



Introduction

Welcome to WELS' *C19* program, an effort to reach more than a million souls with the gospel prior to and on Christmas Eve. That probably sounds ambitious. But, consider this: a year ago we set the goal of reaching a million souls through our *C18* effort. The response from WELS congregations was remarkable. We estimate that as many as 1.2 million souls were invited to hear the Christmas message. This demonstrates just how large an impact the people of the WELS can have when our efforts are directed toward a common goal and those efforts are blessed by the Lord.

Those of you who used *C18* will be familiar with the kinds of resources we are providing in *C19*. Many are congregational outreach tools like postcards, worship resources, and a social media ad. We encourage you to use whichever resources are fitting for your congregational setting. But *every* congregation will want to find ways to encourage its members to be engaged in personally inviting their unchurched friends, neighbors, and co-workers to join them for worship this Christmas. Why? Because it has been shown by study after study that the unchurched are far more likely to accept a personal invitation to attend church.

What do you need to do to participate? Simple. Visit the *C19* section of the WELS Congregational Services website. All the resources for *C19* are available there for download. This means you can plan as far in advance as you would like. You can also sign up on the homepage of the Congregational Services website to receive regular updates in the months leading up to Christmas, reminding you of what you will want to do when.

Here are some of the resources provided in *C19*:

- *Worship folder templates for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.* Using worship folders is a great way to make it easy for guests to follow along in the service. The *C19* worship folders contain artwork and music with the copyrights owned by Congregational Services, meaning you can use them for free without any copyright restrictions.
- *Evangelism materials for Christmas Eve invitation.* The theme for our *C19* Christmas Eve Service is *God So Loved the World*. Low-cost outreach postcards, business cards (for members to share with those they wish to invite), and banners are available through echtprinting.com, who can also provide mailing services.

- *Social Media advertising.* A professionally produced video is available for use in social media advertising. A *Facebook* advertising primer is also provided for those new to social media advertising.
- *School resources.* *C19* will provide training materials to help equip our elementary school children to invite their unchurched friends and their family to Christmas Eve.
- *Special-needs ministry.* Studies show that most families with special-needs children do not have a church home. Parents believe that the church will not be able to meet the needs of their special-needs child. *C19* will include materials to help congregations reach out to families with special-needs kids.

One final encouragement: Recent studies have discovered that unchurched adults are extremely likely to seriously consider accepting an invitation to a Christmas Eve service. Your members may be surprised at how willing and interested their unchurched acquaintances would be. Let them know! Encourage them to proffer the invitation! And then, wait and watch how the Holy Spirit chooses to bless.