

Leadership Meeting Agenda

Reaching the Unchurched—All Leaders Together

Prepared by:

Dean Abernathy, Ministry Specialist, Leadership and Evangelism Training and Events, LifeWay Christian Resources

PREPARE:

Read:

- *The Unchurched Next Door*, Thom S. Rainer (Zondervan, 2003)

Provide the following resources:

- Nametags, markers, copies of *Missionary Sunday School* by David Francis (download free at www.lifeway.com/davidfrancis)
- Prepare large sheets of paper with these statistics from *The Unchurched Next Door* (Rainer) or create a PowerPoint presentation with this and other insights from the book:
 - What do the unchurched in your community look like?
 - Faith stages reveal responsiveness:
 - Highly receptive to hearing and believing the Good News
 - Receptive to the gospel and to the church
 - Neutral, with no clear signs of interest, yet often open to discussion
 - Resistant to the gospel, but no antagonistic attitude
 - Highly antagonistic and even hostile to the gospel
 - Percentage breakdown of categories

Very Friendly	11%	Resistant	21%
Friendly	27%	Highly Antagonistic	5%
Neutral	36%		

Display the following resources:

- *Missionary Sunday School* (Francis) and *The Unchurched Next Door* (Rainer)

Prepare the room for learning:

- Place nametags on a table near the entrance; arrange chairs in groups of three to five.
- Set up AV equipment needed if using PowerPoint presentation.

PRESENT:

1. INTRODUCTION (5 min.)

Greet leaders. State: *An accurate understanding of the unchurched, added to our empathy for them and a commitment to obey the Great Commission, should guide us to implement Sunday School actions necessary to reach the unchurched in our community for Christ.*

2. UNCHURCHED NEXT DOOR (10 min.)

Instruct participants to brainstorm these two questions in their small groups: *How open and receptive to the gospel are the unchurched in your community? How open and receptive to your church are those in your community who are unchurched? What is the basis for your opinions?* Allow five minutes for the groups to work, then call for groups to share.

Comment: *An accurate understanding of the unchurched is essential in our ability and willingness to lead our Sunday School to reach them.*

3. PRESENTATION & ACTIVITY (20 min.)

Share about the unchurched based on research from *The Unchurched Next Door*. Use statistic sheets you prepared or the PowerPoint presentation to show research and identify the unchurched groups. Discuss your church's attitude about reaching the unchurched in your community.

State: *The unchurched in our community are waiting for someone to invite them to Sunday School. The unchurched are waiting for someone to invest time and energy to develop a meaningful relationship with them in order to share Christ. That someone should be our Sunday School leader/ member.*

Direct small groups to discuss the information about the unchurched. Ask them to write three statements that reflect your Sunday School's willingness to reach the unchurched in your community. Provide large sheets of paper and markers. Allow each group to share and discuss.

4. MISSIONARY SUNDAY SCHOOL (10 min.)

Direct learners to read "What's Your Assigned People Group?" (pp. 32-33 of *Missionary Sunday School*) and discover what a UPG is (unreached people group, under-reached people group).

Ask: *Which group do we see more often in our community? Which UPG is your class assigned to reach? Ask: How does your UPG know that your class exists to reach them?*

5. CONCLUSION (15 min.)

Ask: *What are we as Sunday School leaders willing to do to lead our members to reach the UPG in our community?* Brainstorm actions for reaching the UPG in your community. Examples:

1. Pray for our hearts to be broken for the UPG in our community.
2. Ask each Sunday School class to pray for the UPG they've been assigned to reach.
3. Ask your pastor to preach sermons that specifically challenge the church family to be willing to go after the UPG in your community.
4. Identify some practical and ongoing actions that will help your Sunday School communicate to your community that your church wants to be a part of their lives.
5. Sunday School leaders should set the pace for reaching the UPG in the community.
6. Create new classes that will focus on UPG in your community. Not all Sunday School classes have to meet on church property or on Sunday morning. Some people cannot attend on Sunday (shift workers, fire and police personnel, hospital employees, etc.).

End with a commitment and prayer to reach the UPG of our community.

Leadership Meeting Agenda

Reaching the Unchurched—Adults

Prepared by:

David Apple, Adult Ministry Specialist, Leadership Training and Events Department, LifeWay Christian Resources

PREPARE:

Provide the following resources:

- Nametags, markers, pencils, index cards (at least one per person), large sheets of paper, masking tape (or markerboard and dry-erase markers)
- Copies of *Missionary Sunday School* by David Francis (available for free download at www.lifeway.com/davidfrancis)

Display the following resources:

- *Missionary Sunday School* by David Francis
- Map of the city or community
- Sample of LifeWay ministry magazines: *Living with Teenagers*, *ParentLife*, *BabyLife*, *Collegiate*, *HomeLife*, *Mature Living*, *More Living* (new Boomer magazine; release date, September 2012).

Prepare the room for learning:

- Arrange chairs in semicircle(s) so everyone can see focal wall with map, markerboard, and display of magazines.
- Place nametags and markers on table near room entrance.
- Prepare placards or visuals (see steps 2, 3, 4).

PRESENT:

1. INTRODUCTION (5 min.)

Invite participants to prepare nametag as they come in the room. Reveal map of the community or city. Invite participants to brainstorm some of the groups of adults we are currently reaching who live in the area. Emphasize that this is the beginning of the mission field for our Sunday School. Explain that this session will help us focus on reaching unreached adults. Lead in prayer.

2. AN ASSIGNED PEOPLE GROUP FOR EACH CLASS (5 min.)

Call attention to the fact that every adult Sunday School class has an assigned people group. Display visual with these two questions: *Who is the people group for our class? What are ways we must get to know people in our people group?* (See *Missionary Sunday School*, pp. 34-35.)

Review map of the community or city. Lead participants to brainstorm unreached people groups in the area. List these on a markerboard or large sheet of paper. Ask participants to discuss: *Are we willing to reach these who are unreached in our community? How can we tell if we are willing to reach any of these unreached groups in our own community?*

3. CHALLENGED TO BE A COMMISSION CLASS (10 min.)

Call attention to the chart on page 5 of *Missionary Sunday School*. Lead brief discussion of how a Sunday School class can function as a Commission Class that seeks to reach unreached adults. © LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention 2012.

4. EVALUATE (10 min.)

Group learners into three groups. Distribute three placards, one to each group:

- Evaluate from our class' perspective
- Evaluate from perspective of unreached people
- Evaluate from Jesus' perspective

Assign each group to evaluate how their Sunday School class is intentionally reaching unreached adults from the perspective of the category on the placards. Call for responses after five minutes.

5. ACTIONS WE CAN TAKE CLOSE TO HOME (10 min.)

Call attention to the display of ministry magazines. Lead participants to discuss ways we can use magazines as ministry opportunities to unreached people in our community. If specific magazines are not available for display (such as *More Living*), overview the target groups for the resources that are or will be available to the Sunday School for ministry, discipleship, and for connecting with adults. Direct learners to www.lifeway.com/magazines for more information.

Encourage participants to decide to use at least one magazine during the coming quarter to connect with persons in their assigned unreached people group.

6. ACTIONS WE MUST STRENGTHEN (15 min.)

Remind leaders of these three significant strategies to strengthen our focus on unreached adults.

- Organize to intentionally build relationships that seek to include unreached individuals in our assigned people group.
- Start or sponsor a new Bible study group that focuses on connecting unreached people in life changing Bible study, ministry, and fellowship.
- Take specific actions to sponsor an unreached people group locally as well as internationally.

Discuss actions leaders can take to lead their class to focus on one or more of these strategies.

7. CONCLUSION (5 min.)

Distribute index cards, one or more to each participant. Invite persons to write the name of an unreached people group (or individual) they will seek to help their class get to know and reach. Lead in prayer of commitment.

Leadership Meeting Agenda

Reaching the Unchurched—Student

Prepared by:

Bruce Edwards, Youth Ministry Specialist, Tennessee Baptist Convention

PREPARE:

Provide the following resources:

- Nametags, markers, large sheets of paper, masking tape
- Read this article: <http://www.barna.org/teens-next-gen-articles/403-how-teenagers-faith-practices-are-changing> and be ready to share your thoughts about the content.
- Download the article about college freshmen from www.beloit.edu/mindset/2012/. Make copies for each worker. Cut one copy into small segments (3 or 4 statements each). Fold each segment and place in a hat or basket.
- Prepare three large sheets of paper with one of these questions on each sheet: *Who are the unreached students in our community? What does our church offer unreached students who live in our community? How can we work with our current students to reach the unreached students of our community?*

Prepare the room for learning:

- Arrange chairs in three circles of three or four. Place nametags and markers in each group. (If your group is small, work together to complete the assignments.)

PRESENT:

1. INTRODUCTION (20 min.)

Greet leaders as they arrive. Ask them to complete a nametag and then to draw out at least one paper from the hat or basket.

Share this information from the Beloit College Web site: *“Each August for the past 11 years, Beloit College in Beloit, Wis., has released the Beloit College Mindset List. It provides a look at the cultural touchstones that shape the lives of students entering college. It is the creation of Beloit’s Keefer Professor of the Humanities Tom McBride and Public Affairs Director Ron Nief. The List is shared with faculty and with thousands who request it each year as the school year begins, as a reminder of the rapidly changing frame of reference for this new generation.”*

Continue by asking leaders: *What do you know about the students in our student ministry? Look at these statements from the Beloit list for 2012 college freshmen—kids who aren’t much older than the students you teach every week—and consider their world. Be prepared to share which statement on your list surprises you most.*

Guide a discussion based on leader responses. Explain that you will provide a copy of the entire document to them at the end of today’s session.

2. WHAT CAN WE OFFER? (30 min.)

Distribute one of the question sheets you prepared to each of the three groups. Direct leaders to work together to answer the question on their paper. Provide markers for each group. (If your group is small, work together on each question and discuss each one as you go along.)

Call for responses from the first group. Add to their ideas based on your knowledge of the students in and around your church community. Challenge leaders to remember that before we can reach the unchurched, we have to identify them.

Call for responses from the second group. Explain that students are often reached through an event (concert, fellowship, party, sporting event, etc.) but our goal as Sunday School leaders is to reach them for Bible study. Challenge leaders to discuss ways we are currently doing that.

Ask: What events can we offer that will reach students? What steps can we take to keep them coming after events?

Call for responses from the third group. Ask why it's vital to involve students in reaching students. Challenge leaders to move beyond what's comfortable and into the hard-to-reach area of students who may look or act differently than the students who are currently attending.

3. WHY DO WE CARE? (10 min.)

Make the following statement; repeat it for emphasis: *Most researchers agree that on any given Sunday, only 12% of teenagers in any community in America can be found in anybody's church.* Share insights from the article you read at <http://www.barna.org/teens-next-gen-articles/403-how-teenagers-faith-practices-are-changing>.

Ask these questions without calling for oral responses: What about the 88% who aren't in church? What is our church doing to reach them? What are you doing to reach them?

Read aloud Matthew 28:18-20. Challenge leaders to pray for the 88% of students in our community who aren't going to anybody's church. Ask them to pray by name for at least one student who needs to be in Bible study. If they don't know at least one student who needs to be in Bible study, challenge them to make it a priority to get to know the students who live in the community.

Give out the 2012 Beloit College list as leaders leave.

Leadership Meeting Agenda

Reaching the Unchurched—Childhood

Prepared by:

Bill Emeott, Lead Childhood Ministry Specialist, Childhood Ministry Training and Events,
LifeWay Christian Resources

PREPARE:

Provide the following resources:

- Items that can be easily identified and retrieved by a group of participants. You will need several items for each team you plan to have. You will need to plan for at least two teams but perhaps more depending on the number of expected participants. Gathered items should represent things that might be used to reach unchurched people (stuffed animals, a Bible, a coffee cup, a swim noodle, a cell phone, a winter coat, canned food, water bottles, school backpacks, etc. Think about your community and be creative.).
- Separate lists of the items collected for each team.
- Provide one large plastic trash bag for each team (large enough to hold the items that will be retrieved in the introductory activity).
- Index Cards

Prepare the room for learning:

- Arrange chairs in circles (one for each team) on opposite sides of the room (as far away from each other as possible).
- Mark one chair in each circle as “base” for use in the introductory activity.
- Strategically place items collected around the room (the distance items are to be placed away from “base” will be determined on the number of participants expected in each team).

PRESENT:

1. INTRODUCTION (15 min.)

Divide the group into two teams as they enter. Share: *Today we are going to discuss reaching boys and girls who are currently unchurched in our community. We will work to discover how as a team we can reach them and bring them into our church family.*

Identify each team’s “base” (chair). Give each team the prepared list of items that they will be retrieving. Share the following instructions: *When I say “go,” each team will work together to reach and retrieve the listed items that have been placed around the room. Teams must work together by holding hands and stretching to reach the items. One team member must be touching “base” at all times. That team member will be responsible for holding all retrieved items. The first team to retrieve all listed items wins.* Clarify the rules if necessary and start the game.

2. BRAINSTORMING (20 min.)

Congratulate the winning team and lead participants to return to their team circles. Instruct groups to consider the items retrieved, and brainstorm creative ways that each item might be used to reach unchurched kids/families in your community. After five minutes, allow teams to share their items and how that item might be used in reaching. Lead the conversations as necessary.

3. WHAT ABOUT YOU? (20 min.)

Distribute index cards to team members. Individuals should write on their index card the number one reason why they choose to attend this church. (Possible responses might include: great worship, great fellowship, enjoy the preaching, love the music, my family goes here, closest church to my house, etc.).

When everyone is finished, teams will collect each team member's response. Use the human chain technique (used in the introductory activity) to allow teams to swap sets of cards. Teams will then review the "reasons" and choose three favorite or most popular. Teams will then determine how those "reasons" might become tools for reaching unchurched children in the community.

Allow time for teams to share their ideas. Elaborate, guide, and encourage the discussion.

Share: The number one reason why first-time guests choose to attend a church is because someone they know invited them. Your personal testimony along with a personal invitation might be the best tool we have available.

4. CONCLUSION (5 min.)

Distribute a second index card to each participant. Encourage the group to consider who in the community is not currently being reached by our church. Ask: *Would one of the reaching ideas suggested during our time together today be an effective tool to reach that unchurched group?*

Encourage participants to list that particular suggestion on their index card and commit to pray about how they might be involved in reaching unchurched children using that tool.