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EXPERIENCING GOD

Knowing & Doing
the Will of God

WEEKEND MANUAL

© 1997 Lifeway Press®
Revised 2022

ISBN 978-1-0877-4168-0
Item 005831467

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Adapted from Experiencing God Weekend Church Preparation Manual, published by Brotherhood Commission, SBC, © 1993.

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Made in the United States of America

Adult Ministry Publishing
Lifeway Christian Resources
One Lifeway Plaza
Nashville, TN 37234



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EXPERIENCING GOD

PREPARING FOR THE WEEKEND

WHAT IS AN EXPERIENCING GOD WEEKEND?

An Experiencing God Weekend exposes the church to the seven realities of the way God works through His people to accomplish His purposes. Church members have the opportunity to examine their lives and seek the Lord's leadership so that they can join God where He is working.

An Experiencing God Weekend has two purposes:

1. To provide for each participant—adult, youth, and elementary-age child—a meaningful and challenging encounter with God that makes the seven realities personal to each participant
2. To preview the study *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God* to stimulate interest in individual participation in a churchwide study

This manual will help you and your church plan for an Experiencing God Weekend. Visiting team members and church leaders will also need copies of the manual.

The Experiencing God Weekend requires a visiting team of small-group leaders; resource teachers for adults, youth, and children; and a weekend coordinator. The number of small-group leaders is determined by the needs of the local church. Every team member must have personally completed *Experiencing God*. Each team member should be enthusiastic about the positive impact the study has had in their personal lives.

Three ingredients contribute to a successful Experiencing God Weekend: prayer, preparation, and participation.

PRAYER

Prayer is critical. Without a foundation of prayer the Experiencing God Weekend will not be all God intends it to be. Spiritual preparation is the most important part of getting ready for the weekend, and prayer is the basis for this preparation.

The church will want to use “Weekend Prayer Guide,” located at li. To be used the week before the event, the guide can be printed in a weekly church publication or published as a separate piece and distributed to church members as a handout or through the mail.

PREPARATION

Preparation for the weekend has several facets, three of which are personal, pulpit, and physical.

1. **Personal** preparation comes through prayer and personal study. Prayer has already been discussed. The book *What the Spirit Is Saying to the Church* by Henry Blackaby can be used for personal or small-group study before the weekend.
2. From the **pulpit** the pastor can preach a series of sermons leading up to the weekend, based on *What the Spirit Is Saying to the Church* or *Experiencing God*.
3. **Physical** preparation includes room arrangement and space needs. With proper preparation the weekend will be free of distractions and last-minute complications. Distractions such as inadequate sound, room lighting, and temperature will keep participants from receiving all the Lord intends for them during the weekend.

Many other areas of preparation are discussed throughout this manual.

PARTICIPATION

Participation by church members is essential. The entire church family should be involved, from young children through senior adults. Extra effort should be made to encourage maximum church participation. The more people involved in planning and leadership roles, the greater the success of the weekend. Although this is not an outreach weekend, church members will want to bring visitors, neighbors, and friends from outside the church family.



EXPERIENCING GOD

LEADERSHIP FOR THE WEEKEND

THE PASTOR'S ROLE

The pastor is the key in preparing and motivating members to look forward to a work of God in the life of the church. His enthusiasm and commitment set the stage for an Experiencing God Weekend.

Ideally, about six months prior to this event, the pastor initiates discussion within the church about having an Experiencing God Weekend. After talking with other ministry staff members and lay leaders, he enlists a visiting weekend coordinator to work with him (see “Visiting Team” on this page).

The pastor selects a general chairperson from the active membership of the church. Together they select nine preparation committee leaders. The pastor and other staff members should be included in the decisions made about the weekend. They need to meet regularly with committee leaders and give their support.

The pastor prepares the congregation to receive what God desires for the church (1) through his preaching, (2) through his correspondence to the church, and (3) through his expressed desire for God to work through the weekend.

The pastor's specific responsibilities include the following.

- Meet with church leaders and deciding to conduct an Experiencing God Weekend.
- Enlist a weekend coordinator.
- Work with the weekend coordinator to invite visiting team members.
- Select the general chairperson.
- Advise and cooperate with the general chairperson to ensure that all preparation is completed as planned and that he and the church staff are involved in the preparation.
- Devote time to teaching and preaching on spiritual preparation, incorporating ideas in *What the Spirit Is Saying to the Church* or other resources suggested by the visiting weekend coordinator.

- Work closely with the prayer-and-follow-up committee to develop plans for after the weekend.
- Provide leadership to the church for the small-group study that follows the weekend.

VISITING TEAM

The use of a visiting team is a major strength of the weekend. Even so, the roles and responsibilities of visiting team members can be accepted by church leaders if you are unable to secure a visiting team. The suggestions in this manual assume that a team has been enlisted from outside the church body.

Weekend Coordinator

The visiting weekend coordinator is responsible for equipping the church to prepare for the weekend. This person should be someone who has studied *Experiencing God* and, preferably, has previously coordinated an Experiencing God Weekend. A detailed discussion of his or her duties begins on page 12 in this manual.

The weekend coordinator meets with the church staff about four months before the weekend. At this time a number of decisions are made, including the date of the preview Sunday, the date of the Experiencing God Weekend, how the church will prepare, and follow-up to the weekend.

The weekend coordinator conducts the preview Sunday, which takes place eight or nine weeks before the Growing Disciples Weekend. Plans for the day are provided on page 20 in this manual. On preview Sunday the coordinator provides general guidance and training for the church staff, preparation committee leaders, and other key church leaders.

The weekend coordinator is also responsible for the visiting team, which is made up of age-group (adult, youth, and children's) resource teachers and small-group leaders. The works with the pastor and the

church's general chairperson to invite experienced team members to the church.

The coordinator serves as a general consultant to the church. He or she is the overall leader for the weekend and moderates each general session. The coordinator works closely with the adult resource teacher in determining the overall content of the weekend. In some cases the weekend coordinator and the adult resource teacher may be the same person.

Age-Group Resource Teachers

Resource teachers are selected by the weekend coordinator and are invited by the church. Visiting resource teachers should be enlisted for adult, youth, and children. This manual provides specific plans only for adult and children's teaching sessions. It is recommended that youth meet separately from adults but that youth teachers follow the adult plans provided in this manual. For the latest resources for conducting youth and children's teaching sessions, go to www.lifeway.com/eg.

The resource teacher presents material to be covered during the age-group teaching sessions. The weekend coordinator may assume the role of the adult resource teacher.

The adult resource teacher is responsible for sessions on Friday evening (7:30–8:15 p.m.), Saturday morning (9:10–10:15 and 10:30–11:30 a.m.), Saturday evening (7:30–8:15 p.m.), during the Sunday School hour, and in the Sunday-morning worship time.

Youth and children's resource teachers lead sessions Friday evening (7:30–9:15 p.m.), Saturday morning (9:00–11:30 a.m.), Saturday afternoon (1:00–2:00 p.m.), and Saturday evening (7:30–9:30 p.m.). Youth meet with adults during Sunday School, while children attend regular Sunday School classes. Everyone meets together for morning worship.

All resource teachers work closely with the weekend coordinator on the schedule and content and are key leaders during the weekend.

Adult Small-Group Leaders

The visiting adult small-group leaders have two primary responsibilities:

1. To facilitate small-group discussions
2. To share personal testimonies during the weekend on how *Experiencing God* has helped them grow in their relationship with Christ

Small-group leaders are selected by the weekend coordinator and are invited by the church.

Adult small-group discussions are on Friday evening (8:15–9:15 p.m.), Saturday afternoon (1:00–2:00 p.m.), and Saturday evening (8:15–9:00 p.m.). The weekend coordinator works with the church's general chairperson to divide participants into small groups of 12 to 15 adults. Discussion plans are provided in "Adult Teaching Plans" at lifeway.com/egleader. Small-group leaders are facilitators, not teachers. Their role is to ask questions that are intended to motivate open discussion among group members. Small-group leaders are not expected to have all the answers; they are expected to be good listeners and minister to group members as opportunities arise.

Adult small-group leaders will be asked by the weekend coordinator to share their testimonies during general sessions and worship times.

CHURCH TEAM

General Chairperson

The primary responsibility of the general chairperson is to coordinate the planning and preparation at the local level. The general chairperson, a member of the church, works closely with the pastor, the church staff, and the nine preparation committee leaders. He or she is the planning liaison between the visiting team and the church. The chairperson works with the weekend coordinator and the pastor to officially invite visiting team members.

The general chairperson should be deeply committed to the Lord and to the church. The person should be an effective administrator and leader. He or she should be recognized by the church as someone who is sensitive to and follows the voice of God. Ideally, this person should have completed *Experiencing God*.

The general chairperson is responsible, with the assistance of the pastor and the prayer-and-follow-up committee leader, for conducting the Sunday-evening praise and evaluation service.

The general chairperson is responsible for ensuring good communication among the nine preparation committees and among the committees, the staff, and the church body. Therefore, it is important that this person have good communication skills.

Preparation Committee Leaders

The Experiencing God Weekend is lay-led, with the pastor and staff serving in an advisory and support capac-

ity. Nine committee leaders are enlisted from the church membership by the general chairperson, in consultation with the church staff. These preparation committees meet regularly to prepare the church for the Experiencing God Weekend:

- Committee 1: Prayer and Follow-Up
- Committee 2: Welcome, Transportation, and Facilities
- Committee 3: Correspondence and Materials
- Committee 4: Attendance and Publicity
- Committee 5: Food
- Committee 6: Housing
- Committee 7: Youth
- Committee 8: Children
- Committee 9: Preschool

Committee leaders are responsible for recruiting their committee members. Some committees will be large; others may have only a few members. Each committee should have an associate leader in case the committee leader is unavailable. Each committee is free to organize in the best way to carry out its assignment. Sometimes subcommittees may need to be formed. In general, the more people involved in preparing for the weekend, the better. One note of caution: do not ask people to work with a committee and then have nothing for them to do. That is counterproductive.

Communication within the committee and among committees is important. Good communication limits confusion, duplication of effort, and inefficient planning. Things should be done as far in advance of the weekend as reasonable so that the weekend can be devoted to spiritual matters. If there is sufficient staff, the church may wish to assign a staff member to each committee as a resource person. For example, the pastor could be a resource person to the prayer and follow-up committee.

Because each church is different, your leaders will want to adjust the guidelines in this material to fit your situation. Do what works best for you. Discuss any changes with your weekend coordinator.

Committee Meetings

Periodically, all committees should meet together for a time of prayer and to coordinate the weekend's activities. This meeting will also generate excitement and anticipation for the weekend.

The pastor and the general chairperson will meet regularly with all committee leaders. Each committee leader should meet with his committee regularly. When they meet, they should devote an equal amount of time to each of the following four areas.

1. Review key concepts from each chapter of *What the Spirit Is Saying to the Church*. The best spiritual preparation comes about when the pastor leads the entire church through that book. If this is not done in your church, committee meetings can be used to conduct the study.
2. Share expectations, concerns, needs, and victories. Sharing in committee meetings should focus on anticipation of the weekend, personal needs within the committee, and other concerns about the weekend.
3. Make assignments based on weekend needs.
4. Pray for the presence of the Holy Spirit throughout planning and preparation. Prayer time should focus on the committee's tasks and needs and on personal burdens about the weekend. A list of unsaved people should be given to each preparation committee. Prayer should include each person on the list. Do not pray around the circle. Instead, encourage people to pray spontaneously.

Many significant spiritual experiences have come from these committee meetings. Committees gain a vision that God's Spirit will awaken the church to spiritual vitality and new life. Excitement about the weekend grows as the committees experience unity through sharing and seeing answers to prayer about needs for housing, food, hosts, and the many other details associated with the weekend.

Committee Responsibilities

The nine committees and their respective responsibilities for the weekend are as follows.

Committee 1—Prayer and Follow-Up

The prayer and follow-up committee has two primary responsibilities:

1. To saturate the weekend in prayer
2. To work with the pastor and church staff to ensure that the church is ready to begin its follow-up plans immediately after the weekend

Members of the prayer-and-follow-up committee should be composed of people who can lead others by example to spend time in prayer seeking a fresh breath

of God's Spirit in their lives and in the life of the church. Unless the entire effort is immersed in prayer, the results will be shallow and temporary. Unless the follow-up planning is complete and preparations are made to begin immediately, much of the positive impact of the weekend may be lost.

Prayer preparation requires specific tasks that give prayer support to the weekend:

- Encourage the church to have a prayer seminar six to eight weeks before the weekend. An appropriate study is *Pray in Faith* (item 005499697) by T.W. Hunt and Claude King.
- Establish churchwide prayer groups and home prayer meetings during the three to four weeks before the weekend.
- Develop a 30-day prayer calendar with specific needs and concerns of the church family, including unsaved people, to share with the other preparation committees and with the church.
- Decide on the details to print and distribute the prayer guide to the church the week prior to the weekend. The prayer guide is located in *Experiencing God Weekend Manual*.
- Make plans for a 24-hour prayer vigil to begin Thursday at 5:00 p.m. before the weekend.

Follow-up preparation requires specific tasks in order to be ready to begin the churchwide study promptly after the weekend:

- Pray with the pastor about how God wants to use this weekend in your church and what type of follow-up needs to take place.
- Work out details with the pastor and church staff about what is needed to offer *Experiencing God*.
- With the church staff's counsel, recruit and train leaders needed for the study groups after the weekend.
- Obtain materials that are required for the small-group study and have enough on hand to get started after the weekend.
- If required, help the pastor and staff organize small groups.

This committee will also work with the pastor and the general chairperson in preparing for and leading the Sunday-evening praise and evaluation service.

Committee 2—Welcome, Transportation, and Facilities

As the name implies, this committee is responsible for greeting and welcoming everyone who is part of the

Experiencing God Weekend. The committee is responsible for helping blend the visiting team and church members in friendly, relaxed fellowship for the weekend.

The welcome, transportation, and facilities committee will make arrangements to meet and transport visiting team members who arrive by plane or other public transportation. Most often, team members will arrive in cars. Sometimes members who share rides have different hosts, and youth team members often do not have cars. Usually, the host families provide transportation to church, but when this is not possible, this committee provides transportation. The committee should publicize a telephone number if either a visiting team member or a local church member needs transportation. The number should also be printed at the bottom of the weekend schedule provided to all church members.

This committee makes provisions for welcoming and registering visiting team members and providing a private meeting room for them to use. Refreshments and a lounge area are helpful, if the church has the facilities, for team members who may arrive several hours early. Permanent name tags help identify visiting team members throughout the weekend.

The committee should provide registration tables for church members who arrive on Friday night, Saturday morning, and Saturday night. Name tags are a tremendous help for each local-church member, including youth and children. New name tags should be provided on Saturday morning and Saturday night for those who forget or lose theirs.

This committee is also responsible for the physical arrangements for the meetings. This includes room temperature, lighting, sound, seating, and any other details related to the environment.

For example, the adult resource teacher will require a good overhead projector with an extra bulb and a large screen (8-by-10-foot minimum) in the large-group meeting room. Small-group meeting rooms should be arranged with a circle of 12 to 15 chairs. The meeting rooms should be numbered and easily identifiable. Signs directing people to the small-group rooms should be prominently displayed. Children's resource teachers will often require special equipment, such as a way to play videos and a monitor.

For many who will attend the weekend, a member from this committee will be their first exposure to the weekend. A friendly, warm welcome will get the weekend off to a good start for everyone.

Committee 3—Correspondence and Materials

The correspondence-and-materials committee works with the church staff to prepare, duplicate, collate, and mail the printed items and materials required for the Experiencing God Weekend. Many of the tools are in this manual, beginning on page 24. This committee's responsibilities include the following.

- Assist the pastor in preparing the team invitation letters and other items required in inviting prospective visiting team members.
- Receive and compile the visiting team-member reply cards and advise the housing committee and the welcome, transportation, and facilities committee of the requirements for each visiting team member.
- Duplicate and mail letters from the pastor and the general chairperson to the congregation about the weekend. The last mailing should include a schedule for the weekend and instructions about meals and children.
- Print required materials for the weekend as requested by the weekend coordinator. Duplicate other materials as needed for the weekend.
- Mail a welcome letter to visiting team members with directions to the church and a schedule.
- Assist the pastor in preparing and mailing a letter to visiting team members reporting the results of the weekend and expressing appreciation for their participation.

Committee 4—Attendance and Publicity

The attendance-and-publicity committee obtains maximum participation from the church family during the Experiencing God Weekend. This committee encourages every member of the church and every person on the current list of prospects to participate. Every member should be contacted several times through—

- two letters from the pastor;
- a letter from the general chairperson that includes a schedule for the weekend and instructions about meals and children;
- publicity in church mailings.

This committee is responsible for providing church members the maximum exposure to the weekend. The goal is to make sure the entire church family (adults, youth, and children) understands the value of the weekend. The Experiencing God Weekend should constantly be kept before the church by means of posters, banners, printed material, e-mails, and reminders of all types.

This committee functions effectively if it is composed of church members who have gifts in creative design and publicity.

Committee 5—Food

The food committee is responsible for coordinating and arranging meals provided by the church during the weekend. These include visiting team members' meals (six in all), which can be in homes, at church, or at other locations. The entire church family is usually included in two or more of these meals. Local-church families who invite team members to stay in their homes are responsible for meals that are not provided by the church. This usually includes two breakfasts. In most cases the food committee is responsible for the following meals.

- Friday-evening meal (visiting team and the church family)
- Saturday-morning coffee, juice, etc., before the morning session
- Light lunch on Saturday (optional; visiting team and the church family)
- Saturday-evening meal (optional; visiting team and the church family)
- Light lunch on Sunday (departing visiting team)

The food committee participates in each session during the weekend. Committee members should plan with this in mind. To avoid creating a burden for anyone, the committee can plan informal meals, making maximum use of disposable plates, cups, napkins, and utensils. They can enlist sufficient help for quick cleanup so that everyone involved can immediately go to the next session.

The food committee also makes plans for the youth and children's meals. Parents should be instructed to provide food for preschoolers. Youth and children can eat meals with the adults, or simple meals can be provided in another area of the church. Snacks and fruit drinks should be considered for younger children during the day Saturday. The committee should consult with the children's resource teacher to plan these refreshment times.

Committee 6—Housing

The housing committee is responsible for providing housing for visiting team members. Visiting team members normally include couples alone, couples with children, youth, single adults, and married adults traveling without spouses. The housing committee should meet early in the planning stages and begin to pray for

God's direction in the selection of homes where visiting team members are to stay.

The Lord often works through visiting team members as they stay in the homes of church members during the weekend. The housing committee will want to pray earnestly about the houses chosen. Visiting team members are often assigned to the homes of less active church members. Hosting a team member encourages the family to participate in the weekend.

Adult couples and married adults traveling without their spouses usually stay with families of the same marital status. Singles, when possible, are placed with singles. Youth don't have to stay with their parents. Place them with families that have youth. Younger children, of course, should be with their parents.

Secure an extra home or two in case of illness or another unforeseen circumstance makes it impossible for the enlisted host family to keep guests. The extra homes will also cover any oversight that may have occurred in replying to the invitations.

Committee 7—Youth

The youth committee is made up of adults and youth in the church who are involved in the preparation and promotion of the weekend. Adult committee members attend the adult sessions during the weekend, not the youth sessions. The weekend coordinator will recommend an experienced youth resource teacher who will lead the activities for the youth all weekend with the help of other visiting youth team members. The youth resource teacher will use the adult plans provided at lifeway.com/egleader to conduct separate teaching sessions for youth.

The youth committee's responsibilities include involving young people in preparation for the weekend and encouraging young people to participate in the weekend. The youth committee can also recommend weekend activities to other preparation committees. Room locations and food are two examples.

Youth will be led by other young people who face similar decisions in their lives. For young people in some churches, this will be the first time they meet peers who are fully committed to Jesus. Encourage youth to request visiting team members to stay in their homes. Spiritual preparation should be included before the weekend to help them realize the weekend's importance.

Committee 8—Children

The weekend will be exciting for the children. If the children are happy and satisfied, the parents will be encouraged to attend all the sessions.

The weekend coordinator will enlist a visiting children's resource teacher or teachers to lead children in grades 1–6. Material for the children is provided at lifeway.com/egleader.

The children's committee should carefully study the children's material to understand the work that will be done and how they can help. They should obtain the name, address, and phone number of the visiting children's resource teacher(s) from the weekend coordinator and establish direct contact as soon as possible. The children's resource teacher(s) will inform the committee about needs for materials and equipment. Most churches will find that the supplies normally in children's Sunday School departments are satisfactory for the weekend. Some photocopying, a way to play or stream video and a monitor are usually required.

The discipline of the local children can sometimes be a problem for the visiting children's resource teacher(s) since some children do not adjust well to new authority figures. If this becomes a problem, the visiting children's resource teacher(s) can request assistance from the parents of the children. The children's committee should be prepared to help in any way necessary.

If a children's resource teacher is not available, the weekend coordinator will help the children's committee prepare for the weekend.

Committee 9—Preschool

The preschool committee is responsible for providing child care for children below the first grade. Provision should be made for child care for all sessions. Do not use church members if possible; they should be free to attend each session of the weekend. Secure workers from outside sources. For example, ask a neighboring church if it would be willing to supply workers for Friday night and Saturday. You can offer to return the favor for a future event at that church.



EXPERIENCING GOD

RESOURCES

The following resources are for planning an Experiencing God Weekend. Resources are available by writing to LifeWay Church Resources Customer Service; One LifeWay Plaza; Nashville, TN 37234-0113; faxing order to (615) 251-5933; e-mailing orderentry@lifeway.com; phoning toll free (800) 458-2772; ordering online at www.lifeway.com; or visiting the LifeWay Christian Store serving you.

ADULTS

Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God by Henry and Richard Blackaby and Claude King (item 005084536)

Experiencing God, Leader Guide by Claude King (item 005085768)

Experiencing God, Leader Kit (item 005096105)

Experiencing God, Audio CDs (item 005095984)

Pray in Faith by T.W. Hunt and Claude King (item 005035525)

What the Spirit Is Saying to the Church by Henry Blackaby (item 001117617)

YOUTH

Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God, Youth Edition (item 001274723)

Experiencing God, Youth Edition, Leader Guide (item 001287547)

Experiencing God, Youth Edition, DVD Pack (item 001288609)

CHILDREN

Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God, Preteen Edition (item 001274724)

Experiencing God, Preteen Edition, Leader Guide (item 001274725)

SPANISH

Experiencing God, Spanish Edition, Adult Member Book (item 001133338)

Experiencing God, Spanish Edition, Leader Guide (item 001133339)

Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God, Spanish, Youth Edition (item 001134078)

Experiencing God, Spanish, Youth Edition, Leader Guide (item 001134079)

Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God, Spanish, Children's Edition (item 001134080)

Experiencing God, Spanish, Children's Edition, Leader Guide (item 001134081)



EXPERIENCING GOD

WEEKEND COORDINATOR'S GUIDE

The weekend coordinator uses this manual to guide the church in preparing for and conducting an Experiencing God Weekend. The following material guides the weekend coordinator in his or her work.

BEFORE THE WEEKEND

Conduct a preliminary meeting with the pastor and staff to clarify the direction of the church and to learn ways they will follow up the weekend with the full study of *Experiencing God*. After discussion, prayer, and the church staff's decision to continue, a date for the weekend should be set. The date should normally be four months or more after this preliminary meeting. Begin to fill in the dates on the countdown planning calendar (p. 18) at this preliminary meeting.

The church calendar needs to be free of any major events for six weeks before the weekend. Stress to the pastor and staff the importance of intensive prayer and spiritual preparation.

Determine the date, time, and format of the preview Sunday. The coordinator enlists other experienced visiting team members to accompany him or her on the preview Sunday to give testimonies about what God taught them through their experience with the Experiencing God Weekend. These team members may or may not be on the visiting team that will lead the event at this church.

Secure an adult resource teacher who can share from personal experience the truths that will be taught during the weekend.

Compile a list of potential small-group leaders, based on the size of the church. The team should be composed of people who are actively practicing what they have learned from the study. The list must be

submitted to the church in time for invitations to be mailed by the date indicated on the planning calendar.

Most coordinators secure a music leader for the weekend. This person should also be equipped to lead a small group and assist in other ways as needed.

Secure an adequate number of children's resource teachers. Make sure they understand that they will lead activities during the teaching sessions. Refer to "Children's Teaching Plans" and "Children's Workbook" available at lifeway.com/egleader.

Youth resource teachers are also essential. They must appreciate the purpose of the weekend and should be able to lead the youth committee and local youth in a meaningful weekend. Youth teaching sessions should be based on the adult teaching plans available at lifeway.com/egleader.

Read all of this manual. Review the weekend schedule and make necessary adjustments, based on the church's needs.

Provide suitable instructions to the correspondence-and-materials committee in ample time to prepare them before the weekend.

DURING THE WEEKEND

Have a visiting team meeting on Friday and clarify the purposes of an Experiencing God Weekend:

1. To provide for each participant—adult, youth, and elementary-age child—a meaningful and challenging discipleship experience. Church members discover the seven realities of the way God works through His people to accomplish His purposes. They also have the opportunity to examine their lives and seek the Lord's leadership so that they can join God where He is working.

2. To preview the study *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God* to stimulate interest in individual participation in a churchwide study

If team members have not filled out a team information card, have them do so at the first meeting. This will assist in making testimony assignments. At each team meeting identify what material will be covered the following session. Give the adult resource teacher time to make comments about the material and any special emphasis for the session. Each team member should understand the objectives of each session so that the team will become unified in purpose and spirit.

At each team meeting overview the schedule up to the next team meeting. Go over team members' instructions for the session. Clarify changes and give any special instructions that are necessary. If there are enough small-group leaders, assign a group leader and a prayer partner to pray together throughout the weekend (see prayer-teams planning chart on p. 17).

Suggest that small-group leaders review the material on the role of a small-group leader. If the team includes first-time leaders, highlight some of the major points.

Emphasize the importance of staying on schedule during the weekend. Make sure the team sets an example by being places ahead of time.

Allow time in each team meeting for prayer. Often this is best at the beginning of the meeting, using prayer teams (see p. 17). Seek the Holy Spirit's leadership during the weekend.

Use the team-member information sheets (see p. 27) to determine which team members could give meaningful testimonies on each topic. Pray for wisdom in these decisions. Team members may have a specific testimony they would like to give. Remind those giving testimonies of the importance of being relevant, clear, and concise (three to five minutes per testimony).

FRIDAY-EVENING TEAM MEETING (5:00 P.M.)

- Welcome everyone and introduce visiting team members and church leaders.
- Form prayer teams (see p. 17). Pray for the weekend.

- Remind the general chairperson that the church family should begin the Friday-evening meal on time. During the meal have the pastor or general chairperson announce the need to move to the worship center 10 minutes before time to begin.
- Check to see that visiting team members are matched with hosts for the weekend.
- Review Friday night's schedule:

- 6:00 p.m. Evening meal.
- 6:45 p.m. Move to the worship center and distribute the adult participant guide as people enter. Have congregational singing or provide special music to help people enter and get ready.
- 6:55 p.m. Pastor welcomes the visiting team and introduces the weekend.
- 7:00 p.m. Weekend coordinator briefly explains the weekend: Why are we here? What are we going to do? What will the weekend be like? Weekend coordinator overviews the weekend schedule. General chairperson leads an opening prayer. Weekend coordinator introduces the team, emphasizing that all are lay people; share what God has and is doing among His people. Weekend coordinator introduces resource teachers.
- 7:20 p.m. Two visiting team members share testimonies about their experiences with previous weekends.
- 7:30 p.m. Dismiss youth and children to go to their areas. Teaching session 1—adult resource teacher leads the study for adults.
- 8:15 p.m. Adults break into small groups.
- 9:15 p.m. Everyone reconvenes in worship center for brief praise service. Weekend coordinator makes necessary announcements and adjourns.

SATURDAY-MORNING TEAM MEETING (8:00 A.M.)

- Conduct a feedback session and provide time for prayer teams to pray together (see p. 17).
 - Emphasize the importance of being on time for the events of the day.
 - Dismiss youth and children resource teachers, reminding them of the next team meeting before they go.
 - Give the adult resource teacher an opportunity to review the teaching material for the morning.
 - Review assignments for the small-group sessions and for testimonies in the morning teaching session.
 - Close with an overview of the morning session:
- 9:00 a.m. Give adult participant guide to newcomers.
Remind youth and children that they should be in their sessions at this time.
Conduct a praise/worship time.
Weekend coordinator leads in an opening prayer.
- 9:10 a.m. Teaching session 2—adult resource teacher leads session. Brief testimonies.
- 10:15 a.m. Break—light refreshments.
- 10:30 a.m. Teaching session 3—adult resource teacher leads session.
- 11:30 a.m. Everyone reconvenes for testimony time by visiting team and church members. Prayer time for the church.
- 12:15 a.m. Lunch.*
- 1:00 a.m. Adult small-group discussions; youth and children are in their areas.
- 2:00 p.m. Dismiss.

Option: Lunch is omitted, and the small-group discussions take place from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Everyone is dismissed at 12:30 for the afternoon.

SATURDAY-AFTERNOON TEAM MEETING (5:00 P.M.)

- Facilitate a feedback session and conduct a prayer time with prayer teams (see p. 17).
 - Discuss the closing time of commitment.
 - Dismiss youth and children resource teachers, reminding them of the Sunday-morning team meeting before they go.
 - Give the adult resource teacher time to review the teaching material for the evening.
 - Review assignments for the small groups.
 - Close with an overview of the Saturday-evening schedule:
- 6:00 p.m. Evening meal.
- 6:45 p.m. Conduct a praise/worship time.
- 7:00 p.m. Introduction; thank food committee for meals, etc.
Weekend coordinator asks someone to lead opening prayer.
- 7:10 p.m. Testimonies by visiting team members.
- 7:30 p.m. Dismiss youth and children to go to their areas.
Teaching session 4—adult resource teacher leads session.
- 8:15 p.m. Adult small-group discussions.
- 9:00 p.m. Adult small groups return to worship center for commitment time.
- 9:30 p.m. Adjourn.

SUNDAY-MORNING TEAM MEETING (8:15 A.M.)

- Have a short feedback session on the weekend. Conduct a time of prayer.
- Thank team members for their participation.
- Give an overview of the morning schedule. Emphasize the importance of staying on time and making testimonies short, concise, and relevant.
- Discuss Sunday School.

The time in Sunday School builds a bridge between those who attended the weekend and those who did not. Sunday School will be led almost exclusively by the resource teachers. All adults and youth meet together for Sunday School as a large group. Children meet as a group with the children's resource teachers and should go directly to those groups. Ask the church to limit record taking to a head count and the collection of offering envelopes.

The weekend coordinator or general chairperson opens the Sunday School time, welcomes people, makes announcements, takes up offering envelopes, and turns the meeting over to the adult resource teacher. The adult resource teacher gives an overview of the study being introduced. He may use adult and youth visiting team members to give testimonies. The adult resource teacher dismisses Sunday School.

- Give the adult resource teacher an opportunity to review the teaching material for the morning.
- Discuss morning worship.

The worship service has two main objectives:

1. The adult resource teacher speaks on the theme of the study being introduced that weekend.
2. People are given the opportunity during the invitation to make a commitment to Christ. Time constraints should be observed so that the invitation can begin a few minutes before the usual close of worship. The invitation itself should not be constrained by time. It should continue as long as the Lord is working in and among His people.
 - Review assignments for testimonies in Sunday School and the worship service.
 - Announce lunch arrangements.

SAMPLE LETTER TO CORRESPONDENCE-AND-MATERIALS COMMITTEE FROM THE WEEKEND COORDINATOR

TO: Correspondence-and-Materials Committee, [church's name here]
FROM: [name], Weekend Coordinator
SUBJECT: General instructions for weekend preparation

You need to do several things to prepare for the upcoming Growing Disciples Weekend. *Experiencing God Weekend Manual* contains material you need to copy or prepare. Please identify the material and work with your church's general chairperson if you have questions. Note that some of the items must be customized for your church based on your plans, so check with your general chairperson about necessary revisions.

You will need the following.

- A participant guide for each adult and youth you expect to attend, including team members
- A children's workbook for each child
- Copies of adult and children's teaching plans
- "Experiencing God Weekend Prayer Guide"
- Evaluation forms for use on Sunday evening. You may make up your own or use the one on page 28 in *Experiencing God Weekend Manual*. Remember that the object is to get people's reaction to the weekend and a list of names of those who would like to take the full study.

Thank you for all your good work. Let's trust God to move in our hearts during the weekend.

SAMPLE FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO THE PASTOR FROM THE WEEKEND COORDINATOR

Dear Pastor:

This is a follow-up letter about the recent Experiencing God Weekend at your church. I would like to make several suggestions for you to consider.

1. Keep up the emphasis on follow-up after last weekend so that it was a beginning, not just an event. It sounds like you are already well organized for good follow-up.
2. On Sunday, _____ [insert date two weeks after your weekend], share something in your morning sermon about the impact of the weekend on your life.
3. Every weekend like this is an opportunity to learn and improve, to increase our awareness of church needs, and to reinforce the things that are positive. Please take a few minutes and write a short evaluation of the weekend from your perspective as pastor. In that evaluation tell me what you thought was most positive and what was least helpful during the weekend. Also tell me what you think might be improved. I will promise to prayerfully consider what you say and seek the Lord's leadership in how I should use the information. I know that whatever you say will be from a helpful, loving, and constructive heart.

_____ [pastor's name], it was a blessing to be in your church. It is obvious that the Holy Spirit moved in a mighty way last weekend in both the visiting team and the church. As time progresses, you will be able to see the impact of the weekend in people's lives, and that is exciting. You are certainly God's special people, and God has His hand on _____ [name of church].

4. Consider a date for your next Experiencing God Weekend. Remember that growing disciples is a spiritual process. It took Jesus three years to grow twelve disciples. A registration form is enclosed.

My prayer is that in the weeks and months ahead, your ministry and influence will grow, and you will become a bright beacon for our Lord Jesus in _____ [city or community].

Thank you for the faith and trust you showed by allowing your people, the visiting team, and me the freedom to follow the Lord's leadership last weekend. You are a servant of Christ. May God bless you and your ministry.

[Usual closing],

[Weekend coordinator's signature]



EXPERIENCING GOD

PRAYER TEAMS

Form prayer teams and provide time in each visiting team meeting for them to pray together for the weekend.

FRIDAY
EVENING

SATURDAY
MORNING

SATURDAY
EVENING

	Prayer Partner	Prayer Partner	Prayer Partner	Prayer Partner	Prayer Partner	Prayer Partner
1.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____



EXPERIENCING GOD

COUNTDOWN PLANNING CALENDAR

This countdown calendar indicates weeks prior to the Experiencing God Weekend. Add items unique to your weekend event.

EXPERIENCING GOD WEEKEND

_____ **Church**

COUNTDOWN • WEEK 16

Date: _____

- ☐ Weekend coordinator visits pastor and staff.
- ☐ Pastor leads a review of the suggested study. Key church leaders make a commitment to the Experiencing God Weekend.
- ☐ Pastor selects church's general chairperson.
- ☐ Church's major focus from this point on should be spiritual growth. Pastor orders and distributes to leadership team as they are selected *What the Spirit Is Saying to the Church*.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

COUNTDOWN • WEEK 12

Date: _____

- ☐ General chairperson enlists nine preparation committee leaders. Preparation committee leaders receive their group's guidelines and begin enlisting committee members.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

COUNTDOWN • WEEK 9

Date: _____

- ☐ Conduct preview Sunday. Church staff, deacons, and key leaders meet with weekend coordinator and a small visiting team to experience weekend concepts through small groups and testimonies. This enables them to realize the spiritual potential of the Experiencing God Weekend and to promote and prepare more knowledgeably.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

COUNTDOWN • WEEK 8

Date: _____

- ☐ Pastor begins sermon series based on *What the Spirit Is Saying to the Church*.
- ☐ Weekend coordinator provides names of visiting team members to be invited to pastor and general chairperson.
- ☐ Prayer-and-follow-up committee plans and conducts a prayer seminar such as *Pray in Faith*.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

COUNTDOWN • WEEK 7

Date: _____

- ☐ Mail invitation letter from pastor to potential visiting team members. Include two response cards.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

COUNTDOWN • WEEK 6

Date: _____

- ☐ Mail letter from pastor to church family introducing the Experiencing God Weekend.
- ☐ Begin securing host homes as visiting team members return response cards.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

COUNTDOWN • WEEK 5

Date: _____

- ☐ Attendance-and-publicity committee begins to enlist church members for the weekend.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

COUNTDOWN • WEEK 4

Date: _____

- ☐ Publicity skits in Sunday School and worship services; posters and signs throughout the church; weekend announced in church publications.
- ☐ Make prayer for the weekend a priority at every church meeting. A weekly prayer time for visiting team members, church members, and visitors would be in order before, during, or after regular services. Deacons divide the membership list and pray specifically for every church family. Sunday School departments develop specific prayer lists.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

COUNTDOWN • WEEK 3

Date: _____

- ☐ Preparation committee leaders share testimonies or expectations for the weekend in worship services. Continue these each Sunday before the weekend.
- ☐ Order resources to be used in studies immediately following the weekend.
- ☐ Begin sign-up for the 24-hour prayer vigil to be held Thursday prior to the weekend. Enlist at least four persons to pray each hour.
- ☐ Mail second letter to church family from pastor, along with prayer reminder for Experiencing God Weekend.
- ☐ Confirm host homes for visiting team members. Encourage hosts to send welcome notes to visiting team members.
- ☐ _____

COUNTDOWN • WEEK 2

Date: _____

- ☐ Mail letter from general chairperson to the church family. Enclose schedule with information about meals, child care, and plans for youth and children.
- ☐ Mail welcome letter from general chairperson to visiting team members with a map to the church and a schedule for the weekend.
- ☐ Home prayer groups pray for the weekend.

COUNTDOWN • WEEK 1

Date: _____

- ☐ Correspondence-and-materials committee duplicates materials for use during the weekend.
- ☐ Final meeting with all preparation committee leaders. Verify that all assignments have been completed. Pray together for church and visiting team.
- ☐ Conduct 24-hour prayer vigil, beginning at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday.

EXPERIENCING GOD WEEKEND

Date: _____



EXPERIENCING GOD

PREVIEW SUNDAY

A good way to introduce the church to the Experiencing God Weekend is through a preview Sunday. This day is a time of inspiration, challenge, and dedication. The preview Sunday should be scheduled eight or nine weeks prior to the weekend.

The weekend coordinator conducts the preview Sunday. He or she may be accompanied by one or more persons who can testify to the ways God has changed their lives and the lives of many in their churches through the study of *Experiencing God*. These leaders may or may not be on the visiting team that conducts the Experiencing God Weekend.

The preview consists of two parts: morning worship and a planning meeting. The following schedule is an overview of the day's activities.

- a.m. Morning worship
- noon Luncheon for church staff and leaders with the visiting preview team
- 1:00 p.m. Planning meeting*
The church staff, general chairperson, the nine preparation committee leaders, as many of their coworkers as desired, and others who will help promote the weekend (for example, deacons, Sunday School leaders, youth leaders) attend this meeting. If possible, include spouses.
- 3:00 p.m. Adjourn

* Other options may be negotiated with leaders to fit local-church situations. A late Sunday-afternoon planning meeting or a Saturday session may work best for some churches.

MORNING WORSHIP

There are two options for Sunday-morning worship. The choice will depend on the weekend coordinator, your pastor, and your church situation. One option is for the weekend coordinator to fill the pulpit on Sunday morning as a visiting speaker and give an overview of the weekend and his personal testimony on the study being introduced.

The other option is to have the weekend coordinator and/or one or more of the visiting lay people give testimonies as part of the morning worship. In either case the object of the worship service is to inspire church members about the upcoming Experiencing God Weekend.

PLANNING MEETING

The following agenda works well for the two-hour planning meeting and includes appropriate agenda items that need to be discussed at this point in planning for the weekend. The same agenda can be adapted for other planning meetings.

- The pastor shares his vision for the weekend and how it will affect the church.
- The weekend coordinator briefly describes the content, schedule, and follow-up opportunities.
- The weekend coordinator briefly describes the duties of each preparation committee and gives suggestions and options for each committee to consider.
- The weekend coordinator conducts a question-and-answer session with church leaders.
- The general chairperson shares the planning schedule.
- The pastor concludes the session with personal remarks and prayer.



EXPERIENCING GOD

WEEKEND SCHEDULE

Adjust to meet the church's needs.

THURSDAY

5:00 p.m.	Begin 24-hour prayer vigil	12:15 p.m.	Lunch (Option: Lunch can be omitted, and small-group discussions can take place from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Everyone is dismissed at 12:30 for the afternoon.)
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FRIDAY

5:00 p.m.	Visiting team meeting	1:00 p.m.*	Adult small-group discussions
6:00 p.m.	Churchwide fellowship meal	2:00 p.m.	Dismiss for the afternoon
6:45 p.m.	General session for everyone	5:00 p.m.	Visiting team meeting
	Music and testimonies	6:00 p.m.	Churchwide fellowship meal
7:30 p.m.*	Adult teaching session 1: introduction and reality 1	6:45 p.m.	General session for everyone
8:15 p.m.*	Adult small-group discussions	7:30 p.m.*	Music and testimonies
9:15 p.m.	Reconvene for closing praise time	8:15 p.m.*	Adult teaching session 4: realities 6 and 7
	Pair hosts and guests	9:00 p.m.*	Small-group discussions
			Reconvene for adult small-group commitment time

SUNDAY

8:00 a.m.	Visiting team meeting	8:15 a.m.	Visiting team meeting
9:00 a.m.*	General session for adults	9:30 a.m.	Sunday School (adults and youth meet together)
	Music and testimonies	10:45 a.m.	Worship service
9:10 a.m.*	Adult teaching session 2: realities 2 and 3		Testimonies and commitment time
10:15 a.m.*	Break	12:30 p.m.	Lunch for visiting team members
10:30 a.m.*	Adult teaching session 3: realities 4 and 5	6:00 p.m.	Evaluation time: What is God saying to you? Commitment to <i>Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God</i>
11:30 a.m.	Testimonies and prayer time		

*Youth and children meet separately with their resource teachers.



EXPERIENCING GOD

SUNDAY-EVENING PRAISE AND EVALUATION SERVICE

The Sunday-evening praise and evaluation service is the only activity scheduled on the Sunday evening of the weekend. All other church activities should be canceled for this one Sunday. The weekend coordinator offers suggestions, based on observations during the weekend, to the general chairperson and pastor on conducting this service.

The service starts at 6:00 p.m. or whenever the usual Sunday-evening activities begin and lasts for 1½ hours or longer. The service is led by the general chairperson, assisted by the prayer-and-follow-up committee leader. The pastor works with them on the format of the service. Usually, the pastor is asked to close the service at the appropriate time.

The service starts with praise choruses, prayer, and welcome of guests by the pastor, along with an explanation that the service will not be the usual Sunday-evening service. After necessary announcements the general chairperson gives his or her personal testimony of what God did in his or her life during the weekend. Church members are asked to share what the Lord taught them

during the weekend. This can be a worshipful time for the congregation. Maintain an attitude of respect and reverence for what God is doing in the lives of church members. As prayer requests are mentioned, stop and pray for them. Consider allowing up to an hour for this time of sharing.

After this time distribute evaluation forms (see p. 28). This form offers church members an opportunity to evaluate the weekend and to sign up for the study. The general chairperson will want to explain how the study will be offered: the number of small groups expected, when and where they will meet, and who will facilitate each group. Allow adequate time for church members to complete the form. Collect forms that evening.

If the service becomes lengthy, the general chairperson should be sensitive to the needs of parents with small children, the elderly, and others and try to dismiss near the normal closing time. The leader should make it clear that it is all right to leave but that the service will continue until the Lord ends it. Ask those who have to leave to complete the evaluation form before they go.



EXPERIENCING GOD

FOLLOW-UP PLANNING CALENDAR

This follow-up calendar indicates actions to take in the weeks after the Experiencing God Weekend. Add items unique to your weekend follow-up.

FOLLOW-UP WEEK 1

Date: _____

- ☐ Pastor mails thank-you letters to visiting team members.
- ☐ Prayer-and-follow-up committee and staff publicize the first study groups. Provide information on time and place for small-group meetings. Have leaders enlisted and ready to facilitate groups.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

FOLLOW-UP WEEK 2

Date: _____

- ☐ Small groups begin. These can be offered in several ways. Consider the needs of church members and establish small groups that will accommodate those needs.
 - One possible format can be used on Sunday evenings. Small groups meet for one hour to discuss their week's study in the workbooks. The second hour is the worship hour. During the worship time, focus on the study theme for that week. Personal testimonies can be an inspirational part of the service.
 - Other study groups can be offered on Wednesday evening or another evening agreeable to group members. These groups meet the needs of those

who have leadership responsibilities on Sunday or are unable to attend church on Sunday.

- Those who are available may wish to meet one morning each week either at the church or in a home. Retired people and those who do not get out at night will value this opportunity.

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

FOLLOW-UP WEEK 3

Date: _____

- ☐ Pastor submits his personal evaluation of the weekend to the weekend coordinator and screens the list of church members who want to serve as future visiting team members.

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____



EXPERIENCING GOD

PLANNING TOOLS

The following forms are helpful in planning an Experiencing God Weekend. Each form includes a description of who should prepare it and how it can be used. Adjust the forms to meet the needs of your church.

TEAM-MEMBER INVITATION LETTER

Correspondence-and-materials committee: The team-invitation letter is to be written on church letterhead and customized to reflect the local church and the pastor's personal input.

_____ [date]

Dear _____ [potential team member's name]:

We want to invite you to be a team member for our Experiencing God Weekend on _____ [date] at _____ [name of church] in _____ [city, state]. We are praying that you sense the Lord's leadership to join us as we seek a fresh word from God. We believe that this weekend is vitally needed by our people.

Our church has a resident membership of _____ [number], with an average Sunday School attendance of _____ [number]. [Share other insights about the church, any who have completed the study being introduced, etc.]

Our weekend will be coordinated by _____ [weekend coordinator's name]. Enclosed you will find two response sheets with self-addressed, stamped envelopes. One is addressed to the weekend coordinator, and one is addressed to the church. Please pray and seek God's leadership about your participation in the weekend. We are asking you for a timely reply in order to give us time to invite additional team members if needed. Please mail both sheets no later than _____ [date].

If you have any questions, please feel free to call _____ [church's general coordinator's name] at _____ [phone number] or at _____ [alternative phone number].

We will be praying with you about your decision. Should you respond yes, you will receive another letter prior to the weekend with a copy of the schedule, directions to the church, and other details about the weekend. We look forward to your being with us. Please join us in prayer for God to do a mighty work before and during this weekend.

[Usual closing],

[Pastor's name and signature]

TEAM-MEMBER REPLY SHEET

Correspondence-and-materials committee:

Two sheets are to be mailed with each invitation. Include self-addressed, stamped envelopes. One envelope is addressed to the church's general chairperson and the other to the weekend coordinator.

John Smithson
P.O. Box 123
City, State, ZIP

☐ I will ...

☐ I will not ...

... be able to participate as a _____ [position asked to fill]
in the Experiencing God Weekend at _____ [church's name]
in _____ [city, state].

If your answer is "I will," complete the following responses.

Adults

Name(s): _____

☐ Couple

☐ Attending without spouse

☐ Single

If you have children who are not part of the team, will they come with you? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, list their names and ages:

Name: _____ Age: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____

Others (youth, children, etc.)

Name: _____

☐ College

☐ High school

☐ Junior high/middle school

☐ Male

☐ Female

Age: _____

Name: _____

☐ College

☐ High school

☐ Junior high/middle school

☐ Male

☐ Female

Age: _____

Name: _____

☐ College

☐ High school

☐ Junior high/middle school

☐ Male

☐ Female

Age: _____

• Do you require housing? ☐ Yes ☐ No

• What is your estimated arrival time on Friday? _____ (Team meeting: 5:00 p.m.)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Complete, sign, and mail before _____ [date]. Mail the card regardless of your decision. Please complete one copy for each team member and return to _____ [church coordinator's name and address] as soon as possible.

TEAM-MEMBER WELCOME LETTER

Correspondence-and-materials committee:

Send the following letter to team members who accept the invitation to serve during the Experiencing God Weekend. Mail it about 10 days before the weekend. Include a team-member information sheet with this letter.

_____ [date]

Dear Visiting Team Member:

We are pleased that you have accepted our invitation to serve as a team member for our Experiencing God Weekend on _____ [date]. Our church is praying that the Lord will do a mighty work among our people during this time.

Enclosed is a weekend schedule. Please note that there is a team meeting at 5:00 p.m. on Friday afternoon. We will serve a meal at 6:00 p.m. before the first general session. A map is enclosed [or directions] to help you locate our church.

Also enclosed is a team-member information sheet. Please complete and return it to the church, c/o _____
[church coordinator's name and address] immediately.

Should you have any change of plans, please notify _____
[church's coordinator's name and phone number] or call our church office at _____ [phone number].

We are praying for you as you spiritually prepare to be with us.

[Usual closing],

[Pastor's signature]

TEAM-MEMBER INFORMATION SHEET

Correspondence-and-materials committee:

Send this sheet to team members who have accepted the invitation for the weekend.

Include it with the letter confirming their acceptance.

Ask them to return it to the visiting coordinator immediately.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State: _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____

Briefly write your testimony that you would share at some point during the weekend. (Continue on back if needed.)

I will serve in the following role(s) during the weekend:

- ☐ Pianist ☐ Soloist ☐ Music leader ☐ Small-group leader
☐ Adult resource teacher ☐ Youth resource teacher ☐ Children resource teacher

Comments: _____

WEEKEND EVALUATION FORM

Correspondence-and-materials committee:

Make enough copies for each adult and youth attending the weekend.

What did you appreciate most about the weekend? _____

What was the most important thing you learned during the weekend? _____

Would you like to study *Experiencing God*? ☐ Yes ☐ No

When is the best time for you to meet with a small group for 1½ to 2 hours each week?

☐ Sunday evening

☐ Sunday afternoon

☐ Wednesday evening

☐ Saturday morning

☐ Weeknight—which night? _____

☐ Morning—which morning? _____

Would you be interested in being invited as a team member on future weekends?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

☐ Adult ☐ Youth

☐ Male ☐ Female

Share other comments you have about the weekend: _____

FOLLOW-UP LETTER OF APPRECIATION

A letter from the pastor to visiting team members should reflect the results of the weekend in the church from the pastor's perspective. Mail it on church letterhead the week after the weekend.

Dear Visiting Team Member:

On behalf of our church family, I want to express our sincere gratitude for your participation in our Experiencing God Weekend. You will never know how effectively God used you during those days. The Lord blessed us through you and your leadership. We pray that you experienced a great spiritual blessing as well.

The fruit of the weekend was varied. Many of our members have shared deep and personal testimonies about what God said to them, what He did in their lives, and how they have seen Him at work.

[Pastor should share further what happened in the body as a result of the weekend. Include comments about the Sunday-evening evaluation time.]

May the Lord continue to use you in the future as you join Him where He is working. Again let me say how much we appreciate the generous gift of your time and effort last weekend.

[Usual closing],

[Pastor's signature]

CHURCH-INFORMATION SHEET

Correspondence-and-materials committee:
Duplicate and send to the weekend coordinator.

Church _____

Address _____

City _____ State: _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ Weekend date _____

Church Size

Resident members: _____ Average Sunday School attendance: _____

Predicted Attendance

Preschool: _____ Children: _____ Youth: _____ Adults: _____

Staff

Pastor _____

Associate pastor _____

Minister of education _____

Minister of music _____

Minister of youth _____

Minister of preschool/children _____

Other church staff _____

Church secretary _____

General coordinator _____

Visiting Team

Weekend coordinator _____ Phone _____ Fax _____

Adult resource teacher _____ Phone _____ Fax _____

Youth resource teacher _____ Phone _____ Fax _____

Children resource teacher _____ Phone _____ Fax _____

Small-group leaders _____

Music leader _____

Pianist _____