



BacktoChurchSunday

3 steps to inviting people back to Church

We all have a network of contacts - people we know well and acquaintances - that we can invite to come to church with us, but normally we don't. Some reasons are:

- We are embarrassed about speaking about God/Jesus/Church/faith: it's just not Anglican
- We are worried that inviting people back to church might somehow damage our relationship with them
- We are worried that if we did invite them, they might come, and the service might be really bad quality or have a high 'cringe-factor'
- We are worried about being seen as a 'Bible-thumper'

But Jesus tells us that "all the world" needs to hear the good news of the kingdom. In the end it is up to the leadership of the Church to engender in its members the confidence that should be ours in Christ. What we have in Jesus is good - we should share it! We can make Back to Church Sunday part of the work of the church by making it part of our liturgy and prayer life.

Here's a simple plan to help people invite others back to church.

Step one: 6th September

Have "Back to Church Sunday" leaflets or paper and pencils available on pews for everybody.

As part of the normal church service, introduce the concept. Be very positive about it. Stress its importance and its potential. Be positive about the potential for new people, new faces, new energy etc.

Stress that Back to Church Sunday is something the whole church is involved in and that members of the congregation are 'part of the team'. They are in fact central to its success, both in their prayers and in personally inviting people to the event.

Stop for prayer. Pray for the event as a whole.

In prayer, ask members of the congregation to think about the people they know that aren't yet committed to following Jesus as part of his Church - not just close friends and family, but even those they know only a bit.

Ask the Holy Spirit to show members of the congregation which of these people they should invite to the event. Be aware that the Holy Spirit might bring a few names to the fore.

Ask them to write down two names. Pray for the names they have written down, that they will be open to be invited and will respond positively. **AMEN**

Mention that you'll be coming back to this over the next couple of weeks and ask them to keep the slips of paper with the names on and bring them to church next week.

Step two: 13th September

During the intercessions, remind people of the leaflets they filled out last week – ask them to have them in front of them.

Have extra leaflets and pencils for those who have forgotten their leaflets or who were not present the previous week - briefly explain what to do with them.

Pray for the people whose names are on the leaflets, that they will be open to the invitation. Pray for these people every day this week as part of their own prayer life. Pray for them as people, not just as potential invitees.

Pray for an opportunity to give the invitation this coming week, and for the courage to actually invite!

Step three: 20th September

Early in the service, ask how many people have been able to invite others to the event. Be positive about what they've achieved in doing so. Pray for those who have been invited, particularly those who are still deciding whether to come.

Encourage those who haven't yet invited people to do so.

Pray in the intercessions for those who have been invited and are intending to come, that God may work in them. Pray for those who have been invited and haven't yet decided whether or not to come, that they may decide positively. Pray for those who haven't yet been asked that they may respond positively to the invitation. Pray for the event as a whole, both in your own setting and nationwide.

That's it - it's an attempt to take inviting people seriously. Without personal invitation, the event is likely to have few non-church people in attendance.

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