

General Topics :: Ideas For Creating Fellowship in Church

Ideas For Creating Fellowship in Church - posted by Trekker, on: 2012/4/10 5:16

Stumbled across some ideas for creating fellowship in your churches in case anyone is interested. Found these ideas at nlm.org. Didn't like everything on the page but here are just a few good ones:

After Worship "Coffee Hour"

Provide a regular fellowship gathering after morning worship. Encourage persons to remain and mingle, greeting visitors and existing members alike. Have light refreshments on hand to help entice folks to stay.

Bake and Deliver Pies to Church Guests

Individuals from your congregation bake and deliver a pie or other baked goods to persons who have visited your church.

Baptism as a Time for Invitation

Provide baptismal candidates with invitation cards. Encourage them to use the cards to invite friends, relatives and loved ones to the baptismal service. Ask them in particular to invite folks without a church home, so they might come and see for themselves the joy of entering the family of God.

Christmas or Easter Card Outreach

Invite prospective and inactive members to Christmas or Easter worship services through hand-delivered cards.

Congregational Card Invitation

Print business card size cards that include a brief invitation to the services of your congregation and a map to the location of your church building. Provide a dozen or so of these for each adult of your congregation, encouraging them to carry them in their wallets and purses for distribution to co-workers, neighbors, friends, etc.

Cross-Connections

A program for those 11-15 in age who come to church through recreational activities and talk times, building meaningful relationships with Christian staff and a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Van-gelism

Ask members to watch for moving vans in their neighborhoods, which often signal the arrival of new people. Provide a few card for easy response, or ask them to contact the church office. Provide the information to a "welcome wagon" style task group.

Visitors Lunch

Organize Sunday lunches in your church fellowship hall to which you invite guests hosted by 8-10 family units.

Hospitality Ministry

Conduct a study of a biblical approach to hospitality, then develop a ministry that makes all people feel loved and welcomed when they attend your church.

OTHER IDEAS I FOUND WILLY NILLY VIA OTHER SITES or gave me ideas to include:

Hold a prayer walk! With refreshments afterward.

Go for a hike and picnic.

Pass out Bibles or tracts door to door.

Go out to eat together at a nice restaurant.

Have a camp-out or slumber party with Bible study, prayer &/or video sermons with a fellowship breakfast to follow in the

morning.

Have a Bible trivia game (but be careful of spiritual pride popping up with this one).

And of course the old Christmas standby: Christmas Caroling (hymns, not secular songs) which can be done in one place in a parking lot at a department store, in a mall where it is warm, or walking in residential areas, etc. Followed by hot cocoa and more.

Re: Ideas For Creating Fellowship in Church - posted by El-Bethel, on: 2012/4/10 5:44

I really doubt if any of these methods will work to build fellowship. Maybe friendship is possible to some extent but certainly not fellowship. Church is the Body of Christ and we are all members. My right hand has a fantastic fellowship with my left hand not because they are in close proximity to each other or because they look alike but because they are both connected to my head. The command comes from my head and they work together, help each other. They are said to be fellowship with each other. They are connected to the head and they submit to the head, never comparing one with other. So with the members in the Body of Christ. You may please read the excerpts from AW Tozer.

July 4 The Church: Let's Eat Something

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. --Colossians 3:16

Times are bad in the kingdom and getting worse. The tendency is to settle into a rut, and we must get out of it....When God sends some preacher to say this to a congregation and the congregation is even half ready to listen to him, they say to themselves, "I think the pastor is right about this. We are in a rut, aren't we? No use fighting it. I think we ought to do something about this." Then 99.99 percent of the time the remedy prescribed will be, "Let's come together and eat something. I know we are in a rut. We don't see each other often enough. We ought to get to know each other better, so let's come together and eat something." I have no objection to fellowship, but it is not the answer to what is wrong with us....I am quite sure that when the man of God thundered, "You have stayed long enough in this place. You are going around in circles. Get you out and take what is given to you by the hand of your God," nobody got up and said, "Mr. Chairman, let's eat something." Eating probably would not have helped. Rut, Rot or Revival: The Condition of the Church, 13-15.

July 30 The Church: 100 Pianos

..that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. --John 17:21

Someone may fear that we are magnifying private religion out of all proportion, that the "us" of the New Testament is being displaced by a selfish "I." Has it ever occurred to you that one hundred pianos all tuned to the same fork are automatically tuned to each other? They are of one accord by being tuned, not to each other, but to another standard to which each one must individually bow. So one hundred worshippers meeting together, each one looking away to Christ, are in heart nearer to each other than they could possibly be were they to become "unity" conscious and turn their eyes away from God to strive for closer fellowship. Social religion is perfected when private religion is purified. The body becomes stronger as its members become healthier. The whole church of God gains when the members that compose it begin to seek a better and a higher life. The Pursuit of God, 90.

Re: - posted by Trekker, on: 2012/4/10 5:59

I never said any of this was the solution "to what is wrong with" the churches. Quite the contrary. And all fellowship must be Christ centered, which is why I filtered out some really shallow stuff from the sites like playing games and basketball, etc. and listed things like slumber party with prayer and Bible study, etc.etc. THE REASON FOR MY POSTING THIS PIECE IS THAT MOST OF THE CHURCHES I WENT TO THERE WAS NO REAL FELLOWSHIP AT ALL, EVERYONE JUST SHOWED UP FOR CHURCH AND THEN WENT HOME. PEOPLE WOULD PLAN "CELL GROUPS" AND THEY WOULD JUST FALL APART FROM THE BEGINNING, OR THEY WOULD PLAN MONTHLY POTLUCKS OR PICNICS WHICH WOULD JUST GET CANCELED. BIBLE STUDIES BECAME DULL DRUDGERY FROM BEING ALL WORK AND NO PLAY/academic and no fun included. Meanwhile, as a single Christian with no family and at an age where everyone in the church is either married, divorced with kids, or too young for me I found myself starved for REAL fellowship. Most people show up for church and then go home with their families and shut their doors. Just showing up for church is NOT fellowship and scripture says the disciples/apostles had fellowship one with another. So before getting all negative and tearing things apart please take some time to consider that not everyone feels like they fit in at your basically middle class clubhouse for married people that you call church.

Re: - posted by jochbaptist (), on: 2012/4/10 6:42

Hi Trekker

I also found myself once as a single person, in a new city. I remember the loneliness, and the way I embarrassed myself when I could not stop talking when someone eventually did visit me. I even went to the Youth meeting on Friday evening although I was the oldest there by far. I almost had to force myself into peoples homes over weekends, because I was in need, and they had their fixed lives and circles of friends.

To my shame you have reminded me of the fact that I too have become insensitive to the single and lonely out there.

Here is another gem from Art Katz, called True Fellowship. Something very few of us have found.

<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/visit.php?lid=12161>

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2012/4/10 7:52

I think sometimes we get too "theoretical" about fellowship. While I support what individuals like Art Katz taught in regard to fellowship, there is still a very practical nature to all of these things. Organizing and doing things like this will foster and create opportunity to have fellowship. It in and of itself will not create fellowship. But it will definitely create structures that encourage such.

At my church, we have a lot of different things to create opportunities to fellowship. We have a lounge that is open for coffee before and after service.

One Sunday a month, the church caters a lunch to all guests who are interested in getting connected with the church. At that lunch, we place about a dozen or so pastors & elders and their wives at random tables throughout the room. We intentionally sit guests with these individuals.

Then we have community groups which meet in homes, coffee shops, and restaurants throughout the community. I personally host two of these. One is for high school guys at Taco Bell. We meet once every Sunday night. The other is for 20 & 30 somethings that meets at a Panera Bread every Friday night. And to mix things up and either to reach out to new people, or to reach out to people who haven't been in a while, I will periodically schedule an outing of some sort for both groups. For my high school guys, a couple months ago we played Laser Tag. For my 20 & 30's, we've done things like go to a hockey game. Or as we did this Good Friday, we had a big dinner at a really nice mexican restaurant in town.

Again, these things do not automatically create fellowship. These things are just tools we use to help foster and create community. People will only have fellowship with one another to the degree they connect in Christ, and decide to intentionally open their lives and share it with one another. While my church is far from having created a Ben Israel type fellowship, we are definitely doing life together in a way more significant than looking at each other in a church service or Bible study.

For example, a year or so ago I got very sick. I hadn't been at my church very long. I had a some bug that was floating around. Sure enough, once people found out I was sick, several people that I fellowship with at church offered to bring me homemade chicken noodle soup. Which, being a single guy with nobody to look after me but me, was a very touching gesture. When I finally was well enough to eat solid foods again, somebody brought me some food from a nice little restaurant in town.

Or there is the story of a single mom at church, who lives in section 8 housing. Two guys I fellowship with at church can regularly be found over at her house, doing yard work, working on her car, and other such things. One even planted a small garden for her recently. And their service and fellowship has been very much wanted, as she has been in and out of the hospital in recent months due to some near fatal medical issues she's been challenged with.

I could easily tell of a dozen other such stories, and then some. But these stories would be harder to come by, I do believe, had we as a church not been intentional in creating opportunities for people to connect and fellowship with one another. Had we just shown up for some sort of church service, be it in a sanctuary or living room, I am convinced most of these things would never have happened.

Re: , on: 2012/4/10 8:43

PRAY TOGETHER AS A CHURCH FAMILY.

#1 it weeds out the chaff from the wheat faster than anything. The goats will leave immediately.

#2 those who are still there will grow in fellowship and love for one another as they learn to pray for each other and carry each other's burdens.

SHARE ALL THINGS IN COMMON, TAKING CARE OF EVERYONE'S NEEDS.

#1 selfish desires goes out the window.

#2 we learn to think of others first.

Everything else will fall into place after that.

Krispy

Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/4/10 11:02

I notice a lot of things that people come up with for "fellowship" revolve around DOING things rather than just hanging out and being friends. Let's not call it fellowship, then. Let's call it workership, or doership. "Hey, let's get together with so and so who we have not seen in 5 years and have some workership".

If we were to take this same approach with our relatives it would indeed be strange.

How does this sound?

"What can we do to foster relationship with our Mother, Father, brothers, sisters and Aunts and Uncles"?

"Let's do a community garbage pickup. How about we all build a new swing set together at the park or bring some food over to our neighbors?"

(Not only will you be able tolerate one another but you will feel good about yourselves at the same time).

or simply this:

Let's invite them over for lunch, have some coffee and catch up with one another.

Now, that last suggestion is a novel idea!!

Pilgrim

How often we convey the feeling to others that they are not worth anything unless they are DOING something of "value". Alas, value is in the eyes of the beholder.

Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2012/4/10 11:21

Quote:

My right hand has a fantastic fellowship with my left hand not because they are in close proximity to each other or because they look alike but because they are both connected to my head.

If I had posted before you I would have put the exact same example as I got the same as a revelation.

The only way to build fellowship in a Church is to speak the full Gospel. Not the partial Gospel that your sins are forgiven

but the full Gospel that 'you can be an overcomer' like how Jesus was and encouraging every member to walk like Christ .

If Christ is the only head (Authority) in each and every individual's life then there is absolutely no way that there will be a lack of Fellowship.

Jesus's final prayers in John 17-20:-

Those also who believe in Me through their word; 21 that they may all be ONE; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You.

If there is one Spirit in all of us then we will all be ONE. But if we are not completely controlled by one spirit then there can never be a fellowship no matter how much you pray, how many lunch or coffee you have together.

In my home fellowship we have lunch together after every meet but this is not the bonding factor, the bonding factor is our Head Jesus.

Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/4/10 11:31

We have relationship with God but fellowship with one another. Why?

Sree, correctly stated, the "bonding factor" is Jesus. Not works or anything else.

1Jn 1:3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Re: - posted by Miccah (), on: 2012/4/10 12:11

Quote:

-----Let's invite them over for lunch, have some coffee and catch up with one another.

Well said Pilgrim. I cannot tell you how many times this is the exact way that the house church that meets at my home has grown. Inviting people into your house and your life, while shining the light of Jesus through you, is the best way to begin a fellowship.

When inviting people over, First... Be grounded in the Word. Know what you are talking about and be sure of your own salvation.

Secondly, live the Word in your life as an example to others. When people talk to you, you should be as clear a reflection of Christ as you can be.

Next, make sure that you are interested in their life and things that are going on with them. Make them and their needs first. Truly care about them. This opens up many doors for fellowship.

Lastly, invite them over again. Don't make it in a month or two. Invite them over for dinner on a Tues./Wed/Thur night for a few hours and repeat the first couple steps above.

Then invite them over again, then do it again, and again, and again. This is the beginning of making disciples for the Lord . Soon a fellowship will start, and you will be surprised on who the Lord brings to your steps.

Be blessed!

Re: , on: 2012/4/10 13:06

Quote:
-----Well said Pilgrim.

John Wayne...? Is that you...?

Krispy

Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/4/10 13:23

John Wayne?

Well, lil pilgrim, the harder you pull the trigger, the farther the bullet goes.

Re: Ideas For Creating Fellowship in Church - posted by El-Bethel, on: 2012/4/10 14:11

Apostle John gave the best idea for creating fellowship in 1John 1:7
7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another.

Re: - posted by Trekker, on: 2012/4/11 5:30

QUOTE: "If there is one Spirit in all of us then we will all be ONE. But if we are not completely controlled by one spirit then there can never be a fellowship no matter how much you pray, how many lunch or coffee you have together.

In my home fellowship we have lunch together after every meet but this is not the bonding factor, the bonding factor is our Head Jesus."--SREE

Sree, i agree with this completely. But the point is, we often don't MEET the people or get to have a lengthy conversation with them unless we plan some sort of activity or get-together. And you even yourself state above in your post that in your home fellowship "we have lunch together".

But i was never suggesting that something like that or any other activity would be the bonding factor. The whole point of fellowship IS to be able to get together and talk and do things with other BELIEVERS in Jesus Christ our Head.

It seems a lot of people have misunderstood what i was trying to say in my original post. Maybe i should not have said anything.

Re: - posted by Trekker, on: 2012/4/11 5:44

QUOTE: "John Wayne?
Well, lil pilgrim, the harder you pull the trigger, the farther the bullet goes."--PILGRIM777

Ok, i GOT to know something. What is going on with all you Christian men that you all are into John Wayne? I got to know. Lol...it seems that every (single) Christian man i meet is a John Wayne fan. Even my Non-Christian parents were "in" to him! I can't stand the guy. I don't find anything appealing about him whatsoever. Why are you not fans of say, Chuck Connors (The Rifleman) instead? Or even Clint Eastwood (Rawhide), although not his dirtier, more uncouth stuff. Or why not Gil Faver (Rawhide)? John Wayne has never been my idea of masculinity. And he was disrespectful to women, wasn't he? Same as Eastwood's characters for most part. Plus he smoked. Bleh. There were lots of other great cowboys but ya'll are always into JW for some reason. I am thoroughly perplexed! :)

Re: , on: 2012/4/11 6:43

John Wayne's cowboy characters always called people "Pilgrim"... so whenever someone calls Pilgrim777 "Pilgrim" in something that they write... I hear John Wayne's voice.

For the money, Sam Elliott is the best cowboy actor alive. Great voice too.

"Beef... it's what's for dinner."

Krispy

Re: , on: 2012/4/11 8:44

"But the point is, we often don't MEET the people or get to have a lengthy conversation with them unless we plan some sort of activity or get-together."

Fellowship with people who are your best friends, they should be your best friends. Sharing your lives together, eating together, praying together, evangelizing together, grocery shopping together, hanging out together, caring for the poor together, raising the kids together, whatever your lot in life is - do it together out of a sincere heart of love, not out of the latest 'how to foster church relationships manual'!

There is nothing better I can think of than having real relationships founded in Christ. This will cure much of what ails us. Have you ever seen a home video of a family that is really happy and you can see the love for each other though the recording quality is very amateur? Then think of a tv sitcom where the supposed family is only together to serve a superficial purpose though the recording quality is very good and professional (with laugh track and all). Everything may look real good but it is staged and fake.

I like the first example better.

In Him -Jim

Re: Ideas For Creating Fellowship in Church - posted by roadsign (), on: 2012/4/11 15:44

Quote:
----- the point is, we often don't MEET the people or get to have a lengthy conversation with them unless we plan some sort of activity or get-together

Trekkor, I wholeheartedly agree with you. You have a VALID (!) point. Planned, organized efforts to be together is losing ground and we are missing out on something that is vital for our wellbeing. I confess, I used to mock organized social get-togethers, and saw that as merely a way to keep people entertained and off the streets. I used to mock the slogan: "If you feed them they'll come" referring to potlucks and refreshments used to raise the attendance of a more "edifying" event. And I thought truly spiritual people would be praying and studying their bibles - not waste their time socializing.

There came a point when my views changed radically. I discovered that nourishing fellowship can happen perhaps more easily during a social than a highly structured church service. A brief eye-to-eye chat with another can be more powerful for some than a sermon, liturgies and singing with non-tangible theological concepts which leave some feeling alone and isolated. I've felt that way at times. We really do need to have opportunities to connect with people. True, much of the dialogue is mere trivia, but it tells another that we care about their world. And those connections sow seeds that we may build on later - for God's glory.

I suspect that few of us are actually in a position to make these decisions or to organize them. The next best thing is to simply take advantage of the opportunities that become available to us - luncheons, church cleaning bees, etc. It may seem so unspiritual, but God may wish to use those "earthly" venues to humble us, teach us, and to use us for his glory.

Diane