

District Leadership Training Workshop

Sharing God's Gift of Good News



Evangelism Ministry

This workshop is intended for clergy and lay persons with leadership responsibility for evangelism ministry in the local church. The content highlights key concepts, strategies, and principles that will aid development of an effective evangelism/discipleship ministry

Kwasi Kena, Director, Evangelism Ministries, General Board of Discipleship (GBOD)
The United Methodist Church, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville, TN 37212.
1-877-899-2780, Ext. 7049 (Toll Free)

E-mail: kkena@gbod.org

Web: www.umcevangalism.com

**Sharing God’s Gift of Good News
Evangelism Ministry
District Leadership Training
2.5 to 3-Hour Workshop Model**

Workshop Leader Preparation:

1. Read through the entire workshop model.
2. Write on newsprint the workshop goals listed on page 6.
3. Read *Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation 2009-2012 – Evangelism Sharing the Good News* (Available through Cokesbury bookstores)
4. Read the Bible study passage, Luke 4:18-19 and meditate on it for personal meaning and inspiration.
5. Pray for the participants and for God’s guidance as you facilitate the workshop.

Note: Informational vs. Transformation Instruction

There are two ways to approach the teaching moment; teaching for information or teaching for transformation. In the teaching for information approach, covering ALL of the material is the priority. In the teaching for transformation approach, personal transformation, i.e. leading participants to some “a ha” moment is the priority—even if all of the material is not covered. Depending on the level of discussion and interaction, all of the content in the following training workshop model may not be able to be covered adequately in two hours. Be flexible. Focus greater attention to the content areas that will address the goals stated by participants during their opening introductions.

Suggested Time

Topic

5-10 Minutes

Welcome and Devotions

Workshop Leader: Introduce yourself and make sure all participants have a copy of the handout packet. Share the following overview of the workshop:

Key Topics Covered During Workshop

1. Evangelism—a three-fold definition
2. Faith Sharing—simplified
3. Who “does” evangelism?
4. Evangelism leader action steps

Group Introductions

Workshop Leader: Invite the group to introduce themselves individually by responding to the following:

1. Name
2. Church name
3. What do you hope to learn during our time together?

Prayer

5 Minutes

Workshop Leader or volunteer: Begin the devotional time with prayer for God’s direction and guidance as you explore ways to share God’s Gift of Good News.

Mutual Invitation Method

Invite the large group to divide into smaller groups of 3-4 people. The person whose birthday is closest to today’s date becomes the leader of the small group for devotions.

Workshop Leader: Direct participants to the Mutual Invitation handout in the packet. Explain the Mutual Invitation method of sharing as follows.

In Mutual Invitation the leader has the opportunity to respond first. There are three possible responses when the opportunity to speak arises: 1. Respond, 2. Pass for now (meaning you would like more time to gather your thoughts), 3. Pass (which means you do not want to comment).

For example, the leader or some volunteer in the small group will read the Luke 4:18-19 passage below. The leader begins by responding to the first question by 1. Sharing, 2. Passing for now, or 3. Passing. When the leader has shared or passed, the leader then invites another person to share. After that person shares or passes, that person invites another person to share.

Direct participants to the Kaleidoscope Bible Study Method in the handout packet. Inform the group that they will be hearing a passage of scripture read three times. After each reading, participants will be asked to respond to the question listed in the Bible study handout.

(Workshop Leader Reads) As you hear the passage read the first time, listen for any word or phrase that comes to your attention. Invite the small group leader to begin by reading or getting a volunteer to read the following passage of scripture to their small group. After hearing the reading, the leader will respond first and then use Mutual Invitation to invite another person to share.

15-20 Minutes

Bible Study - Luke 4:18-19 NRSV

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free.”

Question following first reading (The leader of the small group responds first.) What word or phrase came to your attention?

Use the mutual invitation method until each person has had an opportunity to respond.

(Small group leader reads) Think of the following question as you listen to the passage a second time, “What is the Good News for you in this passage?”

Read the passage a second time.

Question following second reading (The leader of the small group responds first.) “What is the Good News for you in this passage?” Use the mutual invitation method until each person has had an opportunity to respond.

(Small group leader reads) Think of the following question as you listen to the passage a third time, “What does God invite you to do, be, or change through this passage?”

Read the passage a third time.

Question following second reading (The leader of the small group responds first.) “What does God invite you to do, be, or change through this passage?” Use the mutual invitation method until each person has had an opportunity to respond.

Once everyone has responded in the small group, close in prayer in the following way:

(Small group leader reads) Let’s close in prayer by holding hands and completing these sentences.

“I ask God for...”

“I thank God for...”

Once again you have the option to respond by sharing or passing. When you have responded, squeeze the hand of the person to your right to indicate that it is their turn. Once everyone has responded, pray the Lord’s Prayer together.

5 Minutes

Workshop Leader: Reconvene the group by singing the first verse and refrain of “O How I Love Jesus” UMH #170 or another appropriate hymn or chorus.

Goals for the Workshop

(Workshop Leader writes goals on newsprint or white board before class session)

Workshop Leader: Show goals and read them to the group.

As a result of our time together, people will have

1. a three-fold definition of evangelism
2. a simple faith-sharing method
3. an understanding of the role of clergy and laity in evangelism
4. an understanding of the initial action steps an evangelism leader should take
5. a list of recommended evangelism resources for use in the local church

15 Minutes

What is Evangelism?

Workshop Leader: Invite each individual to write his or her personal definition of evangelism.

Invite volunteers to share their definitions with the large group.

(Workshop Leader Reads) Most people have a basic working understanding of evangelism. Still, many people are afraid of evangelism. Why do you think some people do not like the word evangelism and have no desire to participate in evangelism? Field responses from the group.

(Workshop Leader Reads) What many people fear is not evangelism, but a negative presentation of evangelism. We are here to explore healthy ways to participate in effective evangelism.

The aim of evangelism is to relate people to God so that they will begin an intentional relationship with Jesus Christ. Evangelism does not end with a person's initial decision to follow Christ. Effective evangelism leads people into a life-long journey of Christian discipleship and spiritual formation. Without discipleship and spiritual formation, the church will only create *members* who bear little or no spiritual fruit for Christ.

To help people move beyond any negative images of evangelism it is helpful to know what evangelism meant for the first-century church. The word evangelism comes from the Greek root word *evangel*. The evangel has three meanings: 1. To tell good news, 2. To bear witness, 3. To proclaim.

Workshop Leader: Ask participants this question, “If a non-Christian asked you, ‘What is the Good News of Christianity?’ what would you say?”

Invite volunteers to share their responses with the larger group.

10-15 Minutes

Workshop Leader Reads: Let’s explore what the Good News was that Jesus shared. Today’s scripture reading from Luke 4:18-19 is a direct reference to Isaiah 61. The last part of Luke 4:19 mentions the proclamation of “the year of the Lord’s favor,” also known as the year of Jubilee. This represented a forgiveness of past burdens, and a fresh start. The Good News promised relief and release, particularly for the marginalized of society.

Think about the people whom your local church could reach, what could your congregation offer that would relieve people physically, spiritually, or financially from social burdens?

Invite volunteers to respond with concrete examples of actions taken by their churches to relieve others.

(Workshop Leader Reads) The four gospel accounts reveal the kingdom of God as the central message of Jesus Christ. Listen to these scripture passages:

[Jesus said] “I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also; for I was sent for this purpose.” (Luke 4:43)

[Jesus said] “But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matthew 6:33)

Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” (John 3:3)

The early church emphasized two key elements of the Good News:

1. Repentance—turning away from evil and turning to good through salvation in Jesus Christ.
2. Announcing the kingdom of God (God’s reign on the earth).

Christ’s constant message was, “Repent for the kingdom of God is near.” His emphasis was on conversion that led to a change in behavior, belief, and action. This transformation ultimately yielded Christians who bore the spiritual fruit mentioned in Galatians 5:22-

23. “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”

A key issue for congregations to wrestle with is how best to communicate Jesus’ central message, namely the kingdom or reign of God.

5 Minutes

Church Questionnaire

(Read) One way to encourage dialogue around this issue is to invite the church to complete a questionnaire with the following questions on it.

Direct participants to the Church Questionnaire in the handout packet.

As a church:

- A. What is our God-given reason for existence?
- B. What purpose do we serve?
- C. As a result of coming within the influence of this church, what do we expect to happen to people?
- D. What difference will this congregation make in the world?

The results from this questionnaire could be used by evangelism ministry leaders, the pastor(s), and administrative council (board) to help the church discern the kinds of evangelistic efforts the church should engage in.

(Workshop Leader Reads) Bearing witness is the second part of the *evangel* mentioned earlier. To bear witness to Jesus Christ means to believe confidently in him, through personal experience. The key question for individuals in the church to answer is, “What difference has Christ made in my life?”

Often people are shy about sharing their faith because they have never practiced articulating their faith journey to anyone.

15 Minutes

Faith Sharing in Three Chapters

Generally there are two groups of people in church; group one can name the day, the hour, or moment they made a decision to follow Jesus Christ; group two often says, “I can’t remember a time when I wasn’t a Christian.”

A simple method called Faith Sharing in Three Chapters gets both groups of people talking about their relationship with Jesus Christ.

Group 1 Those who can name the day, hour, or moment they accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

One: My Life Before Turning to Christ

Two: How I Met Christ

Three: My Life with Christ

Group 2 Those who grew up in Christian households.

One: Early Christian Influences in My Life

Two: Making It (the Christian faith) My Own

Three: My Life with Christ Today

(Adapted from *Your Church Can Thrive*, Harold Percy)

Workshop Leader: Instruct the group to divide into small groups of 3-4 people again. Ask the original leaders of the small groups to begin—reminding them that they can share, pass for now, or pass. Ask people to share their stories for 3-4 minutes per person. Once the leader has responded, he or she should invite another person to speak using Mutual Invitation.

After the groups have shared, invite volunteers to describe what it was like to share and hear testimonies in the small group. Ask the group, “How often are testimonies shared in worship services, Sunday school, Bible studies, choir rehearsals or other times in church?” Invite participants to work with their pastor to identify opportunities to use the Faith Sharing in Three Chapters method and introduce faith sharing as a regular activity in the life of the congregation.

(5-10 Minutes)

(Optional Break If Needed)

5-10 Minutes

Workshop Leader: Reconvene the group by singing a hymn or praise chorus such as: I Want Jesus to Walk with Me UMH #521 What Does the Lord Require of You TFWS #2174

(Workshop Leader Reads) The third definition of the evangel means to *proclaim*. Some may ask, what message should we proclaim? And where do we begin? A good focal point is Jesus—his words, deeds, miracles, and teachings. Jesus was part of an oral culture that communicated its values through stories. Many churches have discovered the power experienced by people who are regularly exposed to Bible storytelling.

How many of your churches use drama, Bible storytelling, liturgical dance, or mime to communicate the Good News of Jesus

Christ? What effect do these types of presentations of scripture have on the congregation? (Field responses.)

There is also great benefit gained when churches participate in Bible reading plans. A popular Bible reading plan is called, “You’ve got the time” <http://www.faithcomesbyhearing.com/youve-got-time> found in your recommended resource list.

(Workshop Leader Reads) With that foundational understanding of the evangel: Good News, bearing witness, and proclamation, let’s talk about structuring the church to promote effective evangelism ministry.

10 Minutes

Expectations about Evangelism

First, who does your local church believe bears the greatest responsibility to “do” evangelism? (Field responses.)

Direct participants to the “Paying the Rent” handout in the packet.

Some churches believe the pastor bears the greatest responsibility for “doing” evangelism. Here’s an exercise that examines that belief. The exercise is called Paying the Rent. Here’s how it works.

Imagine you are about to receive a new pastor. List the top ten tasks that that pastor should do well in order to “pay the rent.” List **tasks** such as officiate marriage services not **qualities** such as being patient. Take two minutes to write down your answers.

Workshop Leader: Field responses.

(Workshop Leader Reads) If we were to calculate the time it took the pastor to complete the tasks on everyone’s list, remembering to include commuting time, we would find that the typical pastor spends 55+ hours a week doing things that primarily benefit the congregation. So, what time does the pastor actually have to “do” evangelism? According to scripture, the pastor’s role is “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:12 NRSV)

In truth, lay people are more likely to come in contact with non-Christians than are clergy. Evangelism is everyone’s responsibility. That means the church must be structured to promote Every Member in Ministry.

45-60 Minutes

Evangelism Leader Tasks

Direct participants to the Evangelism Leader Action Steps Handout in the packet.

Workshop Leader: Lead a discussion focused on the Evangelism Leader Handout. Invite participants to share any success stories they have about any of the topics mentioned in this section. Highlight as many main topics as time allows.

Team Building

If you have been elected as an evangelism leader in your congregation, you will need to build a team. First, consult your pastor and nominations committee to identify persons who can become your prayer team. Work with this team to determine times for regular prayer and ways to share prayer concerns and answers to prayer.

Build an evangelism team, preferably 5-12 people, depending on the size of your church. Determine a reading schedule that includes both a Bible reading plan and the Evangelism Sharing the Good News booklet from the 2009-2012 Guidelines series available from Cokesbury. Read the Book of Acts together and discuss the missionary evangelism used by the early church. List the outreach opportunities that exist for your congregations.

Assess Your Current Reality Area

Ministry Assessment

List the evangelistic efforts actively engaged in by your congregation now. Ask questions like: Which efforts are effective? Which are not? What new approaches might our church try? What training, resources, etc. would a new effort require? What percentage of giving goes toward missions, outreach, and evangelism?

Workshop Leader: Ask the group, “How does your local church assess the effectiveness of its ministries?” And, “How often does ministry assessment occur?” (Field responses)

Core Membership

Find out key facts about your congregation, such as: What is the average worship attendance in your church? What percentage of your congregation regularly participates in worship **and** one or more church activities? Regular attendees represent the core membership of your congregation. They may be a good group to engage in evangelism ministry.

Study Demographics

Get demographic information about your community. Check the conference office, US Census Bureau, the Office of Research at the General Board of Global Ministries. Your conference may have contracted with a demographic company such as Percept. Look at the findings and ask, “What is God saying to us through this data?”

Workshop Leader: Ask the group, “Has your church collected demographic data in the last five years? If so, how was it used?”

Hospitality & Welcoming Strangers

Go to the Rethink Church website (www.rethinkchurch.org) for resources to help develop a strong ministry of welcoming and hospitality.

Develop A Vision

Depend heavily on prayer, Bible study, and collected information to inform the development of a vision for evangelism in your local church. Who are you called to serve? What could your church do to make a difference?

Develop a Plan

Work with the pastor(s), and other key leaders to develop a plan that weaves evangelism throughout the life of the church.

Evangelism is not an auxiliary activity. Evangelism and discipleship are the central reasons for a church’s existence. The evangelism plan should consider ways to address areas such as: outreach and invitation to strangers, welcoming and hospitality, incorporating people into the church, spiritual formation, sending people out to reach others for Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

Workshop Leader: Thanks the participants for their time and commitment to evangelism. Remind participants to consult the recommended resource list frequently during their work.

Closing Prayer (On last page of handout packet)

Read Together: Gracious God, give us the courage to be your witnesses in our local churches, homes, jobs, schools, and communities. Grant us the spiritual discernment needed to lead our congregations into the regular practice of effective evangelism. Help us remember the Good News that you have brought into our lives through Jesus Christ. Then, prod us out of complacency with our individual salvation and draw us into the world filled with people hungry for Good News. Transform us; transform our churches, so that we may help transform the world. Amen.

**Evangelism Workshop
Handout Packet**

Mutual Invitation

In order to ensure that everyone who wants to share has the opportunity to speak, we will proceed in the following way:

The leader or a designated person will share first. After that person has spoken, he or she then invites another to share. The person you invite does not need to be sitting next to you. After the next person has spoken, that person is given the privilege to invite another person to share.

If you are not ready to share yet, say “I pass for now” and we will invite you to share later on. If you don’t want to say anything at all, simply say, “pass” and proceed to invite another person to share. We will do this until everyone has been invited.

We invite you to listen and not to respond to someone’s sharing immediately. There will be time to respond and to ask clarification questions after everyone has had an opportunity to share.

(Source: Eric Law)

Respectful Communication Guidelines

R = take Responsibility for what you say and feel without blaming others

E = use Empathetic listening

S = be Sensitive to differences in communication styles

P = Ponder what you hear and feel before you speak

E = Examine your own assumptions and perceptions

C = keep Confidentiality

T = Trust ambiguity because we are *not* here to debate who is right or wrong

(from *The Bush was Blazing but Not Consumed* by Eric H. F. Law)

I agree to uphold these guidelines for the time we have together.

Signature

Date

Kaleidoscope Bible Study Process

1. Read the Respectful Communication Guidelines and invite members of the group to affirm them for their time together.
2. Inform participants that the Bible passage will be read 3 times. After each reading, participants will be invited to share their reflections.

FIRST READING

3. Invite participants to capture a word, a phrase or image when listening to the passage the first time.
4. Invite someone to read the passage.
5. Take a moment of silence to capture a word, a phrase or image that stood out from the passage for them.
6. Using Mutual Invitation, invite each person to briefly share his or her word, phrase or image. (This should take no more than five minutes.)

SECOND READING

7. Invite participants to consider the second question appointed for this passage. (The facilitator should prepare ahead of time a question that is relevant to participants' context.)
8. Invite someone to read the passage a second time.
9. Take a moment of silence to reflect on the question.

10. Using Mutual Invitation, invite each person to share his or her reflection

THIRD READING

11. Invite participants to consider the following question while listening to the passage again.

“What does God invite you to do, be, or change through this passage?”

12. Invite someone to read the passage a third time.
13. Take a moment of silence to reflect on the question.
14. Using Mutual Invitation, invite each person to share his or her reflection.
15. End the session with a prayer circle:

Invite participants to join hands in a circle. Invite each person to mentally complete the sentences:

I thank God today...

I ask God today...

The leader will begin by sharing his or her prayers. After he or she has shared, the leader then squeezes the hand of the person to the right. That will be the signal for the next person to share his or her prayers. If the person does not want to share, he or she can simply pass the pulse to the next person. When the pulse comes back to the leader, he or she can begin the Lord's Prayer and invite everyone to join in.

(Source: Eric Law)

Bible Reading: Isaiah 43:1-7

*I But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.² When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.³ For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.⁴ Because you are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you, I give people in return for you, nations in exchange for your life.⁵ Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you; ⁶ I will say to the north, "Give them up," and to the south, "Do not withhold; bring my sons from far away and my daughters from the end of the earth--⁷ everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made."
(Isaiah 43:1-7 NRSV)*

Leader: Inform participants that the Bible passage will be read 3 times. After each reading, participants will be invited to share their reflections.

FIRST READING

Invite participants to identify key a word, a phrase or image when listening to the passage the first time.

Invite someone to read the passage and take a moment of silent reflection.

Using Mutual Invitation, invite each person to share briefly his or her word, phrase or image. (This should take no more than five minutes.)

SECOND READING

Invite participants to consider the second question:

What is the Good News for you in this passage?

Invite someone to read the passage a second time.

Take a moment of silence to reflect on the question.

Using Mutual Invitation, invite each person to share his or her reflection

THIRD READING

Invite participants to consider the following question while listening to the passage again.

What does God invite you to do, be, or change through this passage?

Invite someone to read the passage a third time.

Take a moment of silence to reflect on the question.

Using Mutual Invitation, invite each person to share his or her reflection.

End the session with a prayer circle: Invite participants to join hands in a circle. Invite each person to mentally complete the sentences: *I thank God today...I ask God today...*

The leader will begin by sharing his or her prayers. After he or she has shared, the leader then squeezes the hand of the person to the right. That will be the signal for the next person to share his or her prayers. If the person does not want to share, he or she can simply pass the pulse to the next person. When the pulse comes back to the leader, he or she can begin the Lord's Prayer and invite everyone to join in.

Evangelism Workshop Notes

Three-fold definition of evangelism:

1.

2.

3.

Faith Sharing in Three Chapters

Tell Your Faith Story in Three Chapters

Group 1 Those who can name the day, hour, or moment when they accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior

- One: My Life Before Turning to Christ
- Two: How I Met Christ
- Three: My Life with Christ

Group 2 Those who grew up in Christian households

- One: Early Christian Influences in My Life
- Two: Making It (the Christian faith) My Own
- Three: My Life with Christ Today

(Adapted from *Your Church Can Thrive*, Harold Percy)

Paying the Rent Exercise

Imagine that you are about to receive a new pastor. Write down the top ten duties you believe he or she must be good at in order to *pay the rent*, i.e. be an effective pastor. The items on your top-ten list should not include character qualities like being patient, loving, or caring. Those are aspects of *being*. Your top ten list should consist of *tasks*, such as: preaching, teaching, visiting the sick, and so on.

Take two minutes to complete your lists. Once the lists are complete, record the items on newsprint or a dry erase board.

The next step in the exercise is critical. Invite the group, with the pastor's help, to estimate the time involved with each task. For example, conducting a wedding may involve six pre-marital counseling sessions, a rehearsal, a rehearsal dinner, the actual wedding and reception. Don't forget the commuting time and opening and closing the church if you pastor a smaller congregation. One wedding may actually consume fifteen hours stretched over several months.

Add up all of the time estimates for each duty.

After tallying up the hours a pastor would spend on these tasks, discuss how much time the pastor would actually have available to "do" evangelism.

Evangelism Leader Action Steps

Team Building

First, consult your pastor and nominations committee to identify key persons whom may serve with you on one of the following:

Prayer team

Evangelism team

As a team, read: The Bible using a Bible reading plan

Choose key evangelism resources to read together.

Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation 2009-2012 – Evangelism

Sharing the Good News (Available through Cokesbury)

Assess Your Current Reality

Ministry Assessment

What are you currently doing? What works, what doesn't?

Training needed

Resources needed

Budget for evangelism, missions, outreach

Core Membership

Who are your most dependable members?

Study Demographics

Get to know your community.

Hospitality & Welcoming Strangers

Use Rethink Church Welcoming and Hospitality resources (www.rethinkchurch.org)

Develop A Vision

Develop a vision derived from your prayer, Bible study, and collected information.

Develop a Plan

Work with the pastor(s), and other key leaders to develop a plan that weaves evangelism throughout the life of the church.

Recommended Resources

Rethink Church

United Methodist Communications
PO Box 320
Nashville TN 37202-0320
Phone: 877-281-6535
E-mail: rethinkchurch@umcom.org
Web: www.rethinkchurch.org

Rethink Church Training Resources:

Welcoming 101 Four-part Course (Free)

The “Welcoming 101” online course (WL101) is a free, self-directed course designed to help church leaders:

- * Explore the importance of developing a welcoming lifestyle—in your life and in your church.
- * Create an action plan to help build welcoming into your congregation’s culture as you invite your community through targeted advertising.

Welcoming National Training Events

Sponsored by United Methodist Communications, staffed by welcoming trainers, and hosted by annual conferences, these training events take place throughout the United States. Each event offers three training tracks at the same time. Choose one, or bring a team and cover all three:

- * Welcome: Basic Welcoming Training
- * Connect: Advanced Welcoming Skills
- * Identify: Creating a Unique Identity

Local Welcoming Training Events

Trainers from across the country are available to come to your conference, district or church to help your congregation learn about this ministry and develop a church lifestyle of welcoming.

Welcoming – Certification

The welcoming certification program is a four-year program that celebrates and recognizes the efforts to proactively prepare to receive newcomers.

DIY Comprehensive Handbook

This is a welcoming and advertising evangelism tool, free for the downloading -- in convenient sections, if desired. How do you reach out effectively to your community? Here are how-to ideas. How does your church intentionally live into a welcoming lifestyle? Look at yourself in light of what God has in mind for you and where you are. Create an environment in which guests are comfortable and

members are ministers of hospitality. Here are assessment tools and training for church leaders. Download the comprehensive handbook by section:

- * Introduction
- * Welcoming
- * Training
- * Advertisement

The wealth of offerings include a media Matching Grant application, tips on how advertising can help get your message into your community, best practices for working with media organizations, how to find free collateral on MediaWarehouse, and how to form a committee and get started.

Rethink Church Online Resources @ www.rethinkchurch.org

- * Radical Hospitality Worksheet (PDF)
- * Friendliness Worksheet (PDF)
- * Mystery Guest Worksheet (PDF)
- * Walk-thru Worksheet (PDF)
- * Welcoming Quotient Worksheet (PDF)

Welcoming – Small Church

Welcoming resources and training offered developed with the small church in mind -- easy downloads, free graphics, low-cost study guides, and no-budget ideas.

Welcoming – Open House

Each September, United Methodist Communications works with each bishop to encourage congregations to celebrate United Methodist Open House Month. This special time coordinates with the national back-to-school advertising messages.

Web Resources:

The General Board of Discipleship Evangelism Web Site

www.umcevangalism.com

Offering Christ Today -- online resource that provides helpful tips on evangelism and offers suggested evangelism resources.

Evangelistic Preaching Helps -- an occasional online resource that helps individuals prepare sermons from an evangelistic perspective.

Stories for Survivors are Bible stories with discussion questions created for survivors of disaster. The stories are told without extensive commentary in order to allow personal and group discovery of the spiritual truths in each text that are most relevant to the needs of people who are in crisis and transition.

“You’ve got the time” (Bible reading plan)

<http://www.faithcomesbyhearing.com/youve-got-time>

Print Resources:

Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation 2009-2012 – Evangelism Sharing the Good News

Evangelism is more than just one individual talking about faith; it is a ministry of the whole church that develops a church “lifestyle” of welcome, invitation, and support.

Topics include:

- * A biblical/theological basis for evangelism
- * The basics of evangelism ministry
- * Building an evangelism ministry team
- * Assessing your church’s hospitality to visitors
- * Equipping people for service

Cokesbury ISBN-13: 978-0-687-64921-1

Time Together in Ministry Everyday Planning Kit

The first in the GO FISH! Series of evangelism & outreach programs. The T.I.M.E. Handbook is an inspirational guide intended for each member of the congregation. Distribute the Handbook when the pastor and other church leaders are introducing the T.I.M.E approach to evangelism and outreach. The T.I.M.E. PLANNING KIT contains one copy each of the HANDBOOK, WORKBOOK, DVD, AND 52 DEVOTIONS book. This starter kit includes the inspiration and how-to processes for introducing your entire congregation to the T.I.M.E. approach to evangelism and outreach.
Abingdon, 2009 ISBN-13: 978-0-687-65358-4

The Apostolic Congregation by George G. Hunter III

In studying apostolic congregations around the world, George Hunter has discovered a set of perspectives and practices that they all share. With the passion and insight for which he is so well known, Hunter demonstrates how your congregation can learn to focus on the one thing that most matters: bringing people into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Abingdon, 2009 ISBN-13: 978-1-426-70211-2

Evangelism after Christendom: The Theology and Practice of Christian Witness by Bryan Stone

Most people think of evangelism as something an individual does--one person talking to one or more other people about the gospel. Bryan Stone, however, argues that evangelism is the duty and call of the entire church as a body of witness. Evangelism after Christendom explores what it means to understand and put to work evangelism as a rich practice of the church, grounding evangelism in the stories of Israel, Jesus, and the Apostles.

Brazos, 2007 ISBN-13: 978-1587431944

Witness Learning to Share Your Faith by Ron Crandall

WITNESS offers small groups the opportunity to embark on an exciting journey full of possibilities; a journey that will stretch participants to the limits of their capabilities and challenge them to dig deeper into their personal faith.

Discipleship Resources, 2007 ISBN-13: 978-0881774931

Just Walk Across the Room by Bill Hybels

Just a few steps and a friendly hello may be all it takes to change someone's life—and their eternity! And the good news is, it has more to do with taking a genuine interest in another person and listening to their story than it does with learning evangelism tactics and techniques.

ISBN: 0310266696 Available at www.willowcreek.com

Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations by Robert Schnase

Successful congregations often have certain characteristics in common. These fundamental practices demonstrate congregational health, vitality, and fruitfulness. They also help churches fulfill their mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Abingdon, 2007 ISBN-13: 978-0687645404

Transforming Evangelism: The Wesleyan Way of Sharing Faith by F. Douglas Powe and Henry H. Knight III

The central motive of authentic evangelism is: Having received a message that's made all the difference in our lives, we desire to share that message with others in the hope it will transform their lives as well. Wesley models an evangelism that reaches out and welcomes, invites and nurtures, and speaks to both head and heart.

Discipleship Resources, 2006 ISBN-13: 978-0881774856

Your Church Can Thrive by Harold Percy

Percy helps congregations answer critical questions about their mission and ministry. He then lays out four main groups of people that any congregations can and should seek out:

1. Those in the pews
2. Those who walk in
3. Friends and family of current members
4. Those who live in the neighborhood

Abingdon, 2003 ISBN 0-687-0225-8

Biblical Perspectives on Evangelism Living in a Three-Story Universe, by Walter Brueggemann

Brueggemann here describes evangelism as a drama in three scenes, concerning (1) God's victory over the forces of chaos and death, (2) the announcement of that victory, and (3) its appropriation by those who hear the announcement.

Abingdon, 1993 ISBN-13: 978-0687412334

Radical Outreach. The Recovery of Apostolic Ministry and Evangelism by George G. Hunter III

This book tells how the contemporary church can reclaim its ancient witness through hands-on ministries with the unchurched.

Abingdon, 2003 ISBN-13: 978-0687074419

Ancient Future Evangelism Making Your Church a Faith-Forming Community by Robert E. Webber

Robert Webber presents a model of evangelism and discipleship firmly rooted in Scripture, attested to in the history of the church, and authentic to the postmodern world in which we live. Webber surveys evangelism throughout the centuries, tracing the development of the ancient process of Christian formation. He translates that process for the 21st century, presenting four stages -- conversion, discipleship, spiritual formation, and Christian vocation -- that can easily be adapted to various church traditions.

Baker, 2003 ISBN-13: 978-0801091605

Church for the Unchurched By George G. Hunter III

Hunter discusses the rebirth of the apostolic congregation, Christianity's vision of what people can become, how small groups shape an apostolic people, how lay ministry advances the Christian movement, and how apostolic churches reach secular people.

Abingdon, 1996 ISBN-13: 978-0687277322

Deepening your Effectiveness, Restructuring the Local Church for Life Transformation by Dan Glover and Claudia Lavy

Proposing a "deep-sea change" from the typical church plan, Glover and Lavy offer experienced coaching in how to systematize disciple making in a congregation.

Discipleship Resources, 2006 ISBN-13: 978-0881774757

Making Room Recovering Hospitality As a Christian Tradition by Christine D. Pohl

This book revisits the discipline of welcoming strangers and provides the foundation for renewed commitment to recovering hospitality as a Christian tradition.

Eerdmans, 1999 ISBN-13: 978-0802844316

The Race to Reach Out Connecting Newcomers to Christ in a New Century by Douglas T. Anderson and Michael J. Coyner

The authors believe that to assimilate newcomers into the life and ministry of the congregation, the whole church system must be involved. Anderson and Coyner demonstrate how to identify and respond to visitors in a nonthreatening, yet interested way; how to share information about them with the leaders of those ministries and programs in which they would be most interested; how best to help them in their decision to become church members; and how to help them understand and fulfill their own call to ministry in the congregation.

Abingdon, 2004 ISBN-13: 978-0687066681

Closing Prayer

(Read Together)

Gracious God, give us the courage to be your witnesses in our local churches, homes, jobs, schools, and communities. Grant us the spiritual discernment needed to lead our congregations into the regular practice of effective evangelism. Help us remember the Good News that you have brought into our lives through Jesus Christ. Then, prod us out of our complacency with our individual salvation and draw us into the world filled with people hungry for Good News. Transform us; transform our churches, so that we may help transform the world. Amen.