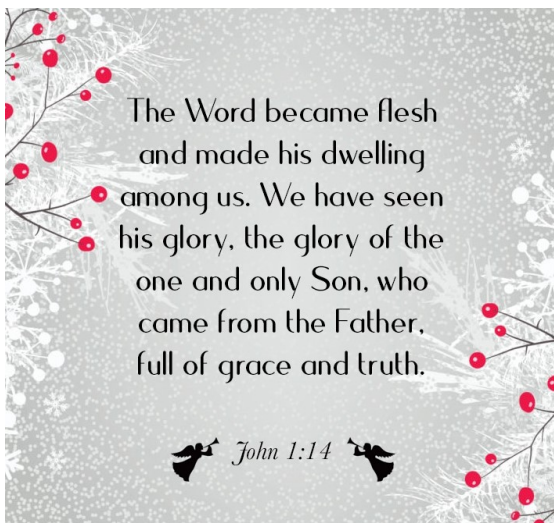




Encouragement & Resources for Today's Church Leaders

December 2023



A fitting thought as we head into Advent & Christmas:

"Without worship, we go about miserable."

A.W. Tozer

Thanksgiving is now behind us...the seasons of Advent and Christmas are knocking on our doors. 'Tis the season for welcoming new guests and visitors onto our church campuses and welcoming back faces we may not regularly see every Sunday.

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS:

What is a unique way your parish shares the Good News of the season with your community?

At St. Matthew in Bel Air, we welcome the community onto our campus with thousands of lights on our campus set to Christmas music each night in December. On weekends, we invite guests to come inside to enjoy a train garden, cookies, and cocoa. We also share Journey to the Star in our Sanctuary- a self-directed walk through the streets of Bethlehem to the manger scene.

CONNECTING IN THE NEW YEAR:

When we turn the page to a new year, many of us seek to create new habits and new connections. It's the perfect time to offer new member classes since you'll likely have guests to your Christmas worship services. Our **I HAVE GOOD NEWS FOR YOU** study has proven to be a great resource for membership classes. Leader's guide and student workbooks available here: [Good News!](#) Tailor your new member classes to your church by sharing your church's mission statement and council/ministry team structure with getting to know you activities at the first session. Need some good "get to know you" questions? Email us for a quick list (info@churchpress.com).

CELEBRATING THE SEASON:

"Advent is a journey toward Bethlehem.
May we let ourselves be drawn by the light of God made man."
—Pope Francis



A TIP OR TWO [in case you haven't prepared this year's Advent message] ...

Sundays provide the most obvious rallying point to inspire your people to anticipate Jesus through Advent. [\[read more...\]](#)



10 CHRISTMAS EVE TIPS FOR PASTORS

For many of us as pastors, Christmas can be the most stressful time of the year. In addition to all the holiday challenges everyone deals with, we feel the pressure to lead spectacular Christmas Eve services that wow the masses and bring the lost to their knees. Even though we've told the story a hundred times, we have to find a new angle on the timeless narrative of Advent. How can we make this Christmas Eve the best ever!? [\[read more...\]](#)



AN END-OF-YEAR CHECKLIST FOR CHURCH LEADERS

Holiday decorations? Check. Christmas sermon written? Check. Choir and band ready to perform? Check. Community outreach? Check.

If you are someone that likes end-of-year checklists, you probably have one similar to the one above. Planning and preparing for the Christmas season is one of the busiest times of the year for church leaders. And you likely spend a large part of this time getting ready to share the hope of this season with your regular churchgoers and new guests.

But after the lights and candy canes are put away, there are still a few things that need to be done that can be easy to forget about.

As you prepare to celebrate with your family and look back on the year, be sure to set aside time to do these items that should be on every church leader's end-of-the-year checklist:

[\[read more...\]](#)

HOW TO CARE FOR MILITARY FAMILIES AT THE HOLIDAYS

With all of the sentimentality, family traditions, and memories to be made, the holidays accentuate the needs military families feel throughout the year. Because of this, churches have a unique opportunity to step into these tender spaces and welcome military families into their communities, meet their needs, and train them to walk in a manner worthy of the gospel. In doing so, your church can obey the Great Commission and deploy military families for the glory of God. [\[read more...\]](#)

A CULTURE OF INVITATION

Personal invitation is at the core of church outreach. A common challenge is figuring out how to get your congregation on board with inviting friends and family to explore Christianity. A couple of church leaders we work with here at Alpha shared how they've approached this challenge and how they've developed not only a habit but a culture of invitation.

Here are seven tips to get your church excited and confidently equipped for bringing others to church. [\[read more...\]](#)

EVANGELISM from a champion...

As I write these words, one humble pastor, and life-long servant comes to mind...Pastor Don Ginkel.

(Hopefully he's reading this).

Evangelism can be a frightening word to many in today's world. Afterall, it makes us a bit uncomfortable, doesn't it - it's an intimidating word - and yet, it's exactly what we are called to do - to share, confess, and profess that Christ has secured everlasting life and forgiveness for every person. If we choose to use a phrase simpler than "evangelism", we can strip it down to "sharing Jesus" - a very important and easy call and gift we can give to others. In the new year, we'll be offering a **NEW study guide by Pastor Ginkel** that shares an easy-to-use blueprints for pastors, church leaders, and Jesus followers who are moved to share the gift of Jesus with others.

In the meantime, consider why you want evangelists on your team and in your church...

"It was a time when people didn't just talk about evangelism—they actually did it. It was a season when evangelists were seen for exactly what they were: gifted servants ordained by God to assist the church and inspire others to proclaim the gospel to the unsaved. I am a firm believer that God wouldn't have given the gift of the evangelist to the church unless we needed it.

Today, I serve as a full-time evangelist, but many pastors I encounter tell me I am the first evangelist they have ever invited to preach. They often say they were unaware of both the need and benefit that this unique gifting would fulfill in their congregation.

Here are seven reasons why every church needs an evangelist: [\[read more...\]](#)

Pastor Blaise & Julie
CHURCH PRESS, INC.
www.churchpress.com
443-771-6431

Church Press | 705 Deep Ridge Road, Bel Air, MD 21014

[Unsubscribe info@churchpress.com](mailto:info@churchpress.com)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by info@churchpress.com powered by



Try email marketing for free today!