



# Outreach Events Ideas

## Reaching your Community

The purpose of the outreach phase of church planting is to gather a congregation. We can accomplish this in three ways: 1) Making contact and build a relationship with the local residents. 2) Discovering their needs and questions and 3) making the Gospel message relevant.

### A. THE MUST DO AT EVERY EVENT:

- Collect contact information and add to a mailing list.
- Send a follow-up email no later than 3 days after every event thanking the people by name for attending the event.
- Send out three invitations for the next event to everyone on the mailing list. The invitation should be sent 3 weeks, 10 days and 3 days before the event.
- The location chosen for each venue should always be easy to find, relevant for the occasion, have clean bathrooms, and be in good condition.
- Evaluate the event: What went right, wrong, and what could we do better.
- Write down the general (not specific) things we are learning about the community, such as their needs, concerns, age, socio-economic, gender, etc. Remember, we are trying to get an accurate picture of who we are ministering to so that our events and message will be of benefit to the community.

### B. EVENT IDEAS:

This list of ideas is not meant to dictate how outreaches must be done, but rather, inspire your imagination and creativity. The point is that each event must meet the goal of moving us closer to gathering a congregation. Here are some ideas:

#### EVENT 1: THE MEET AND GREET

**The purpose:** Getting to know the community and for the community to know us.

**The Program:** Tabletop discussion uses a few simple questions as a means to open people up to share about their life.

**The Format:** Divide the attendees around tables of 4-8 people (never more than 8) including 2 team members. The team members will facilitate discussion and take notes.



Step 1: Go round the table and introduce yourself.

Step 2: Question Time:

- What brought you to the meeting today?
- What do you hope to learn from this meeting?

Step 3: Introduce EMI and our goal of planting a church. Keep it short.

- “We’re here in your city to prayerfully consider opening a church here. We are part of an organization called EMI whose goal is to provide churches for people who are curious about Christianity or feel excluded or uncomfortable in other churches.”

Step 4: Questions that go deeper

- Are you actively involved in any faith?
- What is your impression of Christianity?
- What do you think are the most pressing needs of your community?
- What advice would you give to us?

**Important:** Evaluate and organize the information into common and overlapping themes. Disregard single or outlier points. Then draw a general picture of who our community is; their hopes, dreams, fears and concerns. Then begin to formulate how we might best fashion our outreaches to meet their needs.

## **EVENT 2: PROFESSIONAL PANEL DISCUSSION**

The panel discussion can be used 2-3 times as an outreach tool as each event can focus on different areas of interest. The topics can be relatable to the Assessment Paper or pertinent to a current issue or stated need.

**The Purpose:** To provide information and answers to their questions.

**The Format:** The panel should include a host who will ask questions and a panel of 2-4 people recognized as informed on the said topic. Each person has 3 minutes to introduce their name, organization and their credentials. Then there is 40-50 minutes where the host asks 3-5 questions of the panel. Some of the questions are for all to answer and some are for a particular person on the panel to answer. The host’s questions should be well thought out to ensure they would bring out the relevant information that the attendees are looking for.

Then there should be 30 minutes of Q&A from the attendees.



**Important:** The Panel participants should be furnished with the questions in advance of the meeting so that they can prepare. Additionally, in advance of the meeting, they should receive a letter with all the pertinent information such the date, time, location and a brief description of what they can expect. Lastly, there should be a polite request to keep answers brief and to the point in order to give everyone on the panel equal time.

**Possible Topics:** Faith and Sexuality, The Place of the Church in Politics and Social Action, The Church and Homosexuality, Marriage Equality, etc.

**A side benefit for us:** We are seen to be up on pressing topics and that we are well connected to professionals.

### **EVENT 3: SEMINARS**

**The Purpose:** To provide a practical life-giving benefit to the community.

**The Program:** A lecture or workshop

**The Format:** There are two different formats for a seminar. The first is a lecture where an informed expert speaks for 30-50 minutes on an assigned topic. In this format the lecturer should be engaging as well as informed. The second format is an Interactive Workshop. In this format the instructor would give short lectures interspersed with audience participation, such as: group discussions, roll playing, a game, a survey etc.

**Possible Topics:** Financial Management, How to come out to your parents, Homosexuality and the Bible, How to Date & Break-up, The Five Love Languages, DiSC: Understanding Myself & Others, How to Map Your Career Path, Conflict resolution etc.

### **EVENT 5: CREATIVE ARTS EVENING**

**Purpose:** To practice personal evangelism, build networks with local talent and show we care about local causes. (The event can be used to raise money for a local charity)

**Program:** A creative arts event can be a Music Concert, Comedy Show, an Art Showing or a mix of these.

**Format:** Use the event to raise money for a local cause. For artists, use a mixture of our own people and locally known talent. Locally known talent usually has a built-in fan base that will attend the event and thus provide our people with the opportunity for personal evangelism. Invite a representative from the local charity to speak for 5-10 minutes about their charity. Use an engaging host to MC the



event. You will need a proficient Event Coordinator to work with and communicate to all the artists. Lastly, and importantly, check and double check that all needed equipment is in good working order.

### **EVENT 6: GAME NIGHT**

1. Escape Room
2. Board Games
3. Las Vegas Casino Games
4. Bingo

And so on

It is our hop that this kick-starts your imagination.

