



Suggestions for developing an Evangelism Ministry inside the Church

Evangelism is. . .

- sharing the good news of God's love with people who have not heard it before,
- preparing people to make or renew their commitment to Jesus Christ,
- participating in God's mission to transform the world.

Offering Jesus Christ to the world outside the fellowship of the local church is a primary task of all Christians. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, said "The world is my parish." Besides welcoming people into the fellowship of the church and helping them become and grow as Christians, the local church must have an evangelism ministry that reaches beyond the congregation!

Evangelism is welcoming new visitors to our churches, but it is also helping prepare all those who attend to make a commitment or renew their commitment to Jesus Christ to become disciples for Christ. This means helping them to become Christians, to grow as Christians and to serve as Christian disciples of Jesus. The following questions and suggestions are meant to help the local church engage in effective evangelism in the congregation.

I. EVANGELISM THROUGH AN EVANGELISM TEAM (Committee)

A. Primary task of an Evangelism Team

1. To see that the congregation reaches out to people with the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ.
2. To call people to a personal relationship with Jesus (help them become disciples for Christ).

3. To train people in Christian witnessing.
4. To explore and use a variety of ways to bring the message of Jesus to people.

B. Job description for an Evangelism Team

1. Help guide the work of evangelism throughout the year.
2. Help recruit volunteers to work in evangelism ministry.
3. Take training in evangelism when offered.
4. Care for all members of the congregation (including those who are inactive) as well as persons who are not members of our congregation; to help all to know Jesus Christ as personal Savior and to experience God's love.
5. Work together planning and carrying out evangelism events.
6. Work together and set goals for congregational growth.
7. Research and provide devotional materials.
8. Encourage and assist the pastor in expanding the evangelism ministry.
9. Assist the Pastor in developing Membership Classes.
10. To make an annual budget to financially carry out the evangelism programs. This budget request is to be submitted to the church Finance Committee.
11. Help evaluate our evangelism work: What works well? What are our weaknesses?

C. Recruiting the Team

1. Does the church annually nominate persons to serve on an Evangelism Committee?
2. If the church does not have an evangelism committee, recruit several persons concerned about evangelism to approach the pastor and request that the church nominate an Evangelism Committee. Include the following with the request:
 - a. persons chosen must be professing and committed Christians.
 - b. persons chosen need to have the ability to communicate to persons of all ages.
 - c. persons chosen must be open and willing to learn how to do evangelism.
 - d. persons chosen need to be willing to serve at least 3 years.
3. Try to begin the Evangelism Committee with at least 4 persons.

D. Training the Team

1. Consider the necessity of training first before doing evangelism. It might help to meet more often than monthly at first (or take a full day), in order to understand evangelism, clarify the vision, set goals, choose priorities and then make plans for the church's evangelism ministry.
2. Make up a resource packet on evangelism for each team member:
 - a. include copies of this document "Suggestions for Developing an Evangelism Ministry Inside the Church"
 - b. include copies of "Suggested Guidelines for Sharing Our Faith Stories"
 - c. include copies of the church brochure, a bulletin, a church newsletter and the church vision statement.
 - d. include copies of "Suggestions for Developing a Welcoming Evangelism Ministry"
 - e. include copies of "Suggestions for Developing an Evangelism Ministry Outside the Church"
3. Review line by line the "Welcoming Evangelism Ministry" document, asking team members to evaluate each question or suggestion and discuss if the particular evangelism activity is being done in the congregation and what the church might do to enable or enhance that particular evangelism activity. Continue the training by reviewing and conducting a line by line evaluation of the "Evangelism Ministry Inside the Church" and then the "Evangelism Ministry Outside the Church" documents.

E. Assigning each Team Member an area of responsibility

1. The team members work together as a team, helping one another in the overall evangelism ministry, but it is helpful for each team member to assume responsibility in at least one primary area (Welcoming, Inside or Outside evangelism), and at least one secondary area, such as development of a particular program or a particular aspect of one of the primary areas of evangelism.
2. Ownership usually results in action, especially if the whole evangelism team holds the individual team members accountable for their areas of responsibility.
3. Help each team member to discover their individual gifts and graces for ministry. It might be helpful for them to take a "Spiritual Gifts Inventory." One of these is available at www.kodachrome.org/spiritgift. (There are many others online: search for "Spiritual Gifts Inventory").
4. Pray together specifically for God's leading as you individually choose to accept accountability assignments.

II. EVANGELISM IN THE CHURCH'S VISION

A. In the Vision Statement

1. Does the local church annually review/modify and then affirm its Vision Statement?
2. Does the Vision Statement include evangelism (making disciples for Jesus Christ)?
3. Is the Vision Statement presented to the congregation on a regular basis?
 - a. in the worship bulletin?
 - b. in the activity brochures?
 - c. in the church newsletter?
 - d. on the overhead computer screen?
 - e. from the pulpit?
 - f. Do the sermons occasionally address the church's vision?

B. In the Vision's fulfillment

1. Does the congregation set reachable goals for the vision?
2. Are these vision goals measurable?
3. Does the congregation hear or read of examples of the vision being fulfilled?
4. Does the congregation celebrate when vision goals are reached?
5. Does the congregation set new, reachable and measurable goals for the vision?

III. EVANGELISM IN THE CHURCH'S WORSHIP

A. In the Pastor's Messages

1. Does the pastor preach biblical sermons (where the core of the message comes from the scriptures and especially the message from God through Jesus)?
2. Does the pastor regularly refer to Jesus in the sermon?
3. Is the "Good News" of salvation through Jesus Christ proclaimed on a regular basis?
4. Are the pastor's messages directed to regular members, new members and the un-churched?
5. Does the pastor tell the stories of effective evangelism (to dissipate fear of evangelism?)
6. Does the pastor give an invitation for commitment (and/or re-commitment) to Christ at the conclusion of most sermons?

B. In the Music

1. Are the music leaders (song leader, choir director, organist, pianist or instrumentalists) open and flexible to a change in the service should persons respond to an invitation? It would be helpful to the pastor to know that the music leaders have at least one musical piece (song, instrumental, hymn, etc.) to play when an unprepared change takes place in the worship plan.
2. Are traditional invitational hymns or contemporary invitational songs regularly used in the worship service?
3. Does the music (songs, hymns, specials) appeal to only one age group, leaving out the others, or do the music leaders offer a variety of music (blended service?) This gives an opportunity for the new people to learn the wonderful old hymns and the lovers of the beloved old hymns to learn the contemporary hymns and songs.
4. Do the music leaders introduce new music occasionally and sing them often enough for the congregation to learn them?
5. Are newcomers encouraged to participate in the music ministry?
6. Do the music leaders worship/pray together in preparation for leading the congregational worship?
7. Is the overall music chosen to enhance the pastor's message or a particular worship theme?
8. Do the music leaders meet with the pastor on a regular basis?
9. When no instrumentalists are available to assist in the music leadership, are accompaniment tapes or CD's used to help the congregation sing?
9. Does the church provide a choice of two worship services?
 - a. earlier, more traditional service?
 - b. later, more contemporary service? (younger people tend to get up later on Sunday)

C. In the Lay Participation

1. Do lay persons assist in the worship service?
 - a. Reading the scripture?
 - b. Sharing the announcements?
 - c. Receiving the offering?
 - d. Offering prayers?
 - e. Assisting in Holy Communion?
2. Is there a screening process established to assure that those who assist in worship have made a faith commitment to Jesus Christ and their life reflects their faith in Jesus? (Much damage is done when uncommitted Christians lead in worship and their lives do not reflect a Christian walk!)
3. Are lay persons encouraged to share their faith experiences during worship?
 - a. as a testimony to answered prayer?
 - b. as a witness to their new life in Christ?
 - c. as a prepared message either with or in place of the pastor's message?
4. Are lay worship leaders given training in speaking and leading in worship?
5. Do the lay participants meet with the pastor prior to the worship service?

D. In a Prayer and Healing ministry

1. Are lay persons recruited and trained to be available for persons requesting prayer?
2. Is an invitation given for persons to come forward (or to the side of the sanctuary) for prayer?
3. Do these trained persons take a position at the front or side when the pastor gives an invitation to make a commitment to Christ?

4. Are the prayer teams trained to help lead individuals to accept the invitation to commit their lives to Jesus (become a disciple for Christ)?

E. In the Worship Helps (bulletins, etc.)

1. Does the bulletin contain an invitation to go to the prayer teams for prayer?
2. Does the bulletin provide information about classes available with an evangelistic emphasis?
3. Does the bulletin have an invitation to an "Inquirer's Class" to learn more about the church or becoming a Christian?

F. In Special Worship Services (evangelism events)

1. Does the church occasionally invite inspirational speakers to come and share their faith and the message of salvation through Jesus Christ?
2. Does the church have at least an annual emphasis on evangelism?
3. Does the church occasionally have an emphasis on renewal of commitment to Jesus Christ?
4. Does the church take time to commission and consecrate those sent out to do the work of evangelism?

G. In Baptisms and Receptions of New Members

1. Child Baptisms: Does the pastor meet with the parents (and/or sponsors) beforehand to explain Christian baptism?

---a. Is the work of the Holy Spirit on their lives and the lives of their children made clear when they present their children for baptism?

---b. Do they understand the requirement of their commitment to Christ and their commitment to do all in their power to raise their children in a Christian home and to prepare their children for the time when their children are of age and will need to make their own commitment of their lives to Jesus Christ?

---c. Is the congregation challenged to do all in their power to help prepare the children to make their own personal commitment to Jesus Christ?

2. Youth, Young Adult and Adult baptisms: Does the pastor meet beforehand with those desiring baptism to explain Christian baptism?

---a. Do they understand fully the significance and requirement of their commitment to Christ; to reject their old, sinful life and to begin to live for Jesus and His way?

---b. Is the church open to providing baptism by immersion?

---c. Are those to be baptized asked to share with the congregation the reason they made their commitment to Christ and why they want to be baptized?

---c. Is the congregation challenged to do all in their power to help them grow in their personal commitment to Jesus Christ?

3. Receptions of New Members:

---a. Does the pastor meet with each person individually to go over the Membership Vows and answer any questions that person may have? (*see the United Methodist Hymnal pages 33-54*).

---b. Does the pastor explain what it means to accept (confess) Jesus Christ as our Savior?

---c. Is a clear explanation given of what it means to become a disciple of Christ?

-a follower of Jesus' teachings

-a believer in Jesus as the way to life

-a representative of Jesus in our world

---d. Does the pastor make it clear to the individual that he or she is to become fully involved in the ministry of the church through prayer, regular church attendance, regular financial support and involvement in the church's ministry in the fellowship, in the community and in the mission of the church?

---e. Does the pastor give the individual an opportunity to share with the congregation why he or she decided to become a member of the church? (It only hurts the church to invite persons to come forward who wish to join without the preparation of a membership class, counseling and clear explanations of what it means to be a disciple of Christ in the congregation!)

---f. Does the church welcome and celebrate the new members with a party, a reception after the service, a dinner in their honor, gifts or other means to express their joy in receiving them as new members?

IV. EVANGELISM IN THE CHURCH'S BUDGET

A. In the Annual Pledge Drive

1. Does the church emphasize evangelism in the presentations to the congregation?

---a. Jesus challenged the disciples to "**Go and make disciples...**" (*Matthew 28:19*). John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, challenged those who were going to America to "Offer them Christ." Is the congregation given an explanation of their commission to make disciples for Jesus Christ?

---b. Is the congregation given specific examples of how their giving will help carry out the church's evangelism ministry in the coming year?

2. Budget examples:

---a. Welcoming Evangelism Ministry budget should include costs of all special brochures, mugs to give to visitors, "give-away" Bibles, parking attendant vests and costs involved with expanded guest (visitor) parking stalls. Also, consider the costs for upgrading to multi-media equipment (computer, good computer projector mounted on the ceiling, digital camera, installation and other equipment (which could amount to \$8,000 to \$15,000 or more). This may need a special fund drive.

---b. Evangelism Ministry Inside the Church budget items should include costs for Membership Class materials, and Evangelism class materials. Possible courses include the National Alpha Course startup training costs and Disciple Bible Study training costs. Expenses for Spiritual Retreats and the costs for inspirational speakers should also be included in the budget.

---c. Evangelism Ministry Outside the Church budget items should include costs for mass mailings, special church brochures, Christmas and Easter announcements in the newspapers, radio and TV presentations and community evangelism opportunities such as parades, county fairs and special community events. Evangelism ministry opportunities should also be included in the budget, such as a ministry to the homeless, prison and hospital ministries, etc.

B. In Finalizing the Budget

1. Does the Evangelism Team (Committee) submit a detailed annual budget to the Finance Committee?

2. Even when funds are limited, does the Finance Committee accept evangelism as a high priority in the church's ministry?

V. EVANGELISM IN THE CHURCH'S PROGRAMING

A. In Evangelism-Specific Programs

1. Does the church regularly offer classes or programs that are focused on helping persons become Christians (disciples for Christ)?
 - a. Pastor's Inquirer's Class (and/or Membership Class)?
 - b. Alpha Course?
 - c. Evangelism or Witnessing Class? A good example might be "Faith-Sharing: Dynamic Christian Witnessing by Invitation" by George E. Morris and Eddie Fox. This is a textbook on the why, what, who, and how of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. This book is available through Cokesbury Bookstores or online at (www.cokesbury.com)
2. Does the church offer weekend spiritual retreats to help persons become and/or grow in their Christian faith?

B. In Evangelism-Related Programs

1. Does the church offer Christian support groups for Christians in the congregation such as widow/divorce recovery, Christian parenting, Christian financial planning, and support of military families in the congregation?
2. Does the church offer classes such as "Disciple Bible Study" series which are helpful in answering questions about the Christian faith?

C. In Evangelism the Church School Curriculum

1. Does the church school material include times when the children (and adults) are given an opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior? Some children and adult curriculum materials take it for granted that the students have already made a commitment to Christ.
2. Are evangelism materials available in each classroom and are the teachers trained to use the evangelism materials?

“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.” (Matthew 28:19-20)

Following orders, we are to make disciples as demonstrated and taught by Jesus. This means to go ahead and do evangelism, even though we don't feel like it!