



## Event Planning

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God's people are yearning to gather again. And not just in worship. They desire to fellowship with each other. The weekend of a *God's People Gather* Sunday would be a wonderful time for a congregation to provide opportunities for such fellowship. Here are some things a congregation may wish to consider as it plans its activities.

### Getting Started ...

- Form an event team at least eight weeks in advance of the celebration date.
- Plan activities based on the personality of the congregation. What favorite church activities are people nostalgic for? What makes us unique and special? What makes people want to gather together? Capitalize on that. Play to your strengths.
- Involve many volunteers for the event—it will get people in the door. Remind them again of how joyful it is to gather and serve God together. Select heads of volunteer groups to oversee an area. Let them loose to recruit their volunteers.
- Find ways to get families and kids involved. Identify passionate parents and staff who love planning fun components.
- Promote your events often and well in advance. Let your people know this is important and will be exciting.
- Encourage members to invite their fellow members to attend. Word of mouth is a powerful tool for promotion.

## Event ideas

- Food/drinks/coffee
  - Gather for food before, during, after services? Where? What? Who?
  - Brunch or lunch, picnic or cookout? After which service?
  - Potluck-style, catered, grill-out, etc. What's best for your setting?
  
- Activities
  - Include a "service" component that invites members to participate. For example, write letters or collect blankets for people in nursing homes, do a food drive, collect donations for a domestic violence shelter, etc. What past service activity in the congregation can be re-activated?
  - Activities for kids? (crafts, service project, games, bounce-house)
  
- Special music for the service

If musical gifts have been sidelined, use the "God's People Gather" worship celebration to revive choirs, children's choir, instrumentalists, or small group ensembles?
  
- Welcome Team

How will your church make people feel like they are welcome and part of the family if they have been away for a while?
  
- Bring a Friend
  - Will your prospect list be invited to the event? Consider how members can invite a friend.
  - What marketing item can you give as a gift (church item with logo that they can keep or give away)?

## Post-Event Planning

*God's People Gather* reminds our members why they want to gather *again*—out of a desire for building up/renewing relationships with each other and with God. As you build momentum for the event, consider how you plan on *keeping* momentum going. Some thoughts:

- Create a slideshow of pictures, a video with photos, and/or social media posts with photos/video clips to remind those who were there of what a blessing that day was and to continue to visually show what a blessing it is to gather together for those who still need convincing.
- Follow-up contact with members after event: e-mail of encouragement, recap of celebration events (list of blessings experienced), pics or link to video from the event, thank you to all who were involved, online link to resources
- What other ministry “kick-offs” can be synched with this Sunday? Now that members are coming back, how will we nurture them? How will we continue to connect them to each other and to God? How will we encourage returning members to also resume Bible study, Sunday school, small group participation, etc. How do you keep the same level of warmth and welcome and connection in our weekend worship gatherings?