



Outreach Ideas for ABFs – September 03

A Shepherd's Market

One effective outreach for us at the Village Church of Barrington has been a Shepherd's Market--a glorified yard, garage, or rummage sale where nothing is sold but all is given away. Orchestrating it through our Home Small Groups, we ask people from the congregation to bring new or used but in good condition clothing, furniture, appliances, housewares, sporting goods, etc. on a specified day. We purchase video tapes, books, Bibles, tracts, etc. and orient participating people on how to engage people in conversation that leads to a personal witness with the Gospel. We set up on the front lawn of the church. One or two of our small groups work together to offer free hot dogs, brats, and beverages as well. When people come to make purchases, we startle them by saying, "you can't buy that." When they ask for clarification, we tell them that we want to give them the items to show God's love to them in a tangible way, no strings attached. This is very disarming to them. Consequently, they allow us to go further by explaining the nature of God's unconditional love for them and how he showed that in an eloquent and tangible way by sending His Son to die for us to pay for our sins, etc. We find people very willing to let us continue because of the unsolicited act of kindness with which we began. We put into people's hands literature that explains the Gospel in a compelling way. People help themselves to the videos and the books and Bibles as well (which we procure in Spanish and Russian as well, since many who visit our Market speak those languages). We have done this four times now and find it very effective in giving us numerous opportunities to share the Gospel and a demonstration of God's love, while also meeting the needs of many needy families who come to benefit from the no cost "sale." It has become contagious as other churches in the community who are used to doing rummage sales as fund raisers catch the impact of the unexpected aspect of this event--giving everything away. At the end of the day, anything left over is loaded on a truck or into a van and taken to a designated charitable organization--benefits all around.

Pastor John Vosnos
Village Church of Barrington
Barrington, Illinois

Liberty in the Community

The idea that has worked for us in regard to getting ABFs to do outreach has been what we call "Liberty in the Community". We pick a Saturday once a year and ask each ABF to pick a work project in the community that they can mobilize their ABF to be involved with. We partner with several social service agencies in the community and go in to cleaning, painting, raking, minor repair work and others. One group did a car clinic for Single's mothers on that day. It's been a good way to move our groups into the community.

I would highly recommend the book "The Church of Irresistible Influence" for ideas for community impact.

Pastor Mike Sutton
Liberty Bible Church
Chesterton, Indiana

Throw a Euchre Party

I have seen a Euchre party go over quite well! Have group members invite friends, neighbors, etc. Of course there needs to be tons of food and a place for the kids to play! I believe we sat them in front of a movie while us adults played in the Euchre tournament. Prizes go over well, too.

Here is a link that explains the rules of euchre. Just click on North American Euchre.
<http://www.pagat.com/euchre/euchre.html>

Pastor John Datema
Woodview Christian Church
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