reenactments
- Festivals—seasonal, ethnic, food, historical
- Trade shows
- Pioneer days
- Agricultural expositions

All of these special events have something in common: large numbers of people. These people have physical and social needs. By meeting those needs, you earn the opportunity to meet spiritual needs.

What Is a Special Events Ministry?

Special events ministry is a wonderful opportunity for the church to break out of its four walls and go to the heart of the community with ministry and witness. It is also a way for Christians to disprove the stereotype that church people are somehow against having fun!

Your specific ministry will depend on the particular event, but provided below is a partial list of ministry projects.

- Free water booth (make sure it does not compete with vendors in the immediate area)
- Diaper-changing and baby-feeding stations
- Information booth with maps, literature, Scripture portions, Bibles
- First aid/sunburn station
- Care packages for booth vendors—cookies, candy, snacks
- Health stop—blood pressure, cholesterol, and glucose checks
- Chaplains to provide counseling in spiritual matters and crises such as accidents, death, drug addiction
- Interpreters for deaf
- Interpreters for language groups
- Traveler's Aid
- Children's activities like face painting, games, Bibles storytelling, balloon animals
- Day care or day camp for children
- Creative arts presentations like clowns, puppets, mimes, singers, handbell choirs
- Street witnessing and tract distribution
- Free parking attendants and clean-up crews

In addition to the event itself, the hotels and campgrounds around the event offer ministry opportunities. See MAP 3 for ideas on campground ministry and MAP 19 for resort hotel ministry guidelines.

How Do We Plan a Special Events Ministry?

1. **Select a team.** You will need several people to help with this ministry.
2. **Understand the setting.** You must attend the event or one like it to understand the dynamics. For events that happen only once a year, that means doing long-range planning by gathering details a year ahead of your ministry date. Or, you could attend a similar event to gather the same type of data. For example, if a traveling rodeo is scheduled for your town, you may want to go to that rodeo when it's in a neighboring town to see what it is like. Either way, you should go with the following agenda:

- Experience the event as a participant.
 - Be aware of needs and unmet services.
 - Take notes on what you see.
 - Put on your “ministry eyes” to see opportunities.
 - Find out who else is attending—visitors, exhibitors, managers, vendors, promoters, security, and so forth. Notice age, marital status, ethnicity, religious orientation, and other factors.
 - Why did people come?
 - How does the event meet their needs?
 - How can we best share the gospel message at this event?
3. **Identify needs.** If you use the community needs assessment in Chapter 6, you will want to include visits to the Chamber of Commerce, business associations, service clubs, tourist bureau, and local government. Also, interview service and law enforcement personnel, medical and mental health workers, and people with agencies related to the event.

Do not forget to talk with church members who attend or work at special events. What are their perceptions and experiences?

Consider the needs of people attending the event. Affluent people may not admit they have needs, but would acknowledge that they have aspirations.

4. **Decide your purpose.** You may find writing a ministry proposal or mission statement useful in guiding your ministry efforts. Your proposal should include the reason for the ministry, your vision, intention, and inclusion (the scope of activities).
5. **Envision the ministry.** What do you want to do? Dream of what the ministry could be if you had no limits. What could you do to meet people’s needs? From that dream, streamline your ideas to what you believe you can do. Remember that you can start small and build as the ministry grows.
6. **Identify resources.** What will you need in the way of volunteers, food and drink, Scripture portions, speaker systems, art and crafts supplies, and other materials? What sources do you have for these resources?
7. **Obtain agreements.** Show your proposal to those in charge of the event. Obtain agreements and permissions from them.
8. **Recruit and train volunteers.** Include personal witnessing training, ministry training, familiarity with rules set by event organizers. If necessary, plan on providing transportation, food, and lodging for volunteers. One very important point in recruiting volunteers: people need to know they are volunteering to serve in a ministry. If they will be given time off to enjoy the event as spectators, tell them that. If not, make that clear also. In a diplomatic way, make sure people understand that volunteering is not simply a way to get into an event for free. Tell volunteers of any expenses for which they will be responsible.

- 9. Work out logistics.** Parking is usually at a premium at special events. Will volunteers carpool or ride in a church van? If so, what time will they leave? Will food be prepared or should they bring sack lunches or money to buy their own food? Will volunteers wear T-shirts or name tags to identify them as part of the ministry?
- 10. Decide how to fund the project.** First check with your church and association for ministry funds. Financial support may also be raised through fund-raising projects, or a sponsoring organization.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

Volunteers will be your biggest resource. Start with individuals and groups in your church and association. Also check with your state Baptist convention office. NAMB can provide both short and long-term volunteers upon request.

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

- 1. Depend on prayer.** Ask people to pray for volunteers as they minister and to pray for visitors at the event to be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- 2. Be sensitive.** Care about people's needs. Use gentle evangelism approaches and avoid the use of "churchy" language—you are working in a secular environment. Respect people's religious and ethnic identities. Do not get into arguments about cultural habits and traditions. Remember that Christ died for everyone and wants everyone to know of His saving love—that is what you are communicating.
- 3. Have quality programming.** Offer your very best efforts.
- 4. Communicate with volunteers.** Do not just turn volunteers loose and wish them well. Have supervisors in place to help check on volunteers. Rotate people if necessary so volunteers can rest.
- 5. Develop a referral system.** Most people attending special events live within surrounding areas, but others live in far parts of the state, out of state, or even in other countries. Use the following referral approach.
 - For local people, provide at least two names of local pastors/churches in the area. Send pastors/churches the names of prospects along with a response card. If pastors do not return the card indicating they will follow up on the referral, send the prospects' names to two other pastors and follow the same pattern.
 - For people outside your area/state, provide them the names of Baptist associational missionaries in their area (this will require some preparation in gathering names). Use the same pattern as above, sending the names to the missionary and asking that they be forwarded to area pastors for follow up. Also use response cards with the associational missionaries to ensure that someone will follow up with the prospect.
 - For people living outside the United States, give the address of the International Mission Board. Send the International Mission Board the names of prospects for them

to forward to missionaries living in the prospects' area. If feasible, send a letter to the missionary to see if contact has been made. Again, use a response card. If no contact is made, ask that the process be begun again with another missionary.

6. Keep good records. Besides compiling a log of witnessing encounters, professions of faith, and referrals, keep an accurate account of monies spent. Keep lists of all contacts made, as well as agencies and organizations with whom you networked. These records will be invaluable during the evaluation and planning of next year's ministry project.

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?

During the event, evaluate the ministry on an ongoing basis. This is a short-term ministry opportunity and any problems should be dealt with quickly. Anything that works well should be shared with other volunteers.

After the event, have a final evaluation with all ministry volunteers and leaders. Address these questions:

- Did we accomplish our ministry purpose?
- Did we meet our goals and objectives?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the ministry?
- What improvements could be made?
- How can we better train and use volunteers next time?
- How many times was the gospel shared with people?
- How many professions of faith were made?

Both written and oral evaluations will be helpful.

His Heart-
Our Hands

His Heart-
Our Hands

Substance Abuse

Ivan has been on the streets since the 1960s. He is an alcoholic and a military veteran who served this country in an overseas war. The many treatment programs he has tried have not helped him so far. Recently, Ivan went to jail. While there, his son, whom he had not seen since infancy, found him. Ivan met him, his daughter-in-law, and his grandchild. His son and daughter-in-law want to take Ivan home with them so they can take care of him, but Ivan refuses to go. Who will help the Ivans of this world?

Who Are Substance Abusers?

Not all substance abusers are like Ivan. Alcoholism and drug addiction strike indiscriminately, regardless of education, income, race, religion, or ethnic background. No one is immune, though some cultural values and practices can affect the percentage of a certain ethnic group which chooses to abuse alcohol and other drugs. “An estimated 14.8 million Americans were current users of illicit drugs in 1999. . . . The rates of current illicit drug use for major racial/ethnic groups were 6.6 percent for whites, 6.8 percent for Hispanics, and 7.7 percent for blacks. The rate was highest among the American Indian/Alaska native population (10.6 percent) and among persons reporting multiple race (11.2 percent). Asians had the lowest rate (3.2 percent).”¹

Most addicts and abusers manage to maintain a fairly normal image in society by holding jobs, living in families, going to church, and being involved in other normal activities. Once hidden, recent media coverage has greatly raised awareness of substance abuse in society.

Yet in spite of the widespread problem and all the media attention it has garnered, substance abuse is still an invisible issue to many Christians who would have trouble naming two or three people they know (or even know of) with some form of addiction. This is because addicted people try to keep their problem a secret. Without specific training, a person may not recognize that frequent absenteeism, chronic lateness, decreasing job performance, and other signs point to possible substance abuse. Also, people have a natural psychological defense mechanism called denial. We trick ourselves into not seeing the signs of abuse and addiction around us.

Abusers do not live in a vacuum. Their families are also affected by substance abuse. This includes not only families of addicts (like Ivan’s), but children of alcoholics (including adult children still affected by the trauma of having lived with an alcoholic parent), families victimized by crime and accidents involving drug use, and people who relate to students, coworkers, and fellow church members with addictions.

What Is Substance Abuse Ministry?

Substance abuse ministry can take many forms, but all ministries should be based on compassionate understanding. People with unresolved personal issues about drug addictions, alcohol addictions, and addicted people would do well to find some other type of ministry outlet. Before attempting to plunge in to help the addicted, it would be wise for a church and its members to take stock of their own spiritual health and ask God to help them grow in grace and compassion.

Prevention Education

The problem of substance abuse will never be corrected just by treating its victims. Prevention is the long-term solution and churches are an ideal institution to do effective education. It is not enough to expect schools to do all prevention education in this area. Just by teaching and living by the principles of the Bible and offering wholesome social activities, churches are making tremendous contributions to preventing substance abuse and other social problems. However, more must be done.

There are pros and cons to a prevention program. Churches who want to do prevention education can choose to do it themselves or may invite experts in the field to the church. A team leadership approach might give you the best of both worlds: church leaders could work together with one or more outside experts.

Therapeutic Community

A loving, forgiving church that lives and teaches New Testament principles can be the most healing force an addict can experience. Pastor, staff, deacons, and Sunday School teachers must take responsibility for developing the church into the kind of fellowship that attracts prodigal sons and daughters because of the healing they find there.

This kind of community can be developed in the following ways.

- Teach and preach regularly about the kind of love and forgiveness Jesus offered to the worst of sinners. Clearly show how angry Jesus got with the religious people of His day who rejected and condemned sinners instead of trying to help them.
- Encourage people who have struggled with addiction (their own or a loved one's) to share publicly their testimony of how God is overcoming those problems.
- Have leaders personally model Christian attitudes and ministry with addicted people. Give public recognition to anyone involved in this ministry.

Spiritual Support Groups

Individual counseling is rarely enough for addicted people. For additional help, develop a spiritual support group for addicts, as well as groups for spouses and children of addicts. The group provides spiritual and social support through Christian fellowship.

- Choose a time and place for group meetings. A small, private room with comfortable furniture is ideal. A weekly meeting of 60 to 90 minutes is best.
- Plan the format for the group with the assistance of several recovering substance abusers who are interested in participating. Include prayer, Bible study, and open discussion.
- Choose your group leader carefully. The leader should be friendly, nonjudgmental, and have solid Bible knowledge. The leader should consider himself or herself the equal of group members, not a superior. Before leading the group, the leader should engage in personal spiritual growth, as well as studying small group dynamics and spiritual issues of concern to recovering substance abusers (guilt, self-esteem, hope, self control).
- Publicize the first meeting by word of mouth. Encourage attenders to invite others.

Partners in Recovery

Most addicts have other substance abusers as friends. After a treatment program, they are faced with the difficult task of building a new network of friends who will encourage and support their sobriety. Since so much of their past life has revolved around drugs and/or alcohol, they will be awkward, withdrawn, and artificially cheerful. They may make embarrassing social mistakes. They may need someone to offer to accompany them to recovery group meetings like Alcoholics Anonymous. Loving, faithful friends can help see them through this painful time.

Families of recovering addicts also have needs. They frequently think no one else can really understand what it is like to live with a substance abuser. They may resent the attention the recovering addict gets. Good friends are a necessary bridge to sanity, health, and spiritual rebirth for recovering addicts and their families.

The church can be a partner in recovery by praying for people with abuse problems. Encouraging calls, notes, and visits help. Teaching, reinforcing, and modeling life truths that lead to recovery help the person stay on track and encourage spiritual growth.

The church can also provide wholesome social activities. Rather than just inviting the recovering addict to attend, ask the person to help with these activities.

Reaching the Community

Church buildings make many addicts so uncomfortable that they will not enter one. Going out in Christ's name to minister and witness opens more opportunities than in-church events. People reached this way can be introduced to Christ and His church by the Christians they have learned to trust.

For example, church members who attend Al-Anon to learn how to cope with an alcoholic family member could decide to start ministering for Christ in that group. After one year of regular attendance, Al-Anon members are eligible to lead Al-Anon groups, sponsor new members, and lead Alateen groups.

Christians can learn the signs that point to substance abuse and be sensitive to it in their workplace. This takes tact, skill, and persistence. Some large companies offer employees training to become peer counselors for fellow employees with abuse problems.

Besides working directly with groups associated with substance abusers, Christians can be salt and light in the community through volunteering in other community programs. A Christian could be a Big Brother or Big Sister to a teenager abusing alcohol or drugs. Tutors are needed for students who are failing; many such students also have addiction problems.

Your community needs assessment (see Chapter 6) can give you more ideas.

How Do We Plan a Substance Abuse Ministry?

A ministry can begin with one dedicated person, although the pastor's support is vital. As that person's enthusiasm spreads, other people may feel God calling them to work in this ministry. Church groups like the On Mission Team, men's ministries, deacons, Sunday School classes, or WMU could be involved. Whatever shape your substance abuse ministry takes, involve the pastor and staff by informing them of plans, inviting them to meetings, and requesting their prayer and advice.

- 1. Form a team.** At least two people dedicated to ministry and witness should be on this team. Include the pastor. Covenant with God and each other to serve and persevere through all obstacles. Pray for His love and power to work through each team member.
- 2. Educate the congregation.** Many drug-prevention curriculum options are available, but choosing one for your congregation could be difficult. See "Sources of Help" below for options.
- 3. Choose a ministry.** Match a need in your community with available people and resources. Use the suggestions above or create one with the help of community leaders.
- 4. Secure church approval and support.** Present the ministry proposal to the church for its approval. A vote by the church validates it as a church ministry.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

Curriculum

Hazelden Foundation is a nationally recognized treatment and educational resource. A catalog is available by mail at P.O. Box 176, Center City, MN 55012; by phone at 1 800 328-9000; by fax at (651) 213-4590; or by Internet at www.hazelden.org.

LifeWay Christian Resources

The resources listed below are available from LifeWay Christian Resources. Purchase them directly from your local LifeWay Christian Store, order by phone at 1 800 458-2772, or order over the Internet at www.lifewaystores.com.

Breaking the Cycle of Hurtful Family Experiences is an ideal book for people who wish to learn healthy ways of relating. God created the family to pass a legacy of righteousness from one generation to the next. This book will help participants understand how families often leave a legacy of dysfunction and how such patterns can be changed.

Conquering Chemical Dependency: A Christ-Centered 12-Step Process is a biblically-based, clinically-tested, proven program that helps an addicted person move from dependence on mood-altering chemicals to the life of a growing disciple.

Quitting For Good: A Christ-Centered Approach to Nicotine Dependency is a biblically-based, effective program that helps persons permanently stop using tobacco while growing as disciples.

Facilities

Brantley Baptist Center offers training, information, and residential treatment for substance abusers. It is located at 201 Magazine St., New Orleans, LA 70130; phone (504) 523-5761; Web site www.brantleycenter.com.

Ministries

S.A.F.E. (Setting Addicts Free Eternally) is a ministry whose purpose is to help an individual gain the tools needed to accomplish permanent change in his or her life. Until a person understands the principles related to change and applies them to his or her life, he or she is doomed to repeat unhealthy patterns. As a person's life gets more and more out of control, and he or she is driven by fierce emotions that destroy the ability to make wise decisions, establish healthy relationships, and develop a close walk with God. The three keys to success are: Christ (He is always kept in the forefront), simplicity (through material made as simple as possible), and repetition (beyond familiarity with a truth, a person's mind must be thoroughly saturated with it in order to have the ability to live by it).

The five objectives of the **S.A.F.E.** ministry are:

1. To be on a sure foundation (be in a right relationship with God)
2. To be of a sound mind (able to control our emotions rather than letting them control us)
3. To be responsible (accepting responsibility for our decisions and actions)
4. To be able to resolve conflicts (the key is a right relationship with Jesus Christ)
5. To be confident (confident that God loves us and places great value on us)

The following materials can be ordered from S.A.F.E. Ministries, P.O. Box 12547, Portland, OR 97212, Telephone (503) 284-8048, Fax (503) 284-8043.

- Leader Set (Leader's Manual, Student Set, and Personal Prayer Guide)—\$35.00
- Student Set (Student's Manual, "Changing from Within" Booklet, and "Bridge of Faith" Booklet)—\$17.00
- Student's Manual—\$15.00
- Leader's Manual—\$16.00
- "Changing from Within" Booklet—\$1.75
- "Bridge of Faith" Booklet—\$1.75
- Personal Prayer Guide—\$6.00

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

You may ask the pastor and other worship leaders to have a call to worship to recognize your church's new ministry focus on substance abuse. Keep ministry prayer requests before the church in various ways: announcements, posters, bulletin inserts, church newsletters, and so forth.

If your ministry has an organized group focus, such as a support group or a prevention education class, publicize it appropriately, taking care not to put anyone on the spot or embarrass anyone publicly.

Caution everyone involved in the ministry to practice confidentiality. Substance abusers and their families are placing painful and potentially damaging information in your hands. By doing so, they are giving you and other ministry participants a high level of trust. Prove yourselves worthy of that trust.

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?

This ministry will not lend itself to numbers as other ministries may. Talk with volunteers, any community agencies with whom you network, church leaders, and of course the addicts or families of addicts whom you serve. Determine what is working well and what is not working. Is Christ being shared? How could the evangelistic focus be strengthened while at the same time offering a high level of help with substance abuse?

Notes

¹ "1999 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse," *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Statistics* (Rockville, Md.: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2000 [cited 29 September 2000]). Available from www.samhsa.gov.

Support Groups

Two women from Whittier Baptist Fellowship in California attended a lecture on sexual abuse. Both women made an appointment independently to talk in private with the speaker. The two women met in the hallway outside the lecturers office and said, “You, too?!”

Out of that chance encounter, the two women went to their pastor and asked if they could start a group for sexually abused women. They wanted to give others like themselves a safe place to share their feelings and to work through the pain of the past. That became the church’s first support group. Today Whittier Baptist Fellowship is reaching many people who would not otherwise come to the church through a number of support groups that minister God’s love and grace to hurting people in their community.

What Is the Need?

There are many needs in North America. Just read the newspaper or listen to the news reports and you will hear about people who are under a great deal of pressure. The following statistics just begin to show the issues with which people are dealing today.

- Overall, the chances remain very high—between 40 and 50 percent—that a marriage started today will end in either divorce or permanent separation.¹
- Although we typically think of the United States today as “the most marrying country,” we actually rank relatively low among the industrialized nations.²
- Marriage is declining as a first living together experience for couples and as a status of parenthood.³
- Young men and women say they live together as a way of avoiding the risks of divorce.⁴
- Some can only describe a good marriage as “the opposite of my parents.”⁵
- The American divorce rate today is more than twice that of 1960.⁶
- Children in [single-parent] families have negative life outcomes at two to three times the rate of children in married, two-parent families.⁷
- There were 19.8 million children under 18 living in single-parent families according to the 1998 U.S. Census.⁸
- More than half of the children born today will spend a significant portion of their lives in a single-parent family.⁹
- Suicide is the third leading cause of death among children and youth between the ages of 10 and 24.¹⁰
- In 1996, suicide was the ninth leading cause of death in the United States.¹¹
- More than 75 percent of American women, “feel fat.”¹²
- On any given day, 48 million Americans are dieting.¹³

- For every three babies born another baby dies in an abortion.¹⁴
- An estimated 43 percent of women will have at least one abortion by the time they are 45 years old.¹⁵
- There were an estimated 476 prison inmates per 100,000 United States residents on December 31, 1999.¹⁶
- Fifty-two percent of women were physically assaulted as a child by an adult caretaker.¹⁷
- Eighteen percent of U.S. women surveyed said they experienced a completed or attempted rape at some time in their life.¹⁸
- Almost seven in ten rape or sexual assault victims states the offender was an intimate, other relative, a friend, or an acquaintance.¹⁹
- About 3 million violent crimes occur each year in which victims perceive the offender to have been drinking at the time of the offense.²⁰
- On average each year from 1993 to 1997, about four out of every 1,000 elementary, middle, and high school teachers were the victims of serious violent crime at school.²¹
- Approximately 15 percent of 11-, 13-, and 15-year-olds in the United States had been bullied because of their religion or race. In addition, over 30 percent of these youth had been bullied by sexual jokes, comments, or gestures directed at them.²²
- About 552,200 Americans are expected to die of cancer in 2000, more than 1,500 people a day.²³
- In 2000, about 1,220,100 new cancer cases are expected to be diagnosed.²⁴
- Up to 2.5 percent of children and up to 8.3 percent of adolescents in the United States suffer from depression.²⁵

Thousands of people come to church each year but quietly leave because they don't feel understood or cared for. They don't feel they can be honest about their pain and problems. The church needs to deal with that.

Support groups are designed to help people experience God's grace and strength rather than bitterness and despair. Support groups can be your church's lifeline to people in distress.

What Is a Support Group Ministry?

A support group is a place where people can deal with difficult issues in their lives. People do not stay in support groups for the rest of their lives. God wants to restore people. Church support groups have an advantage over secular support groups. Churches are able to introduce the power of God to the circumstances people face.

The Holy Spirit will walk beside every believer through every possible circumstance of their lives. Christians need to be reminded of this. Non-Christians need to know this kind of help is available to them if they will allow Jesus to become their Savior and acknowledge Him as Lord of their lives.

The following characteristics of church support groups are also important:

- Recovery involves grief and repentance. True recovery involves exposing the victim's wounds, but it also involves grieving over those wounds and acting responsibly in our behavior and relationships. Recovery involves both grief and repentance. People must grieve over the wounds others' sins caused and they must repent of their own sinful behaviors such as bitterness, abuse, and withdrawal.
- Recovery involves changing one's view of God. "Christ came to meet needs," sounds very attractive to those who have doubted God's goodness, but it doesn't mean He is obligated to provide a loving spouse, kind parents, money, health, and happiness. God may give those to us, but He may not. The Scriptures clearly state that God provides the essential elements for an abundant life. Regardless of circumstances, God supplies believers with His wisdom, love, forgiveness, strength, and promises.
- Support groups provide a nurturing environment for people to grow in their love for God and obedience to Him. Many people first become disciples of Jesus through involvement in a support group. The support group helps them to look honestly at the wounds and hindrances in their lives. They then can complete the difficult work of grieving and begin to make better choices in their lives.
- Support groups allow believers to grow in their ability to honor Christ with their lives. Honoring Christ does not mean denying emotional pain, looking for quick fixes, or wallowing in victimization and blame. Honoring Christ means learning to apply God's Word profoundly to real life. Through support groups, many believers are growing in their ability to honor Christ.

Steps for Starting a Support Group

1. Pray

God has a vital interest in those who seek after Him. God is already using support groups to bring unsaved people to Himself and to restore believers to wholeness. He may very well be inviting you to join Him in what He is doing. Prayer unleashes the power of God to work in the lives of hurting people.

2. Secure Approval

Consult with the pastor or appropriate church staff person. Make sure they understand your goals and procedures and seek their advice as well as approval.

3. Select a Support Group Coordinator

Success depends on the quality of the leader. The person might be a staff member, a deacon, or a layperson. Consider both men and women. Qualifications should include:

- Proven spiritual leadership—this person takes initiative and is skilled at selecting and shepherding others.

- Good relational skills—this person merits the trust and respect of others, encourages others, and speaks the truth in love.
- Good organizational skills—this person can plan, delegate, and follow through.

4. Select Facilitators

Selecting the right leadership is the single most important factor in determining the success of the support group. Generally, the most effective support group facilitator is one who has personal experience in the recovery process for this particular life experience.

Because the pain and relational problems associated with critical life issues are so severe, the facilitator must understand the limits of his or her ability and the group's ability to meet people's needs. Occasionally, someone in the group experiences depression, a relapse into addictive behavior, abuse from a spouse, divorce, or some other problem that requires professional help. Facilitators need to be aware when people need this level of help and not hesitate to make appropriate referrals to qualified professionals.

Good facilitators must be characterized by the following:

- **Genuineness**—genuine people encourage trust and people feel safe with them. Genuine people are authentic, original, valid, natural, and sincere. When you are genuine, no one has to read between the lines. No one has to interpret you. No one has to wonder if you are really what you say you are. Genuine people do not wear masks or put on fronts. They are real.
- **Unselfish love**—loving others is the mark of authentic Christianity. Many people confuse love with sentimentality or emotions. The biblical authors focus on the action of love, not its emotions. Loving actions include caring, kindness, gentleness, respect, and fairness. Love can even include rebuke when it is done from a motivation to build and not destroy the person. Unselfish love distinguishes between the person and the deeds. Jesus displayed such love in His encounter with a rich young man. Though He loved the man, He allowed him to walk away from eternal life (see Mark 10:17-23). Love does not blur the boundaries between individuals. It allows others to express their own individuality, even if their choices are wrong. We can disapprove of, and even limit, people's misbehavior and still love them.
- **Empathy**—empathy is seeing the situation from the other person's viewpoint in order to understand that person's feelings and thoughts. The purpose of empathy is to understand and support another person. Empathy respects other people's boundaries by not attempting to feel their feelings for them. Everyone needs people who can understand and be sensitive and supportive.

5. Train Facilitators

Facilitators need to be trained in how to facilitate a group. *Search For Significance, Leader Guide*, by Robert S. McGee, has excellent guidelines for training facilitators (available from LifeWay Christian Resources). *Wise Counsel: Skills for Lay Counseling*, by John W. Drakeford and Claude V. King, is also a great training resource. It helps people learn to listen, guide behavior change, and interact appropriately in relationships. It also provides guidance for counseling families, youth,

singles, senior adults, and those who are grieving, sick or suicidal.

Skills that are needed and need to be developed during training include:

- Ability to transition the conversation to a presentation of the plan of salvation
- Good communication
- Servant leadership
- Integrating biblical and psychological truth
- Confronting with love
- Communicating acceptance and concern
- Creating a feeling of safety
- Facilitating feedback and group interaction
- Reading nonverbal communication
- Active listening
- Encouraging openness
- Knowing limits

6. Set a Time, Date, and Place

Schedule group meetings at a time most convenient for the members. If the group members prefer a more confidential setting, schedule the meeting at a time when the church is free of other activities. Provide an environment in which members feel free to share and deal with emotional issues that will arise during the group sessions.

Set a starting time that will be most convenient for the group members. The meeting format is set up for about one and one-half to two hours, but you may need more time for group members to deal with emotional issues that arise out of the group discussions. During the introductory session, let the members decide for themselves about the time and place.

7. Order Materials

Some of the best materials for church support groups come from LifeWay Christian Resources. See the section entitled “What Sources of Help Are Available?” for specific resource recommendations.

8. Decide on Promotional Efforts

Promotion needs to take place both inside church and outside the church.

Inside the church, the following promotional ideas could be utilized:

- A sermon series on the healing ministry of Jesus as found in Luke 4:18-19. This series would help the church see support groups as an extension of Jesus’ ministry to people who have great pain in their lives.

- Compelling testimonies from members of the congregation about their experiences with support groups.
- Showing a promotional video helps educate members about specific support groups.
- Promotional skits based on various vignettes or examples from support group workbooks. Members can perform these skits during a worship service or during some other church program.
- Articles in the church newsletter.
- Posters in strategic places around the church building.
- Church media library display.

Outside the church, consider using one or more of the following methods of promotion:

- Newspaper publicity—most newspapers have “What’s Happening” columns that publish brief news items on community events. Newspapers with religion sections print special columns publicizing events conducted in churches. Newspapers usually print these items free.
- Public service announcements on radio and television—contact the news director at your local radio and television stations to learn how to submit these items.
- Talk show interviews—approach talk show hosts about interviewing support-group leaders or individuals who are recovering from critical life situations in part because of their support-group experience. Some of the tips listed earlier for newspaper story ideas also apply to approaching talk show hosts on local television stations. Contact your station’s news director and follow up with a news release.
- Flyers—post flyers on bulletin boards in places like the local YMCA, YWCA, Salvation Army lodging, United Way agencies, or even bulletin boards in businesses like grocery stores where individuals place help-wanted or community announcement notices.
- Civic group testimonies—take advantage of testimonial opportunities in community and civic groups like the Rotary Club, Junior League, and other organizations in which your church members are involved.
- Fitness fair—conduct a church-sponsored fitness fair as an outreach for your community. Make your church’s support groups a focal point, serve snacks, provide a free body-fat screening, and conduct seminars on health, fitness, and exercise.
- Family enrichment fair—plan a community-wide family enrichment fair at your church. Sponsor seminars on a variety of marriage, family, and parenting topics. Include topics like, “Making Peace With Your Past,” and other critical issues as an opportunity to spread the word about your church’s support group ministry.

9. Set fees

Each group member should pay for his or her own book and other materials. You may want to charge an additional fee to help cover related costs for the ministry. You might want to use the additional fees to provide scholarships for persons who cannot buy their own materials, to purchase leadership materials, or to provide a reference set of audiocassettes.

Asking each group member to pay a fee helps communicate the level of commitment that you expect of group members. Churches often avoid charging persons for courses to avoid the appearance that churches are trying to make a profit from them. However, people tend to be suspicious of things that are free. Charging a small fee for materials and other expenses actually can lessen an unchurched person's apprehensions about participating in the group. To protect your church from legal liability, do not pay the leader/facilitator for the leadership of the group or charge fees for his or her services. This is a lay-led group, not a professional-led group.

10. Decide on child care

Decide whether you will provide child care for the children of group members. Child care will allow some people who could not participate otherwise to become group members. The disadvantage with providing child care is the cost involved and the possibility that some group sessions might last longer than expected. The best solution is for the group members to arrange for child care on their own.

11. Get started

Review the first 10 steps to ensure you have covered all necessary details. Meet with the facilitators on a regular basis to be sure things are going well and to avoid potential problems.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

The resources listed below are available from LifeWay Christian Resources. Purchase them directly from your local LifeWay Christian Store, order by phone at 1 800 448-8032, or order over the Internet at www.lifewaystores.com.

Search for Significance helps persons build their self-worth on the forgiveness and unconditional love of Christ instead of relying on their own abilities to please others.

Untangling Relationships: A Christian Perspective on Codependency will help anyone who desires to understand, to recover from, or to minister to those who are codependent.

Breaking the Cycle of Hurtful Family Experiences is an ideal book for people who wish to learn healthy ways of relating. God created the family to pass a legacy of righteousness from one generation to the next. This book will help participants understand how families often leave a legacy of dysfunction and how such patterns can be changed.

Recovering From the Losses of Life helps persons recover from the pain and sadness of profound losses such as the death of a loved one, loss of a job, a broken relationship, loss of an identity, or loss of a dream or goal. It helps individuals understand and work through the grief process and shows how they can respond to losses in a more positive way.

A Time for Healing: Coming to Terms with Your Divorce is a study designed to minister to adults who have experienced divorce. When divorce occurs, the life of each family member is affected. But the road to recovery can begin with a Christ-centered group that helps individuals grieve, heal, and forgive.

New Faces in the Frame: A Guide to Marriage and Parenting in the Blended Family will give blended families the skills to succeed. When remarried couples provide a warm, loving, positive, and consistent home life, their children will be less likely to experience the painful circumstances of divorce.

Shelter from the Storm: Hope for Survivors of Sexual Abuse offers hope and healing to survivors of sexual abuse. Persons who sustain sexual abuse wonder if they ever can be free of the haunting memories and feel physically, spiritually, and emotionally whole again. This study tells the stories of many survivors and their journeys to recovery from the trauma of sexual abuse.

Making Peace With Your Past: Help for Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families is a dynamic, life-changing study that offers practical, biblically-based guidance to lead adults to identify, understand, and come to terms with the feelings and problems of growing up in a dysfunctional family.

Moving Beyond Your Past is a follow-up course to *Making Peace With Your Past*. This study leads group members to change present-day patterns from a painful past. *Making Peace with Your Past* is a prerequisite to *Moving Beyond Your Past*.

Conquering Chemical Dependency: A Christ-Centered 12-Step Process is a biblically-based, clinically-tested, proven program that helps an addicted person move from dependence on mood-altering chemicals to the life of a growing disciple.

Conquering Codependency: A Christ-Centered 12-Step Process was developed for persons who are determined to please and care for others, even if they harm themselves in the process. This study helps individuals recognize the destructive patterns called codependency—the compulsion to fix, rescue, and control. This course offers sound biblical strategies that give hope and promise healing from the damage codependency can do to lives and families.

Conquering Eating Disorders: A Christ-Centered 12-Step Process recognizes that for some individuals, food is a means to gain control or to medicate painful feelings. This study is an effective, proven program for people dealing with anorexia, bulimia, or compulsive overeating.

Faithful and True: Sexual Integrity in a Fallen World is a two-part study of sexuality. Part 1 of this study helps individuals move in the direction of healthy sexuality and more Christ-honoring behaviors. It is for both single and married people. Part 2 is designed for those who struggle in a more serious way with issues of sexuality. These struggles may involve compulsive and addictive behaviors. It helps people recover from destructive behaviors and find hope through Christ.

Quitting For Good: A Christ-Centered Approach to Nicotine Dependency is a biblically-based, effective program that helps persons permanently stop using tobacco while growing as disciples.

Strength for the Journey: A Biblical Perspective on Discouragement and Depression helps individuals gain insight into the symptoms and possible treatments for depression, the number one health problem in America. This study gives five causes of depression: loss, anger, stress, medical problems, and personal sin.

Fit 4: A Christian Wellness Plan helps participants discover how God’s plan for health includes every area of life. This is a whole new way of looking at health. Participants will learn how nutritious eating parallels biblical principles and how being fit increases one’s energy to serve God with love and devotion. This study also teaches how important it is to maintain healthy relationships with family, friends, and others. This is great as an outreach in the community because it seems everyone is interested in becoming healthier these days.

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?

Keep a record of the groups that are meeting and the number of people in each group. Your goal is not to have people perpetually in a group. People should be in a group as long as necessary to deal with their life issues, but eventually, they should become strong enough to leave the support group in wholeness.

At least annually, take a look at the support groups that your church is sponsoring. Are there still people needing each of them? Are there new support groups that need to be started? Keep the groups vital and timely so they will be addressing real issues in the lives of people in your community.

Most important, determine if people are being led to a relationship with Jesus Christ. Are unsaved people accepting Him as Savior and acknowledging Him as Lord? Are Christians growing in their relationship with Him? Look for ways to make your evangelism and discipleship tasks effective through these groups.

Notes

¹ David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead. *The State of Our Unions 2000: The Social Health of Marriage in America* (Piscataway, N.J.: National Marriage Project, 2000), p. 26. Available from www.marriage.rutgers.edu.

² Ibid., p. 22.

³ Ibid., p. 3.

⁴ Ibid., p. 12.

⁵ Ibid., p. 19.

⁶ Ibid., p. 25.

⁷ Ibid., p. 31.

⁸ Ibid., p. 32.

⁹ Barbara Ludwig, “Reaching Out to Single-Parent Families,” *Journal of Extension* 26:1 (Spring 1988 [cited 20 September 2000]). Available from www.joe.org.

¹⁰ “10 Leading Causes of Death, United States 1997, All Races, Both Sexes” (Hyattsville, Md.: National Center for Health Statistics [cited 21 September 2000]). Available from www.cdc.gov/ncipc.

¹¹ “In Harm’s Way: Suicide in America” (Bethesda, Md.: National Institute of Mental Health, 1999 [cited 21 September 2000]). Available from www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/harmaway.cfm.

¹² “Women’s Campaign to End Body Hatred and Dieting” (New York: National Center for Overcoming Overeating [cited 2 October 2000]). Available from www.overcomingovereating.com.

- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ “Facts in Brief” (New York: The Alan Guttman Institute [cited 2 October 2000]). Available from www.agi-usa.org.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ “Prison Statistics” (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics [cited 20 September 2000]). Available from www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs.
- ¹⁷ “Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence Against Women,” *Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 1998 [cited 22 September 2000]). Available from www.ncjrs.org/txtfiles/172837.txt.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ *Characteristics of Crime* (Washington, D.C., U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2000 [cited 21 September 2000]). Available from www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Philip Kaufman et al., *Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 1999* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Departments of Education and Justice, 1999), p. 5. Available from www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/iscs99.htm.
- ²² Ibid., p. 10.
- ²³ “Statistics” (Atlanta, Ga.: American Cancer Society [cited 22 September 2000]). Available from www.cancer.org.
- ²⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁵ *Depression in Children and Adolescents* (Bethesda, Md.: National Institute of Mental Health, 2000 [cited 21 September 2000]). Available from www.nimh.nih.gov.

Transportation

Margie is a volunteer driver in a senior adult transportation ministry. One day she picked up a new rider named Otis who was going to the hospital for a biopsy.

When they arrived at 11:00 a.m., Otis asked Margie, “Will you go in with me please? I’ve never been here before.” Margie agreed, but once inside discovered Otis’ appointment was not until 1:30 p.m. While he waited, Margie went on to pick up other riders and eat lunch.

When she returned, Otis was in an examining room. A nurse asked Margie to be with Otis when the doctor came to give him the test results. Otis was apprehensive and wanted someone with him. Margie, a little hesitantly, agreed to go back. She chatted with Otis while they waited for the doctor.

When the doctor came in he said, “The news is not good. You have cancer in your throat.” Otis sat without expression.

He remained quiet on the drive home. Margie knew she could not let Otis out without witnessing to him. As they neared his home she asked, “Otis, where do you go to church?”

He replied, “I used to be Methodist, but I think I want to be Baptist.” Margie shared that the important thing was not where you go to church, but whether you have trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior.

“Have you ever done that?” she asked.

Smiling broadly Otis replied, “Oh yes ma’am, I love the Lord.” He went on to give a wonderful testimony about his walk with the Lord and how Jesus was sustaining him through all of his difficult times.

Margie and other volunteers continued to provide transportation for Otis during the months of treatment that followed. Though Otis had a son and daughter, he did not know where they were. The volunteers became his primary means of support. They became, in a very real sense, his family.

Who Needs a Transportation Ministry?

As our nation’s population becomes older, more and more senior adults are finding themselves isolated. For many, family support erodes as children move away geographically or emotionally. Few communities are without senior adults who live alone or elderly couples who can no longer care for themselves.

The psalmist cries to God, “Do not cast me away when I am old; do not forsake me when my strength is gone” (Ps. 71:9). How many older people today are forsaken by their family and cast away by society? Yet, God will never fail nor forsake those who need Him most. A caring, well-planned, transportation ministry touches the lives of senior adults in their time of need.

Before beginning any new ministry, make sure the need exists near your church's ministry area. While it is a safe assumption that there are transportation needs in most communities, yours may be the exception. You may have a small senior adult population with sufficient income and family to meet their needs. Or, there may already be enough transportation resources. The community needs assessment described in Chapter 6 will help you determine if this is the case.

How Do We Plan a Transportation Ministry?

Choose Leaders

First, decide how the ministry will be directed. Who will be the leader—the pastor, another staff member, or a member of the laity? Preferably, a layperson will become the leader with staff persons serving as support. The leader should have a keen interest in this ministry and the time and people skills to make it happen. The title does not matter—director, coordinator, or chairperson. Christian maturity and a desire to serve, however, are paramount.

The leader will need the help of a transportation ministries team or committee. In some cases, this may be an existing church committee such as the On Mission Team. To effectively address the ministry's needs, a new committee of interested persons might work better. Decide time, location, and frequency of meetings. Early on, many meetings will be needed. After the ministry is underway, one meeting a month should suffice.

Determine Guidelines

Whom you serve and the frequency of service will help determine your guidelines. You may decide upon guidelines by reflecting on your community needs assessment.

- Who are the targets of your ministry? The elderly? The disabled? Anyone needing a ride?
- Will there be economic guidelines?
- Will you transport groups to locations such as a shopping center or will you focus on individual needs, such as trips to the doctor?

The following guidelines are used for a typical senior adult transportation ministry. They can be adjusted to meet your needs and resources.

- Riders must be at least 55 years old.
- Riders must be ambulatory (able to get in and out of the vehicle on their own).
- Rides must be scheduled 24 hours in advance.
- Trips will be made to necessary destinations only (no trips for social or recreational purposes).
- Destinations may not be changed or added on the day of the ride.
- Riders may not make purchases considered immoral by the church (alcoholic beverages, lottery tickets, pornographic material, etc.) when riding in the church vehicle.

- Smoking is not permitted in the vehicle.
- Seat belts must be worn at all times.
- A \$1 donation is expected each way (\$2 round trip).
- Riders must call the office as soon as possible if their ride is to be cancelled or postponed.

Gather Resources

The guidelines will determine what resources you need. Prayerfully plan your ministry and trust God to lead you to the resources needed to do all you feel led to do. However, if you do not discover all of the resources you seem to need, that may be God's way of leading you to alter or simplify plans.

Broadly speaking, you have three kinds of resources: finances, "in-kind," and people. First, look at **finances**. A transportation ministry is not cheap. If you decide to offer the service free or for a modest donation, then you will need a consistent source or sources of revenue such as the church budget, fundraisers, donations, and memorial gifts. Do not rule out the possibility of grants, as long as there are not restrictions that would hinder witnessing. Grants may come from the state or federal government or from private foundations. Your public library should have a list. See Appendix E and Appendix F for in-depth information on Charitable Choice and 501(c)(3) corporations. This information will be valuable in understanding how to work with government agencies.

"In-kind" resources are the donation of goods or services. The most formidable hurdle could be securing an appropriate vehicle. If your purpose is to transport groups of people to the shopping center or other sites, you will need a van. Perhaps the church van may be used for this purpose. Some government entities donate vans for transporting the elderly or disabled. Even a private charitable organization or foundation can help. If individuals are to be transported, similar to a taxi service, a car is better suited. Some persons donate cars for tax purposes instead of selling or trading in their cars. The car, however, must be reliable. In some cases, the ministry could be based on volunteers driving their own vehicles. In that case, make sure that all drivers' and the church's insurance carriers are aware of the arrangement.

People will be your most valuable resource. You cannot have a ministry without people because things don't minister; people do. No matter how well you structure your service, you will need volunteers. Volunteers serve on the transportation ministry team and they will serve as drivers. Volunteers may be elderly (in fact, likely will be). However, they should be in good physical, emotional, and spiritual health. A list of drivers should be provided to the church insurance company, and either they, or the church, should check driving records. Those with a poor driving record should be encouraged to volunteer in ways other than driving.

Volunteer drivers should fill out an application that includes name, phone, driver's license number, emergency contact persons, and references. Hold a training session to orient drivers to the vehicle, explain procedures, and provide training, such as witnessing effectively to senior adults. (See personal evangelism training resources in Appendix A.)

Never forget the importance of all your volunteers. Some recognition ideas for volunteers are listed later in this chapter.

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

To get started you may need to publicize your new ministry. Publicize slowly, however, to avoid being overwhelmed. Publicity ideas include:

- Church announcements
- Revisiting the homes and organizations in which you conducted your surveys as part of your community needs assessment
- Visiting other social service agencies, especially those dealing directly with senior adults
- Public service announcements on radio, television, and newspaper

Some form of application will be needed as prospective riders begin to call. The information needed will depend on the guidelines your committee frames when planning the ministry. If age is a criteria, then you need a birth date. If eligibility is based on income, this should be recorded. Also include name, phone, address, social security number, church membership, physician, physician's phone, emergency contact person and phone, and directions to the residence.

A common problem is that sometimes riders may not answer the door when the driver arrives. This leads to concern about the rider's well being. Emphasize that riders must call if their plans change and they no longer need a ride.

For those occasions when the rider does not answer, and there are no apparent reasons, there should be an emergency procedure. This may include the following steps: call the rider's home, call the rider's emergency contact person, call someone with a key to the home (this can be recorded on the application). If you are unable to reach anyone, call 911.

Rides should be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance. A phone number, usually the church office, will be needed to receive calls. Be aware that as the ministry grows, calls for riders can take up a significant amount of time. Keep a daily schedule of rides. The nature of your ministry will dictate the structure of your schedule. If you are carrying groups in the van to the mall, your schedule will look different than if you are taking individuals in a car to the doctor's office or if a team of volunteers drive their own vehicles to pick up one or two persons a week. A computer is a helpful tool in coming up with a schedule format that will work for your church. The schedule might include the following categories: pick up time, appointment time, rider's name, rider's address, where they will be when you pick them up, destination name, and destination address.

Volunteer drivers should set aside the whole day that they are to drive. They may call the day before to check on the time of their first appointment. Drivers should, of course, be courteous. As they begin the day, if they are using a church vehicle, they should check the fluid levels in the vehicle. It is also helpful to have a driving log on which they record beginning and ending mileage, and the purchase of gas, oil, and other necessary items.

As they pick up riders, drivers must make sure the rider is wearing a seat belt. The driver should receive the agreed upon donation, if any, from each rider. At the end of the day, if the vehicle has less than one-half tank of gas, it should be filled. Also, all trash should be removed at the end of every day.

Give drivers clear instruction regarding what to do in case of an accident. Of course, if there is injury, they should call 911 and then the church office or the program coordinator. Other problems should be relayed to the program coordinator as well. Sometimes riders will ask for money or personal favors. The best policy is to refuse these requests or to refer them back to the church. The drivers should not do personal favors for the riders nor should they give out their phone number.

Witnessing

Sharing one's faith in God is a part of any true ministry. Witnessing to riders presents some unique challenges, as the only face-to-face encounter may be the actual ride. The church can begin the process in writing. A letter to new riders welcoming them into the ministry and explaining policies is always helpful. In the letter, offer a way for them to become involved in your church and a way for them to know more about how to have a personal relationship with Christ. While all drivers may not consider themselves skilled in evangelism, they should at least be prepared to share their testimony. A witnessing seminar for volunteer drivers may be helpful. The church should keep a record of all people who are offered rides. If the rider is a repeat rider, a card should be given to the driver with a history of the rider. The card should note whether or not the rider has made a profession of faith and when. It should also list special needs and current prayer requests. This will give the driver information so they can prepare for the opportunity they will have to minister to this person during the ride. The church should periodically visit the homes of riders as a part of their churchwide visitation.

How Do We Recognize Volunteers?

Two types of recognition should be done: one for drivers, the other for the riders. Drivers, like other volunteers, should be thanked. This could be done at a recognition service for all church volunteers or a service just for drivers.

Recognition Ideas for Drivers

- Banquet
- Luncheon
- After church fellowship
- Party
- Notice from pulpit
- Thank you in church bulletin
- Card or other personal note

Recognition Ideas for Riders

Recognizing volunteers comes naturally, but those to whom you minister should also be recognized. They often need something to brighten their lives and the kindness done can become a springboard for witnessing.

- Cards—birthday, get well, condolence, or “thinking of you”
- Christmas baskets to every rider from the previous year
- A party just for the riders

Remember, the ride should be the starting point of your ministry, not the end of it.

How Do We Evaluate the Ministry?

Periodically, the director should lead the committee and the church in evaluating the transportation ministry by asking the following questions:

- Is the ministry achieving its purpose?
- Are lives being touched?
- Are riders joining the church?
- Are riders accepting Christ?
- Could the ministry run more smoothly? How?
- What changes are needed?
- Is this still a needed ministry?

Don't ignore problems or potential problems. Address these honestly before they become disasters. Allow everyone serving in the ministry to take part in the evaluation process. Realize that you will never completely satisfy everyone. Both drivers and riders are occasionally frustrated, but that frustration does not mean the ministry is not fulfilling its purpose. Clearing the air may be painful, but it usually helps. Regular, at least annual, evaluations keep the ministry healthy and vibrant.

Tutoring Children and Youth (TCY)

Beth, a third grader who has difficulty with schoolwork, was a prisoner of poor self-esteem. She used to say, “Everyone else seems to be able to do the work. I can’t. I’m dumb. I’m stupid. There’s no use in me trying.” Beth is now a participant in a TCY ministry at a church in her community. Beth’s tutor tells her that she is made in God’s image, unique and special. The tutor assures Beth that Christ will strengthen her and help her learn. Since going to the tutoring ministry, Beth’s grades and self-image have improved. Beth’s understanding of God’s love for her has grown. She is no longer a prisoner of poor self-esteem.

Who Needs a TCY Ministry?

Many students have difficulty with their school work. In some communities, 38 percent of fourth graders read below grade level.¹ The U.S. Department of Education indicates that between 300,000 and 500,000 students drop out of high school each year.²

A TCY ministry provides an opportunity for your congregation to demonstrate and share the gospel with these children and their families. It can make a difference in the path their lives take spiritually, educationally, and socially.

What Is a TCY Ministry?

A TCY ministry is a type of literacy missions ministry. The premise is simple: trained tutors work with at-risk students on a regular basis, either one-on-one or in small groups. While trained tutors make up the bulk of your ministry, other volunteers are needed to provide refreshments and transportation, and to coordinate the ministry. While the students and tutors may use the student’s school materials in the tutoring sessions, a TCY ministry provides opportunities to provide Bibles and/or Scripture portions to students.

The tutoring sessions should be held at least once, preferably twice, weekly. The church or association may host a tutoring center or tutors may meet with students at school. Meeting at the home of the tutor or the student is possible, but not preferable, as there are too many possible distractions. While tutors may be matched to individual children or youth, one adult should never be alone with one child. Churches, schools, or public libraries are better places to meet than someone’s home.

How Do We Plan a TCY Ministry?

1. Pray

Seek God’s leadership as you consider starting such a ministry. Ask other people to join you in prayer.

2. Study the need

Visit local schools and talk with principals, teachers, and counselors. A good working relationship between the ministry and public school officials is essential. When making your initial and follow-up contacts, keep these points in mind:

- Avoid the first two weeks of school unless you and the principal have agreed on the details of a program far in advance.
- Always work through the principal or the principal's designated representative.
- When exhibiting interest in starting a tutoring program, make sure the principal understands your tutoring program does not imply criticism of the school program. Ask what the principal feels needs to be done in the area of tutoring.

3. Obtain church approval

When you have determined that there is a need and an opportunity for a TCY ministry in your area, seek your church's approval. When the church (or association) votes to recognize the ministry as part of its regular programming, it will strengthen the ministry and encourage mutual support and accountability. Including the TCY ministry in the church budget strengthens this relationship. Each church structures its activities differently. The ministry may relate to the On Mission Team, missions committee, WMU, men's ministries, the evangelism committee, or any other group that seems most appropriate.

4. Select a director

This position is crucial. The ministry director will support both students and tutors. Experience has shown that a TCY ministry gets off to a strong start if the director is chosen before volunteers are enlisted and trained. Job responsibilities of a director include:

- Recruiting volunteer workers
- Training workers (basic and continued)
- Enlisting and placing students
- Administering the ministry
- Supervising volunteers
- Evaluating the ministry
- Recognizing volunteers

5. Enlist tutors and other workers

The church has a rich resource of people within the congregation who could help school aged children and youth with academic difficulties. These tutors could be retired school teachers or certified teachers who are rearing a family and are unable to teach full-time in public schools. Many other people have professional degrees and work experience in branches of English and math. Some churches use youth who are academically proficient. Keep in mind that you will want

volunteers to serve not only as tutors, but also as hosts or hostesses and to provide transportation and refreshments. There are several steps to enlisting volunteers:

- Write a job description or covenant before you seek to enlist tutors. The tutor should commit to a minimum of six months (at least two semesters—fall and spring). This gives time to build a relationship with the student and for the student to make good progress. Anything shorter than six months will not be as beneficial. A tutor should commit to:
 1. Attend tutor training events.
 2. Teach at least once a week during the tutoring school term.
 3. Prepare lessons based on the student's needs.
 4. Keep records of the student's progress.
 5. Report regularly to the student placement coordinator or program director.
 6. Attend regular tutors' meetings.
 7. Contact students when they are absent and seek outreach opportunities to all students.
 8. Pray for and with each student.
 9. Share the gospel with students.
- Develop an application to become a tutor. Consider doing a background check on all tutors to avoid problems later.
- Review the church rolls for potential volunteers. Make a list of those you think would be qualified and available, but do not limit your search to only obvious candidates.
- Personally contact potential volunteers. There are many advantages to this. They can ask questions and get an immediate response. They feel important because you singled them out and made a contact. And, some very qualified workers simply do not volunteer without being specifically asked, even when they would like to serve.
- Advertise the need for tutors through the use of newsletters, bulletin inserts, posters, and handouts.

6. Secure funding

Some funding is necessary for a TCY ministry. The best way to fund it is through the church/association budget. This creates a feeling of ownership on the part of the funding body, and accountability on the part of the ministry. Monies might be needed for:

- Teacher training—basic workshops and continuing education workshops (expenses and honorarium for the workshop leader, nursery, refreshments, etc.).
- Tutoring materials—teachers usually purchase their own basic teaching materials; however, additional teaching and student materials will be needed.
- Advertising to enlist tutors and students—posters, business cards, brochures, and other printed items.

- Bibles and Scripture materials—most ministries like to present a Bible or Scripture portions to students.
- Other—refreshments for students during sessions, transportation for students, and sundries such as paper, pens, and pencils.

7. Determine the structure of the ministry

Base your structure on the answers to some basic questions.

Time of meeting

- When will you meet?
- Will individuals arrange different times with students or will all tutors work at the same time?
- Will it be every afternoon after school, one or two days a week after school, one night a week, or only in the summer?

Knowing when your tutors are available will be a controlling factor in setting a time and place. You also need to know if there are other tutoring services being provided in your community and when these are held. The school may have an afternoon tutoring program already in place. There may be a need for night or weekend tutoring ministry to help students who can't attend the afternoon program.

Some ask if tutoring only one day a week can make a difference for a student. The answer is, "Yes!" Many church ministries are structured this way and have seen significant improvement from the students they are helping. Often, the primary help is not the explanation of homework or practice on academic skills. The primary positive effect has been that an adult showed consistent care and concern about the student. As a result of this care and concern, the student's motivation to learn greatly increases.

Length of sessions

- How long will your tutoring sessions be—one hour, one and one-half hours, two hours?

Anything less than one hour will not give you time to accomplish much. More than two hours is longer than a child or youth can focus on tasks, particularly if the ministry is scheduled right after school.

Location of sessions

- Where will you meet—at the church, in the school, or another location such as a Baptist center, apartment complex recreation room, or some other place?

Meeting in the church building provides a clear identity that this is a Christian ministry of this congregation. Meeting with students in school buildings is also a popular option. Meeting at the teacher's home or at the student's home when working one-on-one is not desirable because of the potential for distractions. Remember, *never* have one adult meet alone with one child.

Transportation

- How will the students get to the sessions?
- Will the church provide transportation, or will the student?

Some churches provide transportation to their tutoring site. This is time-consuming and labor-intensive, but provides a basic service that makes it possible for students to attend who would not be able to do so otherwise. Most tutoring ministries ask students to arrange to get to the tutoring sessions on their own. They may walk from a neighborhood school to the church for an afternoon program, they may go to their apartment complex recreation room for one evening, or a family member may bring them.

Age group(s) to be tutored

- Elementary school
- Middle school/junior high school
- High school
- A combination of the above

Most tutoring ministries initially concentrate on a single school age group—children or youth. Many that initially begin with a children’s tutoring ministry, however, often grow to include middle school and high school students as those they tutor move up a grade and wish to continue the tutoring relationship.

Student/teacher ratio

- One to one
- One to three or four

The most effective way for building relationships is the one-to-one tutoring ratio. This also greatly reduces discipline problems. You may discover, however, that you have five volunteers and 12 students that you wish to help. Having volunteers work with small groups of students can still be effective.

Tutoring content

- Will you provide homework assistance?
- Do you plan to offer tutor-generated basic academic skills reinforcement?
- Do you desire to furnish both types of tutoring?

During the school year, assistance with homework may be a prime area of help that students need. Yet, some days students will come to the sessions without any homework and the tutor will need to be prepared to help them strengthen their basic academic skills. So, both types of help will be needed. The student’s teacher can identify areas where the student needs help.

8. Train tutors

Training workers is a top priority for literacy missions ministries. Basic training for tutoring is available in a 16-hour Literacy Missions Tutoring Children and Youth workshop. The basic workshop introduces volunteers to basic teaching techniques, teaching resources, basic witnessing techniques, and Bible teaching materials. Workshops are conducted by NAMB-trained leaders. Contact your associational church and community ministries director or your state convention evangelism ministries director for names of workshop leaders in your area. After the basic training, in-service training helps keep volunteers focused and sharpens skills and knowledge of resources.

What Sources of Help Are Available?

LifeWay Christian Stores carry the *Literacy Missions Tutoring Children and Youth Workshop Manual* (ISBN#0633034789) or it may be ordered by calling 1 800 448-8032.

For further information visit the NAMB Web site at www.namb.net. Some specific pages on the NAMB Web site that would be valuable are:

www.namb.net/ccm
www.namb.net/evangelism
www.namb.net/literacy

How Do We Begin Our Ministry?

Prayer

As the ministry begins, ask those who have been praying to continue to do so. Enlist more people to pray and make the entire church aware of your prayer needs. Each tutor should have at least one prayer partner. Being prayer partners gives opportunity for homebound persons and those who work full-time to have a part in the ministry. You should also enlist a group of people to pray for students.

Tell the student that someone is praying for him or her (besides the teacher who should also be praying). The person does not have to be given the student's name. God will know in whose behalf they are praying.

Prayer partners should know when the tutor and student meet and pray for them at that time. People should also be asked to pray during prayer services, in prayer groups, and any other time the congregation prays. Also, keep a list of prayer requests and answers to share with the church. Remember to thank everyone for their prayer support.

Enlist Students

Visit the principals with whom you have formed a relationship in the planning stages. Ask for the best way to recommend potential students for the tutoring ministry. Also seek recommendations

from church members, children, and youth. The potential student names can be given to the ministry director. Then send a letter to potential students and their parents informing them about the ministry.

NOTE: You may wish to publicize the ministry through newspapers, public service announcements, and so forth, but be aware that the response may be more than your ministry can handle. You do not want to offer a service and then be unable to fulfill the requests.

When enlisting students, always secure parental permission. It is helpful to be able to give parents a brochure with pertinent information. Visit with the parents and discuss the following:

- That participation by the student is not being required by the public school, but that the church is making this service available to the students
- The importance of regular attendance by the student
- Arrangement of transportation, if necessary
- Any fees set by the church (most tutoring programs are offered at no charge)
- That the Bible will be used as a resource and spiritual needs will be addressed

Reporting

Inform the church of what the ministry is doing at least once a year. Meet with the pastor or staff person related to the ministry at least quarterly and provide an update. Also, display promotional materials about the ministry (such as a bulletin board devoted to the literacy ministry) that will keep the church aware and interested in the ministry.

How Do We Evaluate Our Ministry?

You will want to keep a record of the number of tutors, number of students, and number of schools involved in the ministry. You may wish tutors to keep a log of the number of hours they work with their students. Also, record numbers of other volunteers, monies spent, Bibles distributed, and professions of faith.

As you evaluate the ministry with students, parents, school officials, and volunteers, keep the following questions in mind:

- How can we better serve students' needs?
- How can we better reach families?
- How can we improve our relationship with schools?
- In what ways can the ministry grow?
- What are we doing well?
- How can we increase the number of students who receive Christ, are baptized, and are disciplined by a local church?

Notes

- ¹ NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card for the Nation and the States (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, 1999), p. 20.
- ² Philip Kaufman, Steve Klein, and Mary Frase, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1997* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1999), p. v.

APPENDIX A

Resources

North American Mission Board

Web Resources

The NAMB Web site is *www.namb.net*. On this Web site you can find information about many of the subjects presented in *His Heart, Our Hands: A Ministry Evangelism Toolkit*.

NAMB's online searchable catalog is available at *www.namb.net/catalog*. By accessing the different categories, you will be able to find many valuable resources for ministry.

NAMB's Web site dedicated to *His Heart, Our Hands: A Ministry Evangelism Toolkit* is *www.namb.net/toolkit*. The Web site will contain new MAPs as they become available. If you develop new models or ministry action plans, send them to us. We might be able to use them. The site will also contain stories about people who are using the *Toolkit*. If you have a story you would like to be included on the Web site, please send it to us. We would also like to hear from you if you have questions or suggestions on ways we can improve our product or service.

E-Mail: *toolkit@namb.net*

Mail: Toolkit
Church and Community Ministries Evangelism Unit
North American Mission Board, SBC
4200 North Point Pkwy.
Alpharetta, GA 30022-4176

Print and Video Resources

To order materials, call Customer Service Center, 1 800 448-8032, or fax, (615) 251-5983

Children's Evangelism

MissionKids Planbook, Volume 1 (0633034312)—Designed to guide first-through-sixth grade children in the understanding and application of becoming an on-mission Christian. Includes stories, games, activities, Bible memory, projects, and more.

MissionKids Planbook, Volume 3 (0840086636)

Mission Kids Planbook, Volume 4 (0840085435)

Niños en Misión (084008501X)—The perfect resource to help Spanish-speaking children be on mission (same components as English version).

Best of MissionKids (0840085028)—The best MissionKids sessions and favorite games and activities in this condensed version of nine sessions.

Sharing God's Special Plan with Children Leaders Packet (0840087209)—Includes everything needed to prepare church leaders and parents to use the *Sharing God's Special Plan with Children* materials to lay the foundation for children to receive Christ. Includes one copy of the user's guide, training manual, witnessing booklet, card set, and a 45-minute training video (not sold separately).

Sharing God's Special Plan with Children Training Manual (0840087373)—Teaches church leaders and parents how to witness to older children and respond appropriately to children of all ages regarding salvation. Also teaches how to train older children to share their faith with their peers.

God's Special Plan Children's Witnessing Booklet (0840087225)—Users say this colorful booklet is the best children's tract available. Designed for adults to share Christ with older children, but can also be used in responding to younger children.

Sharing God's Special Plan with Children Witnessing Card Set (0840087217)—Set of 10 colorful cards with Scriptures about becoming a Christian—for older children to use in witnessing to their peers. Includes instructions for training children to share their faith.

Show & Tell Leader's Kit (0840096534)—Material designed to teach older children how to share Jesus with their friends. The kit contains a leader's manual and several witnessing tools to assist children in presenting the gospel.

Show & Tell Leader's Guide (0840085389)—For children, the truth is as simple as it seems: Jesus loves them, and they want to share this truth with their friends. This book contains simple and easy-to-use ideas to help older children find ways to share their faith.

Show & Tell Book Cover (0840096445)—A colorful witnessing tool that older children can use to share Jesus with their friends. This book cover uses five basic colors (gray, red, white, green, and yellow) to present the gospel in terms a child can understand.

Show & Tell Sticker Booklet (0840096453)—An interactive witnessing booklet that explains the plan of salvation to children using stickers.

Show & Tell Bookmark (0840096488)—This colorful witnessing tool uses the same five colors as the Show & Tell book cover. The book mark is designed for older children to explain the plan of salvation to their peers.

The World's Greatest Adventure (0840087128)—This personal commitment guide for older children is a thorough and practical counseling tool dealing with salvation, growing in Jesus, assurance of salvation, baptism, and church membership.

Nana Puddin' Sing Along (440210004)—Dennis Lee and the Nana Puddin' Bunch sing their favorite songs from the Nana Puddin' show.

Nana Puddin' Sandpaper & Velvet (0840096801)—This program shows how words that hurt are like sandpaper, while soft and comforting words are like velvet. Sandpaper and velvet . . . the words we say really do make a difference.

Nana Puddin' Red Ribbon Carnival (0840096763)—Dennis and the Nana Puddin' Bunch celebrate being drug free. D.A.R.E. Lieutenant Leon Flowers makes a special visit to describe the dangers of abusing drugs. The Morris Brothers join in to show us that good choices really do pay off in the end.

Nana Puddin' A Rock, A River, and A Rainforest Tree (084009678X)—Baby Mickee wants to be a tiger because they roar. They look tough. People respect them. But Dennis and the Nana Puddin' Bunch take Baby Mickee on a treasure hunt to show him it's not our outward appearance that matters.

Nana Puddin' Chill (0840096771)—Dennis and the Nana Puddin' Bunch take a trip to the South Pole, where they encounter a new friend who has good advice on how to control our feelings. Mr. Chilly Pants says, "Chill out, calm down, and think twice."

Nana Puddin' What's In a Name? (084009681X)—It's a surprise birthday party for Baby Mickee. Join the party to see Mickee learn how he got his name and open his gifts. Just like birthday presents, we all have different wrapping on the outside, but it is what is inside that matters the most.

On Mission Lunch Notes (0840096151)—Send your child to school with a reminder that he or she is on mission to share Jesus. These 3 by 4 inch notes come 30 to a pad, with 15 different messages—and there's room for you to include a personal note, too.

Interfaith Evangelism

NAMB's Interfaith Evangelism Team has produced a number of free materials that can be photocopied for church use. "Belief Bulletins" are provided on most of the major religions, cults, and sects. Each Belief Bulletin includes the following features:

- Basic information about the religion, cult, or sect
- Christian response to major doctrines
- Suggestions for sharing your faith with members of the religion, cult, or sect

In addition to the Belief Bulletins, the Interfaith Evangelism Team provides “A Closer Look” pamphlets. These materials take a closer look at various aspects of thinking relative to various world religions, sects, or cults. Examples include *A Closer Look at Jehovah’s Witness View of Christ*, *A Closer Look at Occultic Games*, *A Closer Look at Reincarnation*, and *A Closer Look at the Truth About Mormon Families*. For a complete list of the various Belief Bulletins and Closer Look materials, visit www.namb.net/root/resources/beliefbulletins. These materials may be downloaded from NAMB’s Web site or you may order materials by calling NAMB’s Customer Service Center at 1 800 448-8032.

Ministry-Based Evangelism

His Heart, Our Hands: A Guide for Ministry Evangelism (0663034614)—A guidebook for starting new ministries through the church from a biblical basis. Twenty-seven sample ministry action plans are also included.

Servanthood Evangelism Manual (0840085052)—Helps leaders implement the highly effective and biblical witnessing strategy, modeled by Jesus, in their church and proves that personal evangelism doesn’t have to be intimidating.

Involving Southern Baptists in Disaster Relief (0840010397)—Train men and women in your church for disaster relief ministry.

Spiritual Preparation for Disaster Relief (0840063571)—Manual to help you prepare for and participate in disaster relief.

English Lessons from the Bible: Book of Mark—Provides a foundation for teaching basic English language skills. Also provides an introduction to Jesus Christ and God’s love through the use of Scripture as an integral part of the lessons.

Book I: Student Edition Textbook (0840088663)

Book I: Teacher Edition Textbook (0840088655)

Book II: Student Edition Textbook (0840088671)

Book II: Teacher Edition Textbook (084008868X)

Gang Ministry Manual (0840088744)—Eighty percent of gang members across the nation are looking for a way out . . . a place to belong. The *Gang Ministry Manual* teaches you how to provide an effective witness to accomplish this goal.

Hope in Crisis Tract (0840063660)—Be a ready witness with this pamphlet designed to help people caught in crisis or disaster.

Hope In Crisis Tract, Spanish version (0840063679)

How to Build a Legacy for Life: A How-To Manual for Establishing a Pregnancy Care Center (0840088647)—A complete guide for establishing a pregnancy care center.

Conversational English Workshop Manual (0840088736)—Basic text for a 16-hour workshop to equip volunteers to teach English as a second language as a mission outreach project.

Conversational English Workshop Video (0840096089)—To be used as a supplement to the 16-hour Conversational English training workshop.

Adult Reading and Writing Manual (0840085001)—Demonstrate your love for Christ through meeting the needs of adult low-level readers. This comprehensive manual helps adults become more literate and provides them with a lifetime of blessings.

Heart of the Matter (0840088612)—This powerful video answers a woman's concerns about the issues of unplanned pregnancy.

Personal Evangelism

HeartCall: The Call to Prayer (0840085044)—Answer the call to prayer through devotions written by women for women. These 365 daily devotionals are written by women in leadership positions who share their spiritual-growth experiences and New Testament insights.

HeartCall: Women Sharing God's Heart (0840085117)—A four-week practical study for women on prayer and witnessing from Colossians 4:2-6. This study not only teaches women how to pray and watch for opportunities to share the gospel, but encourages women to apply the principles of God's Word in their daily lives. The workbook also includes a section for leaders to go along with the four sessions.

HeartTalk Tract (0840085079)—Witnessing tract especially for women.

HeartTalk Leader Manual (0840085087)—Shows how to have an effective lifestyle witnessing program for women.

The Chart New Testament (0840085478)—Share this New Testament with your waterfolk friends. Included in this CEV translation are helps and insights into God's Word using nautical terms and references.

Family to Family Resource Kit (0840085370)—Includes a copy of the book, a leader's guide, promotional material, and a six-session dramatized video hosted by Christian recording artist Steve Green.

Family to Family Book (0840085109)—This book is for hurried parents who deeply desire meaningful family time, true significance, and long to pass the baton of their faith in Christ on to their children.

Family to Family Leader's Guide (0840085095)—This helpful tool provides practical tips for maximizing *Family to Family* in your church or organization. It is a must for the church that wants to include family-based evangelism to carry out the Great Commission.

The NET Complete Tool Kit (0840096593)—Contains everything you need to begin The NET in your church: Mentor Handbook, Leader Guide, Apprentice Manual, The NET tract, Tool for Locating and Cultivating Evangelistic Prospects, devotional guide, survey, and story/testimony memory card.

The NET Leader Guide (0840096615)—Thorough, step-by-step guide for The NET training process. Essential for effectively leading The NET.

The NET Mentor Handbook (0840096607)—Detailed handbook on how to mentor effectively. Includes information on the mentor's life, material for the mentor to communicate to apprentices, information on reaching our culture, and help in growing and maturing spiritually.

The NET Apprentice Manual (0840096623)—Motivational, interactive guide with weekly assignments and responsibilities, as well as practical tips to help the apprentice grow spiritually and become an effective lifestyle witness.

Your Story: How Will It Turn Out? (0840096631)—Easily understood, powerful tract designed to be used alone or with help from a witness.

Eternal Life Witnessing Booklet (0840012616)—20 million sold! Explains the plan of salvation.

Sharing Jesus: Focus on Homosexuals Kit (0633034584)—A packet of information designed to help Christians share their faith with friends and family who are living the homosexual lifestyle. Contains two tracts (10 each), "I Love You" and "All I Want is a Place to Belong." Also contains suggestions for use.

All I Want is a Place to Belong (0633034606)—Two Christians share their testimony of how God saved them from their homosexual lifestyle.

I Love You Tract (0633034592)—A letter written by a Christian who cares for someone living the homosexual lifestyle. The letter introduces your friend to Jesus, the only one who can love them unconditionally.

On Mission to Share Jesus Bracelet (0840096070)—The leather strap, five colored beads, and two knots can be used by Christians of any age group to effectively present the gospel.

Prayer Evangelism

Lighthouse of Prayer Starter Kit (0840096348)—Packet of material which provides everything you need to begin your own Lighthouse of Prayer.

Lighthouse of Prayer Starter Kit with Video (0840096828)—The Lighthouse of Prayer Starter Kit (video edition) provides everything you need as a church leader to inspire, recruit, and train believers to make their homes Lighthouses of Prayer.

Praying Your Friends to Christ Tract (0840067283)—This individual guide for evangelistic praying is an inexpensive, trifold pocket guide to be used by church members in praying for lost and unchurched acquaintances.

Praying Your Friends to Christ Training Guide (084008837X)— This guide helps church leaders train the people in their church to use the *Praying Your Friends to Christ* tract.

Taking Prayer to the Streets: Prayer Journeys Resource Kit (0840096321)—These 12 sessions share information on becoming more faithful in prayer, Prayer Journeys (prayerwalking, etc.) that involve the whole church, and principles for an overall Great Commission prayer strategy throughout the congregation.

Taking Prayer to the Streets, Spanish edition (0840096704)

Taking Prayer to the Streets, Korean edition (0633034525)

Special Evangelistic Events

SEE: The Evangelistic Block Party (0840087144)—The block party strategy of evangelism is growing in popularity throughout the nation. This manual describes every step of planning and implementation for a successful evangelistic block party.

SEE: The Evangelistic Block Party, Spanish edition (0840069790)

SEE: Halloween for Christ (0840069812)—Churches are hosting creative Halloween events to reach many for Christ. This is a compilation of some of the most effective events, along with resources.

SEE: Evangelistic Events at Thanksgiving and Christmas (0840086652)—Provides ideas for Thanksgiving and Christmas as meaningful times for evangelism.

SEE: Love Is the Theme: Evangelistic Events for Valentine's Day (0840088086)—Valentine's Day presents opportunities to introduce people to the Savior. This manual includes planning sheets, job descriptions, and valuable resources.

Let the Celebration Begin (0840085311)—An exciting new immediate follow-up piece.

Let the Celebration Begin, Spanish edition (0840085133)

Let the Celebration Continue (0840085141)—The first week of discipleship training for a new believer.

Let the Celebration Continue, Spanish edition (0840096232)

Student Evangelism

Mission Games and Activities for Youth (0840063385)—Stock up on individual and group activities for seventh-12th graders. Includes crafts, games, and sports.

Drama On Mission (0840086784)—Skits written for your drama youth group that will challenge your church to be on mission for Christ.

It's Time Leader Kit (084009650X)—Trains students and provides them with ideas and tools for sharing Christ with their friends. Includes leader book, student workbook, five “tools” for sharing your faith (including tract and tract card), and a CD-ROM packed full of resources for the leader and for students.

It's Time Leader Book (0840096518)—Guides the leader through a six-session study to help students focus on where they are in the process of sharing their faith to give them practical ideas for sharing Jesus comfortably and naturally.

It's Time Student Workbook (0840096569)—Practical help for the student taking part in the six-session preparation for sharing Christ.

Campus Missionary (CM) Packet (0840096275)—Contains everything you need to launch your students as missionaries into the greatest mission field in our country: secondary school campuses. Materials include manuals for the church coordinator, student missionaries, and coaches; *The 923 Call* leader's guide and student workbook; a mail-in coupon for a free Campus Missionary video, plus a Coordinator's Supplement.

Campus Missionary Student Handbook (0840096283)—Essential resource for students commissioned to reach their school campuses with the gospel. Contains checklists and hundreds of ideas for being on mission at school.

Campus Missionary Coach's Handbook (0840096291)—Mentor's guide for adults who “coach” campus missionaries. Hundreds of ideas to train, encourage, and guide students.

The 923 Call Leader's Guide (0840096305)—*The 923 Call* is Jesus' challenge to His disciples in Luke 9:23. This five-session study is used to call students to an on mission lifestyle.

The 923 Call Student Workbook (0840096313)—Order one copy for each student in your youth group. Use the five study sessions of *The 923 Call* to recruit campus missionaries.

Campus Prayer Journey Church Kit—Campus Prayer Journey is a prayer event designed for adults to pray for the safety and salvation of students that takes place the night before See You At the Pole. To order, call 1 800 806-6940/ext. 5177 or visit www.studentz.com/prayer.

FiSH! Student Team Building Guide—This guide is the first step for the student who is interested in starting a club on his or her campus. It gives steps to follow to reach their lost classmates. To order, call 1 800 576-1844 or visit www.catchthis.net.

FiSH! Team Building Guide—The *Team Building Guide* is intended to help you build a “net”work of youth ministers/workers in your community. To order, call 1 800 576-1844 or visit www.catchthis.net.

FiSH! Prayer Cards—This simple prayer card contains 12 FiSH! stickers that students can use as a reminder of their need to talk to God about their non-Christian friends. To order, call 1 800 576-1844 or visit www.catchthis.net.

Other Organizations

American Bible Society
1865 Broadway
New York, NY 10023
1 800 32-BIBLE (322-4253)
222.americanbible.org

Focus on the Family
Colorado Springs, CO 80995
(719) 531-5181
www.family.org

Life Cycle Books
P.O. Box 420
Lewiston, NY 14092-0420
1 800 214-5849
www.lifecyclebooks.com
(abstinence, pregnancy resources)

Lifeway Christian Resources
127 Ninth Ave., N
Nashville, TN 37234
1 800 233-1123
www.lifeway.com

Loving and Caring, Inc.
1905 Olde Homestead Ln.
Lancaster, PA 17601
(717) 293-3230
www.lovingandcaring.org
(adoption and decision making for teens)

Prison Fellowship Ministries
P.O. Box 17500
Washington, DC 20041-0500
(703) 478-0100
www.pfm.org

The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, SBC
901 Commerce, Suite 550
Nashville, TN 37203-3696
(615) 244-2495
www.erlc.com

The Medical Institute for Sexual Health
P.O. Box 162306
Austin, TX 78716-2306
1 800 892-9484
www.medinstitute.org

U.S. Committee for Refugees
1717 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 347-3507
www.refugees.org

Woman's Missionary Union, SBC
Highway 280 East, 100 Missionary Ridge
Birmingham, AL 35242-5235
1 800 968-7301
www.wmu.org

World Vision
MARC Publications
800 W. Chestnut Ave.
Monrovia, CA 91016-3198
1 800 777-7752
www.marcpublications.com

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APPENDIX B

Action Plan Sheet

Objective number _____ Goal number _____

Description of tasks _____

Date to be completed _____

Person responsible for seeing that tasks are completed? _____

Approvals needed Yes No If yes, by whom or by what group? _____

Person responsible for seeing that this approval is secured? _____

Who has to report to whom about what? _____

What information is needed in this report? _____

Who has this information and what must be done to get it? _____

ACTION PLAN SHEET

What resources are needed? What resources are available? Who controls the disbursement of these resources and who has to do what to secure the needed resources?

People

Money

Services

Other

What are the possible negative consequences of this action? _____

Can these be avoided? Yes No If yes, what has to be done by whom? _____

Notes on additional special circumstances surrounding this action: _____

APPENDIX C

Key Questions to Ask and Answer Before Starting a New Ministry

Starting any new ministry is a challenge and there are no guarantees that it will be a success. However, answering the following questions can greatly increase the possibility that a new ministry will succeed. Be sure to answer each question honestly and thoroughly.

1. What is the purpose of the ministry?
2. Who are we trying to serve?
3. What are their needs? What services will we offer them?
4. How will we address those needs?
5. How will we communicate the gospel?
6. What kind of team is needed to carry out the ministry?
7. How will we lead the ministry?
8. What support will be needed for the ministry, such as people, budget, space, and materials?
9. What training is needed to do these ministries?
10. What is the communication plan for the ministry?
 - with the volunteers
 - with those you are trying to reach
 - with church staff
 - with the church at large
11. How will you know the ministry is effective?

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APPENDIX D

Towns Spiritual Gifts Inventory

Developed by Elmer Towns, Dean of School of Religion, Liberty University

Rate each of the following on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being weak and 10 being strong.

1. I believe in taking a stand on issues, even when no one stands with me or even cares. _____
2. If a job is worth doing, it's worth doing well, and I can do it many times. _____
3. I can effectively motivate others into Christian service. _____
4. I enjoy studying the Bible to find new things. _____
5. I find tithing my income is easy to do. _____
6. I believe in managing money properly to get the most done, not spontaneous buying. _____
7. I want to spend more time helping addicted people break their habits. _____
8. I have shared my faith with many nonbelievers at school and/or work. _____
9. In a group, people look to me for leadership. _____
10. The church would be stronger if pastors boldly denounced sin by name from the pulpit. _____
11. I enjoy doing the little jobs around the church that others don't do. _____
12. I think living an effective Christian life is more important than knowing doctrine. _____
13. I take time from other things to study the Bible. _____
14. I enjoy managing my money, paying bills, and writing checks. _____
15. I believe most of the problems in our church come from poor management. _____
16. I want to make sure everyone visiting my church is made comfortable. _____
17. I find deep satisfaction when I lead someone to pray to receive Christ. _____
18. I usually try to persuade members of my group to my point of view. _____
19. If the church took a firmer stand on issues, society could be more righteous. _____
20. I don't mind being asked to do something that takes time. _____
21. People constantly tell me how much I have helped them in life. _____
22. I can speak in public without embarrassment. _____
23. I get great joy in writing out my weekly check for my church. _____
24. I don't believe in doing a job that I can delegate to others. _____
25. I listen to people's problems so I can understand them better. _____
26. I have led many to Christ in my lifetime. _____
27. I study practical ways to help the spiritual life of others. _____
28. I find it easy to confront inactive or uninvolved Christians. _____
29. I like to help behind the scenes without recognition. _____
30. I think preaching should encourage listeners to healthy attitudes and practical living. _____
31. I enjoy studying the meaning of words in the Bible. _____
32. I am ready to give additional finances for special evangelistic crusades. _____
33. I believe we could get more done if we planned and followed a detailed schedule. _____
34. I enjoy ministering to discouraged believers to motivate them to overcome their problems. _____
35. I find it natural to turn the conversation with unbelievers toward my church or Lord. _____
36. I find it easy to make a decision for the people in any group I am with. _____
37. When church members try to hide their sin, I feel a pastor should rebuke them. _____
38. When I serve the Lord, I don't care who gets the credit. _____
39. I like to share insights from my study to help others practically. _____

TOWNS SPIRITUAL INVENTORY

40. I spend extra time studying my Bible because I love to teach. _____
41. I look for items in my budget to trim so I can give more to God. _____
42. I usually think of a long-range plan for projects before others see it. _____
43. I am willing to assist others to make the ministry go forward. _____
44. I am so convinced that people are lost, I try to communicate the gospel even though people resist. _____
45. I have a concern that people in my group grow in Christ. _____
46. I believe in confronting a friend about a nonChristian attitude. _____
47. I get more pleasure out of doing a job well than from compliments. _____
48. I enjoy sermons with positive suggestions more than those that attack sin. _____
49. I believe that it is terrible to speak in public without having something to say. _____
50. I am not offended when the church asks for extra money for foreign missions. _____
51. I believe the church needs more job descriptions to get more done for God. _____
52. I feel so deeply for cancer victims that I want to be with them in their need. _____
53. Because I love to share my faith with unsaved people, I get frustrated at Christians who don't. _____
54. I am so concerned when people drop out of my group that I go after them. _____
55. I am not embarrassed to wear a religious pin or read my Bible in public. _____
56. I appreciate the opportunity to do any task to help the ministry. _____
57. I like to share practical helps that will make life easier to live. _____
58. My greatest satisfaction is helping others get new insights from the Bible. _____
59. I get irritated when my church has a money need and doesn't ask me. _____
60. I believe it is important to plan small details so a group won't waste time. _____
61. I feel the sufferings of people so deeply that I try to help them. _____
62. I am always inviting unsaved people to attend church because I want them to be converted. _____
63. I try to get my friends together for fellowship or to serve Christ. _____
64. I feel we need more preaching on sin, "calling a spade a spade." _____
65. I want to give extra time to do any little job at the church. _____
66. I would rather hear practical sermons than negative ones that attack. _____
67. I have not taught an acceptable lesson unless I share some new truth from the Word of God. _____
68. When I've increased my tithe in the past, God has blessed me financially, so I constantly look for extra ways to give more money. _____
69. I like everything in its place and cleaned up before I can relax. _____
70. I find my deepest reward when discouraged people are helped by my support. _____
71. I look forward to presenting the gospel to the unsaved when the church invites me to participate in evangelistic outreach events. _____
72. I will give up personal time to help everyone in my group become obedient to Christ. _____
73. To help people, I don't allow them to feel comfortable in their sin, but I confront their sin. _____
74. I feel good when a job is done right and no one has to compliment me. _____
75. I tend to enjoy sermons with practical applications more than "deep" sermons. _____
76. I think knowing Bible doctrine is more important than learning practical helps. _____
77. I begin with the tithe and then give extra. _____

- 78. I believe our church would be better if we followed more carefully the master calendar, the budget, and the bylaws. _____
- 79. People tell me their problems because I understand and support them. _____
- 80. The main problem with my church is many members are not interested in soul-winning. _____
- 81. I pray for many in my group because they don't pray for themselves. _____
- 82. I feel confident telling others what to believe about the Bible and correcting their wrong views. _____
- 83. I appreciate the opportunity to do any task to help the ministry. _____
- 84. Everyone in the church can be helped with a kind word, so be slow to criticize. _____
- 85. I enjoy taking the responsibility for the growth of Bible knowledge in others. _____
- 86. I believe we should give our money to God, even when we have to sacrifice necessities to do it. _____
- 87. I believe we need more supervision of ministry so we would have better results. _____
- 88. I try to be there when my friends need me, not to do something for them, but to spend time with them. _____
- 89. People say I'm compulsive because I'm always trying to share Christ with them. _____
- 90. Whenever I'm in a group of people, I usually take over leadership. _____

Finding Your Totals

Add the score for the following questions to discover your score in each of the gifts.

Your highest scores are your strongest spiritual gifts. Concentrate on using these gifts when choosing the ministry God has for you.

Prophecy	1	19	37	55	73	10	28	46	64	82	Total
Helps	2	20	38	56	74	11	29	47	65	83	Total
Exhortation	3	21	39	57	75	12	30	48	66	84	Total
Teaching	4	22	40	58	76	13	31	49	67	85	Total
Giving	5	23	41	59	77	14	32	50	68	86	Total
Administration	6	24	42	60	78	15	33	51	69	87	Total
Showing Mercy	7	25	43	61	79	16	34	52	70	88	Total
Evangelist	8	26	44	62	80	17	35	53	71	89	Total
Shepherding	9	27	45	63	81	18	36	54	72	90	Total

Definitions of Gifts

Prophecy—that special ability to see the influence of evil (as did the Old Testament prophets) and warn God’s people of its damage. The prophet has a deep passion to defend God’s reputation, takes a stand for issues, and uses negative motivation, i.e., “Thus saith the Lord” (see Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:10,28; Eph. 4:11-14).

Helps—that special ability to do service-oriented work for God in necessary tasks that may seem routine and mundane. The helper usually enjoys serving without public attention, doing such tasks as preparing a meeting room or working on a church building (see Rom. 12:7; 16:1,2; 1 Cor. 12:28; 1 Pet. 4:10-11).

Teaching—that special ability and desire to study God’s Word and share with others what is learned. The teacher enjoys communicating information to individuals or groups (see Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11-14; 1 Tim. 4:13).

Exhortation—that special ability to find and communicate to others practical ways of serving God. The exhorter is a positive motivator, knowing practical Christianity will change the lives of others (see Rom. 12:8; Heb. 10:25).

Giving—that special ability to contribute material resources to God’s work. The giver has a great desire to share time, talent, and treasures with liberality and self-sacrificing cheerfulness (see Rom. 12:8; 2 Cor. 8:1-7; 9:12).

Administration—that special ability to manage human, financial, and physical resources in an efficient manner. The administrator functions by planning, organizing, leading, and supervising (see Rom 12:8; 1 Cor. 12:28; Titus 1:5).

Showing Mercy—that special ability to identify with those in distress and sympathetically give spiritual comfort and support. The one who shows mercy ministers through identifying with those in distress and comes along side to comfort them (see Matt. 9:36; Rom. 12:8).

Evangelist—that special ability to lead unsaved people to knowledge of Christ. The evangelist has a passion for souls, a clear understanding of the gospel, and a tendency to be confrontational in approaching people because of the urgency of the task (see Acts 21:8; 8:5-6; Eph. 4:11-14; 2 Tim. 4:5).

Shepherding—that special ability to lead a group of believers. The shepherd (group leader) has a desire to help the group determine its spiritual goal(s), provide direction as they move toward the goal, and protect group members from harmful influences (see Eph. 4:11-14; 1 Pet. 5:1,3).

APPENDIX E

Charitable Choice

When Congress voted in 1996 to “end welfare as we know it,” the legislation included a provision of utmost importance in the battle against poverty and its ills. That provision is called “Charitable Choice” and it reflects Congress’ intention to partner with faith-based institutions in meeting the great human needs in America’s communities.

Central to the concept of Charitable Choice is the question, “What does it mean to be a compassionate people?” Historically, the church has taken this question seriously. The church and community-based organizations have heeded the call of Christ to “love your neighbor.” As Chapter 1 pointed out, the church understood that serving the needy and oppressed was a central aspect of knowing and worshiping God, consistent with Proverbs 14:31 (GNB), which states “kindness shown to the poor is an act of worship.”

“Since the 1960’s, the United States has spent \$5.4 trillion on human service programs. Yet, we have endured a 30-year rise in illegitimacy of 500 percent, watched violent crime increase by 600 percent, and seen the number of children on the welfare rolls swell from 3.3 million in 1965 to 9.6 million in 1993.¹ What do these statistics show us? That simply allocating money cannot solve the problems at the heart of such ills as teenage pregnancy and violence, family disintegration, and the welfare mentality in general. Something greater than government is needed.

In 1996, Congress began to dismantle this exclusive governmental approach with the Charitable Choice provision. Title 1, Section 104, of the Welfare Reform Act of 1996 seeks to stimulate cooperation between the public sector and the community in matters of fighting poverty and its ensuing ills. As Michael Novak states, “What we are seeking is a new way. . . . a welfare society whose pivot is less the state than the civil society; and in which the state’s method of operation is indirect by way of strengthening civil society, rather than indirect by way of repressing it.”²

Understanding Charitable Choice

What is Charitable Choice and what does it do? Charitable Choice invites states to enlist the help of charitable and faith-based institutions in delivering welfare services to needy Americans. The provision allows states to partner with faith-based programs on the same basis as secular agencies and anti-poverty efforts. Religious providers are not required to sterilize their programs or be apologetic about the power of the gospel in order to compete for contracts or participate in voucher programs in servicing the needy. The church stays true to its unique ecclesiastical nature and retains control “over the definition, development, practices, and expression of its religious beliefs.”³

Senator Ashcroft of Missouri, the author of Charitable Choice states, “America’s faith-based charities and non-government organizations . . . have been successful in moving people from welfare dependency to dignity and self-reliance. Government alone will never solve our welfare problem. We need to enlist our faith institutions in the war on poverty.”⁴

Charitable Choice specifically provides that:

1. States may provide welfare services through contracts with charitable, religious, or private organizations and/or give beneficiaries vouchers that are redeemable with such groups;
2. Religious groups may participate on the same basis as any other non-governmental provider without impairing the religious character of such organization and without diminishing the religious freedom of beneficiaries of assistance; and
3. States may not discriminate against a religious provider on the basis that the organization has a religious character.

Why Charitable Choice?

When considering the possibilities posed by the Charitable Choice provision of the 1996 Welfare Reform Act, a congregation has several options. One is to do ministry without utilizing any government funds. This is a valid choice for those who prefer not to seek government assistance. A second option is to learn about community organizations that provide assistance and refer people to those services. It is always wise to work in conjunction with the available helping agencies in your community. This demonstrates responsible stewardship.

A final option is to explore the possibility of obtaining government funds to render a service through your church. Examples include providing subsidized child care through a church preschool program for parents new to the workforce or receiving government funds to provide heating financial assistance in the winter months. The resources, needs, and opportunities will vary from community to community. Pursuing this avenue will necessitate knowledge of the community social service system. Social workers who are members of your church could prove invaluable in guiding the congregation in exploring these options.

Texas Governor George W. Bush has stated, “Government can hand out money, but it cannot put hope in our hearts or a sense of purpose in our lives. It cannot bring us peace of mind. It cannot fill the spiritual well from which we draw strength day to day. Only faith can do that.”⁵

How can the church respond? The unique value of faith-based ministries comes not just in delivering services more efficiently than government, but also in delivering services more effectively. Faith-based institutions strive for inner conversion and inject spiritual and moral resources that are beyond government’s ability or role. Consequently, the church is not simply a government contractor in various and sundry areas; rather, it is an equal partner providing what the government cannot. And in order for the church to have its full impact, it must be careful to guard its religious character and mission.

The church must do what it does best—present a life-changing message to an individual blinded due to extraordinary need, a message that moves the individual from dependence on government money to dependence on an eternal Savior.

Hence, the local church has a two-fold challenge:

1. Establish creative ministries that service the hurting and impoverished in its community; and
2. Ensure that the ministries are efficient and effective in accord with the Great Commission.

Ministry examples include: Christ-centered General Equivalency Diploma programs; job training programs with a curricular focus on a person's relationship with God, family, and work; day care programs for working families; and faith-based drug treatment programs. These are just a few examples among endless options. The community needs assessment described in Chapter 6 will give you a better idea of what programs and ministries your church could offer. This guide provides detailed suggestions and plans for specific ways your church can serve the poor and needy in your community.

Charitable Choice offers a unique and challenging role to the church. With regard to the cultural crises we face, the church must see that no other approach holds greater promise than does its energetic and active involvement. Faith institutions offer changed lives. They work at a redeeming level. They appeal to matters of heart and soul. They renew human connections and instill hope. They renew the mind. The American landscape desperately needs the message the church has to offer.

If your church chooses to navigate the waters of Charitable Choice, it is embarking on a great opportunity: an opportunity for a resurgence of evangelism through meeting the needs of persons in the community around them—ministry-based evangelism. Let us hope that the whole church will respond with the statement of Isaiah, “Here am I. Send me” (Isa. 6:8, NASB).

Notes

¹ “Introduction: A Vital Role for Religious Social Ministries,” *Faith in Action . . . A New Vision for Church-State Cooperation in Texas* (Austin, Tex.: Governor’s Advisory Task Force on Faith-Based Community Service Groups, 1996), p. vi.

² *Ibid.*, p. vii.

³ *Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996*, 104th Cong., 2nd sess., H.R. 3734.

⁴ “The New ‘Charitable Choice’ Act,” *Faith in Action . . . A New Vision for Church-State Cooperation in Texas* (Austin, Tex.: Governor’s Advisory Task Force on Faith-Based Community Service Groups, 1996), p. 4.

⁵ “Introduction: A Vital Role for Religious Social Ministries,” *Faith in Action . . . A New Vision for Church-State Cooperation in Texas* (Austin, Tex.: Governor’s Advisory Task Force on Faith-Based Community Service Groups, 1996), p. v.

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APPENDIX F

Pros and Cons of Forming a 501(c)(3) Organization

In Appendix E, you learned about the Charitable Choice provision in the 1996 welfare reform legislation and how it can affect your ministry. In this appendix, we will look at the pros and cons of becoming a 501(c)(3) organization.

Questions come up once your church or faith-based institution decides to engage in the arena of welfare and spiritual renewal by way of the Charitable Choice provision. For instance, should you establish a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation separate from existing corporate entities? Or, would it be better to simply engage, interact, and cooperate with state and local governmental agencies as is? To answer that question for your church, you will need to understand the nuances of a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. This appendix gives you both the characteristics of a nonprofit corporation and details of the 501(c)(3) tax exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code (IRC).

Defining a Nonprofit Corporation

First, look at the attributes of a nonprofit corporation.

- A nonprofit corporation is a creature of state law. Each state makes statutes governing both the creation and maintenance requirements for a nonprofit corporation.
- Like for-profit companies, nonprofits provide limited liability protection to their founders and directors, and generally allow a profit from both nonprofit and commercial activities.
- Unlike for-profits, however, a nonprofit may not issue shares of stock or pay dividends. Also, while most for-profit companies are formed for “any lawful purpose,” nonprofits must usually be established for specific purposes that benefit the public at large or a particular membership. In fact, the essential trait of a nonprofit, which we will examine in detail later, is its specific nonprofit purpose articulated in its bylaws and articles of incorporation.
- You especially need to understand that a company may actually incorporate as a nonprofit corporation, but not be eligible for tax exempt status under the IRC. In other words, all tax exempt entities are nonprofits, but not all nonprofits are tax exempt.

Understanding 501(c)(3) Recognition and Tax Exempt Status

IRC 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporations simply are corporations that meet the eligibility criteria spelled out in this section. Specifically, IRC 501(c)(3) nonprofits must be organized for religious, charitable, educational, scientific, or literary purposes. These tax exempt categories cover many purposes and activities. The articles of incorporation of a 501(c)(3) must limit corporate purposes to one or more of these allowable 501(c)(3) purposes and must not allow the nonprofit to engage in activities that do not go along with its stated objectives, other than in small ways.

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Once the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) receives an application presenting eligibility information consistent with IRC 501(c)(3), then a nonprofit obtains 501(c)(3) designate status. The length of the application and approval process varies, but this typically takes about nine months.

The cost of establishing a 501(c)(3), nonprofit company will vary greatly, but generally will not exceed \$750 to \$1000.

Upon approval, the nonprofit inherently receives the benefit of “tax exempt” status. The benefits of this status are:

- Eligibility for state and federal exemptions from paying corporate income taxes.
- Tax exemptions such as property, sales, and excise taxes.
- Donors have the incentive of receiving an individual tax deduction.

Benefits of 501(c)(3)

Does your ministry have to be a 501(c)(3) entity to be a faith-based provider under the Charitable Choice option? No. Rather, the decision is a matter of preference. There is no rule that says you must create a new entity.

As a matter of preference, however, a religious organization may opt to establish a 501(c)(3) to coordinate use of federal funds in response to audit responsibilities. Otherwise, a religious organization may simply erect a separate account within an existing entity and still comply with the audit accountability. Some would argue, however, that it is better to establish a separate 501(c)(3) because it limits the intrusiveness of audits. A 501(c)(3) also helps shield the existing organizations from federal employment requirements. In order to protect the main religious organization from “employment” related issues, a new and separate 501(c)(3) entity will provide further protections and safeguards.

Yet, some religious entities fear that by creating a 501(c)(3), control and direction will be given up in favor of convenience and coordination. Recall from the beginning of this appendix that nonprofit corporations are creatures of state law. In state statute, specific requirements are spelled out regarding the roles and responsibilities of members, directors, and officers of a nonprofit corporation. Moreover, the statutes indicate even the minimum number of annual meetings required of the board of directors, officers, and so forth. Obviously, these requirements mimic and duplicate the type of requirements placed upon for-profit companies.

The requirements and varying roles described in law provide a way for persons intimately interested in the entity to control and direct it accordingly. For instance, the statutory provision and option for formal membership in a nonprofit corporation is an initial decision that greatly influences control and direction. Members of a nonprofit are given specific legal rights to participate, and thus exercise control, in corporate affairs. Membership rights normally include, among others, the right to:

- Vote for the election of the board of directors.

- Approve changes to the articles or bylaws of the corporation.
- Vote for a dissolution of the corporation.
- Approve a sale of the corporation's assets.

It is optional for a nonprofit to have formal members with legal voting rights. Here are some reasons many nonprofit corporations prefer a non-membership corporation:

- Setting up a formal membership with voting rights dilutes directorship control over corporate affairs.
- It isn't always simple to expel a member. State law may require that members only be expelled for good cause subsequent to a formal hearing.

Yet, with interests of control at stake, an organizer of a nonprofit corporation engaged in ministry in association with a church may actually want to dilute the board of directors' ability to govern. This can be done by choosing to establish a formal, voting membership made up of people who are long-standing patrons of the community and whose convictions are identical to the church involved in the ministry. This offers a pseudo "gridlock" function similar to Congress (a balancing of powers if you will). Of course, by vesting a membership class with substantial control in the selection of "managers" of the corporation, the persons selected to fill those vacancies will mirror the convictions and concerns of both the church and the members. This preserves the element of control. In other words, the members, with the interests and purposes of the church in mind, can deter the corporation from veering off the course the church or faith-based entity had originally determined for it.

Other protections exist including staggering the terms of both directors and officers, defining and limiting definitions of responsibilities and rights of directors and officers, specifying and articulating bluntly the nonprofit corporation's one or similar purpose.

In essence, with the advice of legal counsel, protections can be provided that will allow the establishment of a separate, nonprofit, 501(c)(3) corporation, but will still maintain and protect the interests of the church and members. The church leadership and organizer(s) of the nonprofit simply must communicate to counsel their priorities of concern and any competing interests, such as whether the creation of a separate entity violates internal governance procedures.

How to Establish a 501(c)(3)

So how does a church get started in establishing a separate, nonprofit corporation? Fortunately, most incorporation steps, especially those involving legal formalities such as reserving a corporate name, preparing and filing articles of incorporation, and so forth, are straightforward. Generally, standard incorporation forms are available, and the process consists of transferring available information to the boilerplate forms. However, because the content of certain corporate documents differ from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, it is essential that the Secretary of State be contacted to first obtain the required forms.

The forms provided by the Secretary of State normally include:

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- A nonprofit articles of incorporation form with instructions on filing
- Nonprofit corporation statutes governing the technical requirements
- A fee schedule for current charges on filing, copying, and certifying various corporate forms
- Forms and instructions to verify corporate name availability
- Forms and instructions regarding post-incorporate procedures, such as procedures to amend articles, change of corporate name, and so forth

The next step will be to choose a corporate name. In practical terms, the name is a very important aspect of the incorporation process, because to a certain extent it reveals the “goodwill” and purpose of the nonprofit. Specifically, government agencies and welfare recipients now reflect the constituency of the nonprofit, and as such, names or terminology are extremely important in reflecting the faith-based approach that the entity will implement in ministering. In simple terms, the name is another chance for your nonprofit to make clear to everyone interacting with it that it is a faith-based entity.

From a legal standpoint, you should keep in mind that the chosen corporate name cannot be confusingly similar to a name already on file with the Secretary of State. Other legalities exist with regard to the selection of a corporate name. Your legal counsel can help you with those legalities.

The next step in organizing the nonprofit is preparing and filing the articles of incorporation. The articles represent the primary incorporation document. The nonprofit is officially registered as a nonprofit only when the articles are filed with the Secretary of State. Also, the articles are where the organizer(s) normally stipulate that the nonprofit will possess formal, voting members. Also, this is where tax exemption language is usually noted in anticipation of 501(c)(3) application and approval.

Following the filing of the articles, the nonprofit, as indicated, is formally a recognized corporation. The corporate structure then drafts and adopts bylaws. Think of the bylaws as the corporation’s internal affairs manual, containing the rules and procedures for holding meetings, electing directors and officers, and addressing other vital corporate functions.

Lastly, subsequent to the corporate filings and adoption of bylaws, the nonprofit will apply for 501(c)(3) status and obtain state corporate income tax exemption. Generally, the following forms are needed in making application to the IRS:

- Form 8718 (User Fee for Exempt Organization Determination Letter Request)
- Package 1023 (Application for Recognition of Exemption, with instructions)
- Form SS-4 (Application for Employer Identification Number)
- Publication 557 (Tax Exempt Status for Your Organization)
- Publication 578 (Tax Information for Private Foundations and Foundation Managers), if applicable

Because of the technicalities of the forms and requirements of satisfying tax exempt requirements, you will want a professional to handle this portion of the process.

Congratulations! Upon filing the necessary forms with the Secretary of State, and initiating and completing the tax-exempt process, a valid and subsisting 501(c)(3), nonprofit corporation is ready, willing, and able to tackle the welfare and spiritual needs of welfare recipients on a community basis. Though the process is somewhat tedious at points, it is well worth it to have all the favorable attributes of a 501(c)(3) nonprofit due to the protections and safeguards established in the Charitable Choice provision.

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