

Making Advent and Christmas Evangelistic

Many churches do a variety of things during Advent and Christmas. It is a time when people are looking for church activities. Many churches have community meals for folks that have nowhere to go. As we invite folks to the church for activities: WHAT IF? What if we ask them about their lives, listen to hear about their stories, their faith, their joys and their sorrows, and also tell them who we are, why we serve? What if we tell them about Jesus?

- Where have you seen Jesus at work in the community?
- What has Jesus been poking you to do?
- How has Jesus given you hope?
- Invite them to worship in a community of Jesus

In Luke 2:20 the text says “The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they have seen and heard.” We imagine them telling everyone they met the amazing story of the birth of Jesus. How will we share the story in this season?

Here is a beginning list of ideas – and we hope you might add to it:

- Take worship, or a carol sing to places in your community - a nursing home, park, with first responders, the hospital, a mall, a pub, or other community gatherings. Invite others to join in and sing.
- Go to places to listen to people – listen to joys and sorrows, laments, and struggles and tell of Jesus welcome and comfort. Use the example of Jake Jacobson’s Christmas Front Porch. Take time in a public place with a sign and a small table and chairs: “Tell Me A Christmas Story”
- Stage a Live Nativity or a Christmas Walk telling the story of the Word Become Flesh. A walk like Stations of the Cross, but stations in the Christmas story. It can be signs and bible verses at each stop, or a narrator or actor at each stop. Culminate with a campfire and hot chocolate and streets and Christmas Carol Sing.
- Bless people – find ways to pronounce a blessing upon the people being served at a community dinner or food distribution and pray for/with them
- Invite friends or other family members to serve with you in holiday community service
- Post invitations on social media or send or hand out invitations. Check out the free [Christmas Communications](#) resources from the ELCA, social media ready
- Invite all the people you encountered to come to worship on Christmas Eve/Christmas Day
- Ask people to tell you their faith journey story – find ways to invite them into further conversations
- Recruit a listening team to accompany volunteer workers so some are working/serving and others are listening to those being served



- Ask those being served what they think are things the church should be doing to help the community or what are important community needs
- Adopt families through local charities that the church can sponsor
- Plan worship services that include familiar music and that use a variety of ways/media of telling the Christmas story
- Above all else – tell the story – Make Jesus the reason for the season
- Host a community Blue Christmas Service
- Newspaper ads
- Christmas dramas for kids or adults
- Light the church driveway with luminaries
- Parking lot greeters or carolers for Christmas Eve worship
- Pay attention to the Sunday after Christmas and invite new folks to come back for more Christmas next week
- If a congregation has a family service, focus on kids with stories, activities, and action
- Work with the neighborhood association to partner on Holiday Events
- Consider having a family service earlier on December 24 or even December 23 so that it does not conflict with family events on Christmas Eve

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ELCA Evangelism Network