



SIZZILIN' SUMMER

OUTREACH

What's inside

- Caring for Your Community
- Block Party
- Back-to-School Swap
- "Doorstep Delights" Follow-up



WELCOME BACK TO SUMMER!

Summer Tips

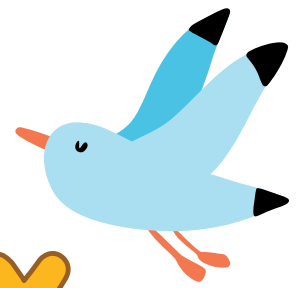
- Collect contact information for every family that attends so you can follow up with "Doorstep Delights" later in the summer!
- Focus on taking your events into the community. Schools, community centers, and parks are great places to start! While it may be easier to host at your church, remember that you're trying to reach people who aren't coming to church.
- Always provide a prayer request box and make sure people know it's there. This is a great way to show your church cares about them and is there for support through prayer.

Churches across the nation are struggling to reach families. In fact, research by Gallup shows that the recent drop in church attendance is more pronounced among married adults with children under the age of 18.

So this summer we've put together three fun yet simple ideas to reach families within your church and your community. Plus, we've included an impactful follow-up idea so you can show how much you care for the families you meet along the way.

One final thought: While we know getting families to attend your church is the dream, focus on building the relationships and trust God to do the rest. To help, included in each idea is a way to encourage relationship-building along the way—just look for the "Relationship Corner" found at the end of each section.





CARING FOR YOUR COMMUNITY



With many school budgets suffering, school grounds are in bad shape. Connect with one or more local schools and agree to recruit volunteers to come and clean up the school grounds.



Recruit through social media (neighborhood and school groups are great places to post!), neighborhood websites (like nextdoor.com), banners and flyers, and the friendship connections of parents and children in your church.



The work site leader should work with the principal and custodian(s) of the school to determine which projects can best be done by volunteers. Tasks that often need to be done include bush trimming, weed pulling, litter collecting, and spreading mulch. Check with local landscapers or landscape supply companies to see if one would donate mulch or other needed material for the cause.



Assign volunteers to bring needed tools, like weed whackers, hedge trimmers, hand tools for pulling weeds, and plastic lawn bags. Volunteers should be asked to bring their own work gloves and water bottles.



Divide up projects and areas of the grounds into sections, and assign teams of volunteers to each section, with one person assigned as the section leader. Make sure people from your church team up with other community people and, hence, get to know them.



Relationship Corner



When neighborhood cleanup is finished, invite the participants to gather on the green space outside the school for some refreshments (provided by your church). Encourage people to sit with a family they don't know and ask how long the family has lived in the community, why they moved there, what their best memories are, and their favorite places to go or things to do as a family.

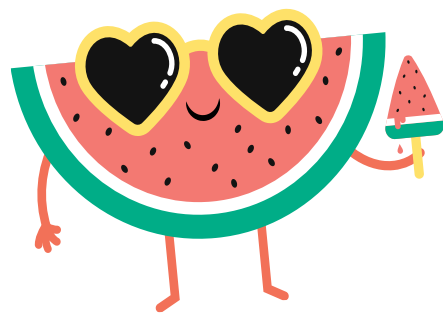




Block Party

Food and fun are great and unthreatening ways to get people together. This event can be organized in a local park or on the grounds of a local school. Preferably a place with plenty of shade and large grassy areas to sit or large picnic table areas.

If you're at a park with a large picnic table area, organize your stations around the picnic table area so people can easily sit down to enjoy the food from each stop. Also, be sure to reserve the space with your local parks and rec department or talk to the school to ensure you can gather there.



On the perimeter, set up game stations and encourage families to play together before and after they eat. Some ideas include water balloon toss, hula hoops, badminton, bocce ball, cornhole, and a hippity-hop relay. Make one station a prayer station where family members can write down their requests for your church to pray about. Invite families to circle up and say a prayer as a family while they're there.



To put a fun spin on this event, make it a "progressive" picnic. At a progressive meal, people normally rotate between several houses to enjoy the many courses of a meal. As people arrive, ask them to start by playing the games you set up around the perimeter and wait for instructions regarding mealtime. Then, when you're ready, announce how you want families to progress through the stations. Allow time for assembling and eating the food from each station as families enjoy time getting to know one another.



PARTY STATIONS

STATION 1: SNACK IT

Create an assembly line with bowls of ingredients to make a yummy snack mix, like pretzels, chips, popcorn, nuts, raisins, dried cranberries, chocolate candies, gummy bears, and other bite-size snack foods. Use cups or resealable plastic bags for people to create their own personal snack mix.



STATION 2: BUILD-YOUR-OWN SALAD CUP

Provide a variety of cut-up fruits and veggies so people can walk along and build their own cups of delicious, healthy food.



STATION 3: THE MAIN EVENT

Barbecue hot dogs and hamburgers, and provide chips, plus condiments.



STATION 4: LIFE IS SWEET

Provide a variety of Popsicles and ice cream bars or baked goods.



STATION 5: THIRST QUENCHERS

Provide a variety of bottled beverages so people can just grab and go. Or, if you prefer, mix 5-gallon jugs of tea, lemonade, and ice water.



Relationship Corner

Each station will have a variety of choices for people to pick from. So while families eat together, invite them to share with each other why they chose the foods they each chose. This is an easy way to get people talking and building relationships with one another. One way to ensure families get the message to share is to put the questions on strips of paper and then wrap plastic utensils with the question strips. Or put question strips in cups at each station and ask everyone to grab a question when they visit each station.

REMEMBER BRING PLENTY OF...

1. Water
2. Ice
3. First Aid Kits



BAG TO SCHOOL SWAP

With many families struggling to make ends meet, hosting an exchange of gently used clothing, shoes, backpacks, books, toys, and other back-to-school essentials is a great way to help people throughout your community. Announce to your congregation that you are going to be hosting the exchange, and let them know that you're looking for donations but also that everyone is welcome to come and "shop" the exchange.

ADVERTISE

To advertise the swap, post in social media groups and on neighborhood websites, pin up flyers in local businesses, send emails to your church members, and post banners in well-trafficked areas of the community.

Be sure that the promotions include an invite to come "shop" the swap and also to contribute items.

State that no money will change hands —this is simply a way to "recycle" items that you no longer use and give to someone who will!



EXCHANGE

On the day of the exchange, have large blankets spread out on your grass and large tables to display items.

Also have plenty of empty hangers and places to hang clothing. Rope tied between two trees or ladders works well.

Consider setting up a "kids only" section, where children can come to swap their toys, games, or books.

This is also a great area to keep kids occupied by setting up a refreshment station where they can serve lemonade and cookies (or other simple snacks) to the attendees. Within this section, you could also host an area for families to exchange baby and toddler items or for mothers-to-be to find maternity clothing.



Relationship Corner

Plan ahead and set up a community resource corner. Invite local charitable organizations that provide helpful services to families such as food pantries, before and after school programs, ride share, and so on. This is a way for your church to show that you care about meeting people's needs. Include a table for your church, and provide information about programs you have for families at your church.

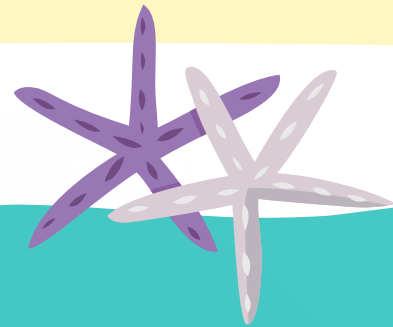


Doorstep Delights

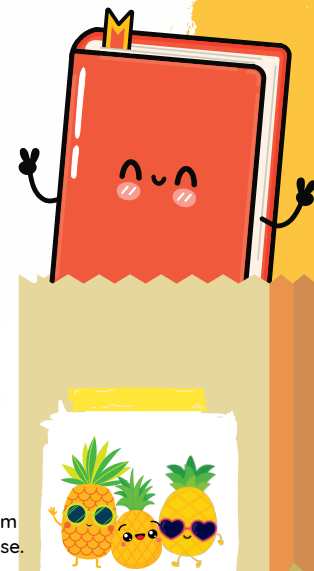
Delight families you've met at your events with these fun treat bags left on their doorstep!

SUPPLIES:

- Paper sacks/gift bags
- 1 copy of the following family activities and family devotion packet
- An ingredient from the recipe (like the cake mix) or a craft supply to add to the bag
- A note from you thanking them for coming to your event(s) and telling them about the gift you have left for them
- An invitation to come to your church on Sunday Morning



One idea is to capture a picture of every family at your events over the summer and add the picture to the bags so they can use it for their Table Talker Centerpiece



SUNSHINE CAKE

Cake



- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 4 eggs
- 1/2 cup oil
- 8-ounce can of crushed pineapple with juice

Frosting

- 3.4-ounce box of vanilla instant pudding mix
- 15-ounce can of crushed pineapple, drained (**SAVE this can! You'll use it for your family craft, so rinse it well and leave it out to dry.**)
- 16-ounce container of whipped topping, thawed
- 1 cup sweetened coconut (optional)

Garnishes (optional)

- Yummy garnishes for this cake are toasted coconut, toasted pecans, and maraschino cherries.

Give everyone in your family a job. Little hands are good at dumping ingredients into bowls. Bigger kids can help with measuring and stirring. And everyone can join in topping the cake with whatever garnishes your family will enjoy.

Heat oven to 350°

Spray 9x13 baking dish with cooking spray. In a large mixing bowl, combine all the cake ingredients and mix on medium speed for two minutes. Bake for about 40 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into the middle comes out clean. Cool cake completely.

For the frosting, mix the pudding mix and pineapple together in a large mixing bowl and let sit for two minutes. Stir in coconut (optional). Fold in the whipped topping until combined. Spread frosting onto completely cooled cake. Top with optional garnishes.



When your family eats this cake, talk about what made your day "sunshiny" today! And thank God for all the ways your day was good.

TABLE TALKER CENTERPIECE



As a family, you'll decorate this centerpiece for your family dinner table. This will become the container for your Table Talker game included in this packet, so be sure to do your craft first.

Start with the crushed pineapple can that you saved from your Sunshine Cake. Peel the label off the can. Then go find whatever craft supplies you have around your house, like colorful craft paper or tissue paper, string, stickers, pompoms, glitter, and so on. Then grab some glue and a family picture. Talk as a family about how you want to decorate your Table Talker Centerpiece—and be sure to incorporate your family picture. Allow everyone to cut, glue, and add decorations to the can.



Table Talker Game



Cut these questions apart and place them in your family Table Talker Centerpiece at the center of your dinner table. As you enjoy your meal, each person can pull a question from the cup for everyone at the table to answer. You can keep going until all the strips have been read, or you can play over several mealtimes. For extra fun, include blank strips of paper so family members can add their own fun questions. Keep adding questions, and play over and over at each mealtime. When you have dinner guests, invite them to join in!

Tell everyone what the best part of your day was and why!

If you could ask God for one miracle, what would it be?

What are some ways our family shows each other love?

If you could be an animal, what animal would you want to be, and why?

What's your favorite thing to do with our family?

Look at the person on your right and tell them what your favorite thing about them is.

Would you rather eat carrots or apples every day?

Would you rather live in a giant bubble under the sea or in a space station above the earth?

If you could ask God one question, what would it be?

Which is worse, telling a little lie or hurting someone's feelings?

Would you rather live without TV or music?

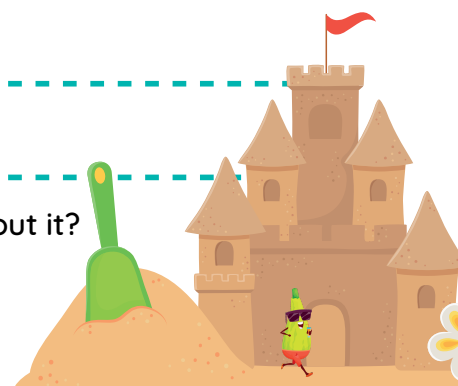
What do you like most about God?

What's your least favorite family rule?

What do you think God's least favorite part about the world is?

If you could change your name, what would you change it to?

If you were in charge of Christmas, what's one thing you'd change about it?



FAMILY DEVOTION

I Love You Because...

Give each person in your family one sticky note for every member of your family, besides themselves. For example, if you have four people in your family, give each person three sticky notes. Each person also needs something to write or draw with. For little ones who can't write, have them draw pictures.

Now, thinking of each person in your family, write something you love about each person on a sticky note. You should write one sticky note per person in your family, except yourself.



Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7:

"Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance."

Now go and stick the notes where each person will be able to read them every day. Like a closet door, bathroom mirror, or headboard of their bed.



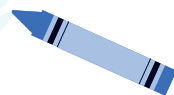
SUPPLIES:



pad of sticky notes (or if you don't have sticky notes, cut square of paper and use tape)



pencils, pens, markers, or crayons



Talk about it...

- Have each person share what they think is the easiest way to show love for each other.
- Now have each person share when it's the hardest to show love for each other.

Pray about it...

Have someone pray for God to help your family focus on showing love for each other this week.

PAY IT FORWARD!

Bless someone in your neighborhood with your own "Doorstep Delight." As a family, brainstorm who on your block you'd like to bless. Talk about the things you want to put in your gift bag that will help their family spend time together and encourage them. Then go shopping together as family to gather your gifts and supplies.

Have each person in your family write the recipients a note of encouragement. If you have little ones who can't write, have them draw a picture!

And one last thing! Before you drop your gift off, have each person in your family place their hand on the bag as someone prays for the family receiving your gift.