

FAMILY IDEAS

'...But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.'
Joshua 24:15

These ideas emphasise strongly the need for churches to help support families, not just as individuals but together as a unit. Consequently many of these ideas involve working with the family as a unit.

FAMILY IDEAS

1 MUMS' BREAKFAST



PURPOSE: A weekly event to provide a support network among mums with young families in the area.

IDEA: To provide a breakfast from 8:45 -10:15am each week for mums that have just left off their kids at school. It could be advertised through the parish and local schools and involve a free late breakfast for an hour. It would focus mainly on the fellowship and food but could begin to build a supportive community of parents.

2 EASTER EGG FUN DAY



PURPOSE: An all-ages family day to help explain the meaning of Easter.

IDEA: To host a short open fun event for everyone that would also highlight the meaning of Easter. It could be held in the church grounds perhaps directly after church on Easter Sunday or at another suitable time. Food and fun fair type activities could be organised as well as Easter egg hunts in the grounds, egg games, crafts, chocolate giveaways and so on.

3 CHOCOLATE PARTY



PURPOSE: To hold an all-ages party to encourage relationship and make connections to the community.

IDEA: This is a family fun day either just before lent or just after Easter (to use up chocolate!). It will be chocolate themed and could include chocolate crafts, baking demonstrations, chocolate fountains, a café with crêche and even a short gospel message based around chocolate bars!

4 CHURCH FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT/ PYJAMA PARTY



PURPOSE: To bring families together for a big screen movie night and strengthen connections to church.

IDEA: To have an open invite to show a family rated movie in the church halls. Families could come to this together to watch the movie or alternatively you could have some tea and coffee for parents while children watch the movie. They could be asked to arrive in their pyjamas and bring a pillow and the movie could be shown on a big screen or projected onto the wall. Popcorn and drinks could be made available. The night should finish with a prayer.



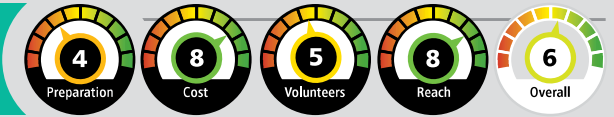
5 PARISH PICNIC



PURPOSE: To invite the parish and wider community to a picnic together just before the summer holidays.

IDEA: To book a local park or other suitable venue for the parish to gather for a picnic straight after church on a June Sunday. It could be the same Sunday as prize giving to encourage more families to be there. People could be encouraged to bring along their own picnic and all gather together or alternatively you could book a BBQ area in a park and ask people to bring their own burgers that a team could cook for them. There should be extra food brought to be able to invite people at the last moment or simply to provide something free for a new person. Alternatively the whole picnic could provide free burgers. A small team of people could organise some games for the children to play and leave time for conversation with parents.

6 FAMILY FUN DAYS



PURPOSE: To invite the whole community along to a family event to promote fellowship and fun and open up the church life to those that don't belong.

IDEA: Instead of, or alongside, traditional church fetes you could host an open fun day for the local community. Invites and posters could be made as widely available as possible and an emphasis placed on there being something for as many ages as possible. Ideas could include: Morning fry-ups, morning tea & scones, afternoon cream teas, bouncy castles, chocolate fountain, popcorn machine, candy floss machine, various sales of crafts, plants etc, bric a brac, cookery demonstrations, puppet shows, funfair games such as hoopla, visits from local fire brigade and police and so on.

7 PARENT AND TODDLER



PURPOSE: To facilitate and run a safe place for parents/carers to come and spend time together with their children.

IDEA: To provide an open invite to the community for a few hours each week when parents/carers can bring their children to a group and also meet with each other. It will need a room/hall set up to allow some space for:

- Play equipment and toys.
- A mat/carpet area to teach songs and rhymes.
- A craft table that could be themed differently for each week, e.g. seasonally – autumn leaf, and for special occasions such as Christmas and Easter.
- Provision of a juice and biscuits/toast break and coffee & tea for parents.

8 CHOCOLATE BAR VISITS



PURPOSE: To develop a relationship between church and home for the children and parents.

IDEA: Get together a visitation team, perhaps including children's leaders as children (and some parents!) will recognize them when they come to the door. The team in pairs visit each child's home with a small present of a chocolate bar and some contact information and information about the church with times of services, Sunday School and any special events coming up. The chocolate bar is simply your excuse to drop a small present in with a family.

9 COMMUNITY PARENTING COURSE



PURPOSE: To support parents in the community as they care for their children.

IDEA: To run a parenting course from the church for 6-8 weeks that would be targeted throughout the parish area and perhaps run in partnership with other churches and organisations. Various courses can be used or adapted from specialist organisations such as Care for the Family www.careforthefamily.org.uk

10 SUNDAY SCHOOL OPEN DAY



PURPOSE: To give parents, expectant parents, grandparents, friends etc an insight into what takes place in Sunday School.

IDEA: Open up Sunday school at the beginning of the year in September to let people see what is done there. Advertise this to all parents and the local community to allow them to sit in the hall/room to experience what goes on and to show how things are run and how much fun and learning takes place. Put on a typical day in your Sunday school with fun activities and teaching that the children and adults can participate in. Finish with juice and biscuits, tea and coffee.

11 FAMILY FAITH SUNDAY



PURPOSE: To highlight the importance of family and that sharing of faith should not just be learnt in church but also at home.

IDEA: Run a service in church devoted to the family – God's big family. Special invites could be sent out across the parish and an emphasis placed on asking parents and grandparents to attend that might not normally be there. Children and young people should also play a key part in the service such as readings, welcome, interviews and so on. Sample service material, children's talk, sermon, PowerPoint slides etc can be downloaded from www.familyfaith.co.uk

12 END OF YEAR SERVICE - PRIZE-GIVING SUNDAY



PURPOSE: To bless and encourage the children that come to church and Sunday School.

IDEA: This is an end of year service, generally held in June to celebrate the children and their achievements over the past year. It can involve:

- The children taking part in the service e.g. teaching a song, a key memory verse from the year, reciting a poem.
- Children receiving a prize of a book, CD or token.
- Showing a slide show of pictures of what the children have been doing throughout the year.
- A children's talk.
- Parents/carers receiving a devotional book for doing with children.