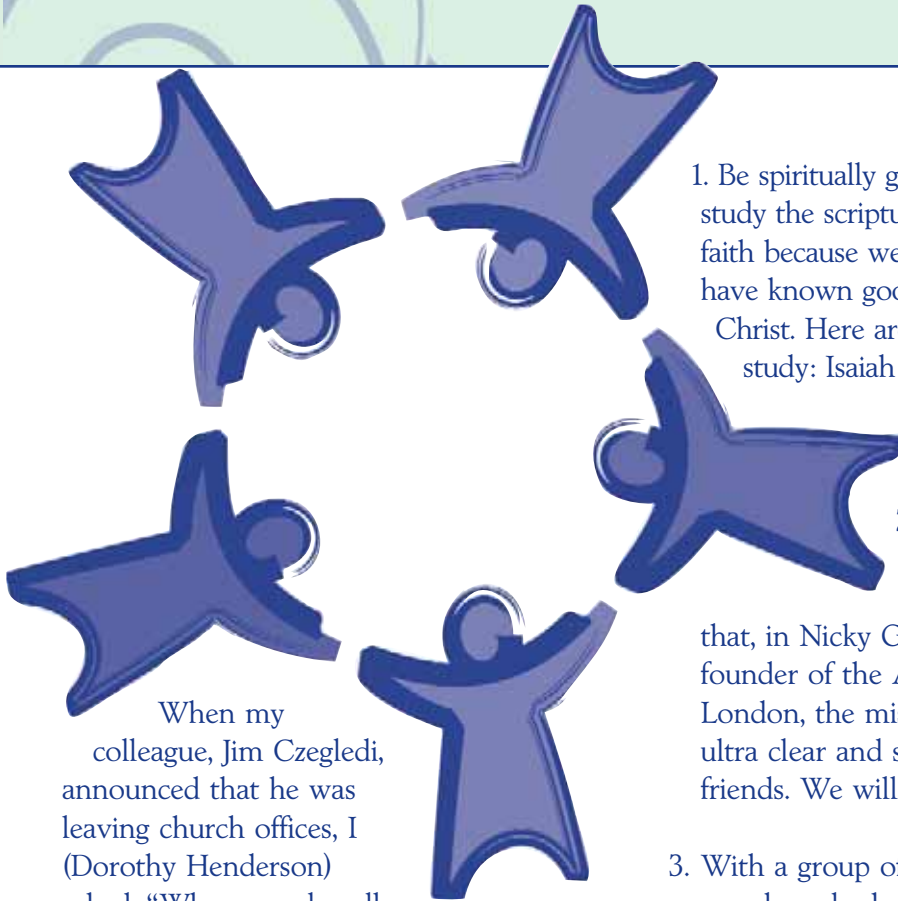


What is Evangelism to you?

Evangelism Questionnaire

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What is Evangelism to you?



When my colleague, Jim Czegledi, announced that he was leaving church offices, I (Dorothy Henderson) asked, “When people call or e-mail and ask for ‘help with evangelism’, what is it that they mean? What do most people mean by ‘evangelism’?”

“Well,” Jim replied, “there are so many different understandings of evangelism, I try to figure out how they define it. It could be hospitality. It could be sharing faith over the back fence. It could be reaching out to the community.”

What is evangelism to you? As your congregation/ministry explores evangelism and outreach strategies, here are some steps to follow.

1. Be spiritually grounded. Pray and study the scriptures. We share our faith because we truly believe that we have known good news through Christ. Here are good scriptures to study: Isaiah 55:1-5; Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 1:1-8; Revelation 7:9-17.

2. Have a clear sense of mission and purpose. It is reported that, in Nicky Gumball’s church (the founder of the Alpha program) in London, the mission statement is ultra clear and short: “We will make friends. We will make disciples.”

3. With a group of interested church members, look over the following areas of evangelism and outreach. Which seem most pertinent to your church life today, and what could be done in at least one area? Check off possibilities and make a congregational plan. (Add your own ideas as well because only you know what works best in your context.) Invite everyone to participate. While children and older seniors may be physically unable to do some activities, they can help by praying.

Attention to Our Building

- _____ We will make our church building/ministry space more accessible to people with physical challenges.
- _____ We will pay attention to our signage and the appearance of our front steps, entrance, and hallways. Are they up to date and appealing? Do they say, "Come in?"
- _____ Is our building (particularly our nursery) clean, fresh, and safe?

Communication

- _____ We will establish a drama, art, or dance group which will share faith in an engaging way.
- _____ We will print a new brochure outlining the ways our congregation/ministry benefits and transforms people's lives.
- _____ At least once a year, we will walk around our neighbourhood to distribute a brochure or invitation.
- _____ We will advertise our programs, worship, and ministries through direct mail, e-mail, print materials, TV, and radio.
- _____ We will provide or write daily devotions for members and friends. (These may be done by e-mail.)
- _____ We will ask our minister/worship leader to preach on specific aspects of outreach and evangelism.

Community and Neighbourhood Outreach

- _____ We will study the neighbourhood surrounding our church/ministry and talk to local leaders about needs in the community.
- _____ When we have identified some of the needs of our neighbours, we will host a "welcome party" and talk about how the church and our neighbours can work together.
- _____ We will host interest groups based on life issues and felt needs of our neighbours.
- _____ We will prepare "new neighbour" packets and invite members of the congregation/ministry to share them with people who move into our neighbourhood.
- _____ We will send an invitation to all residents who live within walking distance from the church/ministry. The invitation may say: "Enjoy walking? Walk to the church in your neighbourhood. Meet neighbours and friends. Meet God." Or, the invitation might be called, "Who needs the church?"

Education/Discipleship Programs

- _____ We will offer education/discipleship programs on several levels—they may be called "Foundations to Faith One," "Foundations to Faith Two," etc.
- _____ We will offer the Alpha program in our congregation/community.
- _____ We will watch for ways to promote a "ministry of action" as part of our discipleship journey.
- _____ We will create or expand small group ministry.

Expanded Worship

- _____ We will add an additional worship service with a special focus on informal, contemporary and/or experiential worship which may appeal to younger or unchurched people.
- _____ We will be intentional about stressing the value of regular worship.
- _____ We will be intentional about adding global resources to our corporate worship.

Incorporating and Encouraging New Members

- _____ When new members join our church, we will invite long-term members to share their faith stories at the new member orientation.
- _____ We will be intentional about inviting new members using a “Come and grow with us” approach.
- _____ We will be intentional about helping new members become active members.

Learning to Share Faith

- _____ We will host a training event to help people learn to share their faith stories.
- _____ We will invite members of our church to speak in worship about their faith story.
- _____ We will be intentional about using money to express our faith.
- _____ We will host learning events on the characteristics of post-modernity so we can better understand the changing milieu of today’s society and the people who are growing up in it. (It may be called “Evangelism in a changing world.”)
- _____ We will be intentional in helping lay people connect their faith to their work.

Organization Growth

- _____ We will plan a new satellite ministry or plan to sponsor a new congregation in another area of town.
- _____ We will set growth goals for involvement of members and guests.
- _____ We will have a clear mission statement and use it weekly.
- _____ We will study how our church size impacts the way we do outreach. For instance, we will study evangelism in the small (or medium or large) church.
- _____ We will invite guests to speak with us about their outreach programs.
- _____ We will engage in study to enrich our church health. (We may consider using Natural Church Development - NCD)

Outreach to Children and Youth

- _____ We will develop new ministries for children and youth, such as an after-school program, homework, computer or tutoring club, a day care centre.
- _____ We will be intentional about encouraging the youth of the congregation to invite friends to all worship, learning, serving, and fun events.
- _____ We will develop and support a mentoring program for children and youth.
- _____ We will help families learn to nurture faith in their children at home.
- _____ We will be intentional about seeing our Sunday school as an outreach program.

Outreach to New Canadians

- _____ We will offer English as a Second Language (ESL) for new immigrants.
- _____ We will find and offer Christian literature/brochures in the language of new immigrants who live around our church/ministry.
- _____ We will offer a “Stop in and find out” café - offering information, support, friendship, food.

Planning a Big Event or Conference

- _____ We will work with others to plan a conference or event on evangelism/outreach.
- _____ We will plan and carry out a new-age revival meeting.

Personal/Relational Evangelism

- _____ We will be intentional about caring ministries—visiting, member-to-member relationships.
- _____ We will begin or multiply the current selection of Bible studies and retreats.
- _____ We will host events that focus specifically on how women share faith, how men share faith, and how youth share faith.

Spiritual Renewal

- _____ We will form prayer groups to keep outreach and evangelism in the centre of our congregational/ministry life.
- _____ We will host a renewal/refocus/refresh retreat. (We may call it “Running on empty?” or “Renewing the Passion.”)
- _____ We will be intentional about adding prayer and/or scripture to every event we host at our church.
- _____ We will encourage members in daily prayer and Bible study.
- _____ We will focus on helping people discover their spiritual gifts.

Welcoming and Hospitality

- _____ We will host “invite a friend” events—worship, concerts, social events.
- _____ We will establish follow-up teams to respond to worship guests.
- _____ We will study what it means to be a welcoming, warm-hearted congregation and put some new practices into place.
- _____ We will identify elements that create an effective climate of Christian friendliness in a congregation/ministry.

Keep this list handy. You may decide to focus in one area for a year or two, then switch to another.

Need resources for any of these approaches?

Call the Vine Helpline (866-642-2830) or e-mail vinehelpline@presbyterian.ca.