

52 Ways to Share Your Faith

Each during the Lancashire Methodist district's year of evangelism we produced a practical idea to act on or an idea to think through. We started on the week after Pentecost 2013 and carried on for the following 52 weeks. A number of people have requested the full list to use again. I have left the dates on as some of them relate to a particular date or season. If you would like to use any of the ideas please feel free to shuffle them around to fit.

A number of people suggested ideas and others were used from an iPad app called '50 Ways to Share Your Faith'. If we've put an acknowledgement on an idea you use please publish their names as well.

Week 1 - 20th May

Meet up with a friend/work colleague.

Arrange to meet up with a friend over the next two weeks. Go & spend time with them. Find out what's going on in their lives and allow them to hear what's going on in your life. Enjoy it!

Week 2 - 27th May

Pray for a friend each day for the week.

Spend time each day praying for a friend/work colleague. Ask God to be very real to them and bless them. If you feel confident enough let them know you are praying for them and ask if there is anything they would like you to pray for.

Week 3 - 3rd June

See What God is Doing and Join in.

As you walk around this week see what God is doing in your family's / friend's / colleague's lives or in the wider world and see if there is anything you can do or say to help them experience God even further.

Week 4 - 10th June

Sharing Answered Prayer.

Think of a time when God has answered your prayer. Keep it at the forefront of your mind, and ask God to send you someone who you can share this story with.

(‘50 Ways to Share Your Faith’ iPad app)

Week 5 - 17th June

What's Your Story?

Spend some time thinking about what God means to you and how you would share that with other people. Keep it brief - there's no need to go until your friend falls asleep! One sentence answers are enough. Take a moment and write one sentence answers to these questions:

- Why is being a Christian important to you?
- What do you get out of having a faith?
- Why do you believe God is real?

Is there anyone who you could share this with over the next two weeks?

(‘50 Ways to Share Your Faith’ iPad app)

Week 6 - 24th June

Connecting with User Groups

To get to know the people who hire your premises throughout the week, look to organise an evening when all groups will be invited to come and share what they do which will then offer an opportunity for you to share what your church does. You could even invite the local community to attend and suggest to the user groups that it’s an opportunity to recruit new people. Offer refreshments and use the event to build relationships between the groups.

(Phil Clarke)

Week 7 - 1st July

Textify

Send an encouraging text to a friend or colleague. It’s a particularly good way to encourage Christian friends or to reach out to those who are not yet Christians in a low lever but effective way. Easy and non-intrusive to let someone know you are ‘lifting them up’ through a text. They get the message and there’s no awkwardness or pressure to respond but the message gets through.

Week 8 - 8th July

Encourage Others in the Community

Do something encouraging or supportive for other people who serve the community - teachers, councillors, librarians, foster carers police, childminders and nursery nurses, care assistants, GPs, lollipop people, cleaners, bin & council operatives, those on customer services, traffic wardens(?). maybe just a card with an encouraging message might give those who work hard but feel unappreciated a powerful message that they are cared for.

(Charlotte Rumble)

Week 9 - 15th July

Sharing Good News During Worship

Over the next 2-3 weeks organise an opportunity within your acts of worship to allow people to share some good news (i.e. what has God done in my life over the last week). This is a great way to inspire one another and if done consecutively over a number of weeks encourages others to see what God is doing in their lives.

Week 10 - 22nd July

Be the Best You Can Be at Work

How can you serve your colleagues this week? Do something that surprises them!

‘When I started my new job I soon discovered an office full of likeable people but lack of collegueship. One woman who was most experienced always had more in her in-tray than everyone else. When I was trained up and getting more confident in the job I decided to break with

the office tradition and help her out by offering to take some of her work. Soon others started to copy me and the office dynamic began to change. You might say it became more Christian. I don't make a song and dance about being a Christian, my colleagues just know I am one. I hope doing something different and helpful might make them curious about Christianity one day.' (Alan P)

Week 11 - 29th July

Hang Around!

Hang around outside your house and chat to your neighbours. Let them know that you're interested in them and offer to pray for them (you can do this outside your own house or outside your church).

Week 12 - 5th August

Alpha

Have a look at any churches that will be running an Alpha course in the autumn (or think about running one yourself). Then think about a friend or neighbour who you could invite and even accompany on the course. Begin to have conversations with them about the possibility of attending. Also be praying for them as you ask.

Week 13 - 12th August

Smile!

There's a saying that goes, 'Smiling is infectious; you can catch it like the flu'. We all know of people who just seem to smile all the time, not a fake smile but one that really lights up their whole face. There are times we may think, "What are they up to?" but mostly we think "they seem really happy". We can feel a bit better about life because we saw them, or they smiled at us. That was my experience just the other day - someone smiled at me and I started smiling too. It felt good and now I want to try this out! Why don't you try it too?

(‘50 Ways to Share Your Faith’ iPad app)

Week 14 - 19th August

Share a treat

Bake something tasty and give some to your neighbours. Why not invite them round for a cup of tea before giving it to them? If you feel brave enough attach a summer card from your church or local Christian bookshop offering God's love & blessing.

(‘50 ideas for Mission’ - Methodist Church website)

Week 15 - 26th August

Evangelism through Lobbying

One of the challenges of the Gospel is to engage with issues of social justice - to bring release to prisoners, liberation for the oppressed, support those who are marginalised and challenge unjust authorities. One way to engage with these issues is to participate in lobbying - of politicians and also of powerful corporations.

By signing-up to groups such as those listed below, you receive emails inviting you to send an email to someone. You may not agree with all the lobbying activities of all the different groups, but you can take action with the ones you do.

38Degrees - www.38degrees.org.uk

Avaaz - www.avaaz.org

350.org - www.350.org

sumofus.org - www.sumofus.org

This in itself is a form of evangelism - expressing to the MPs or CEOs that the Gospel has something to say about their activities. A second expression of evangelism is to post your activity to your Facebook page in order to tell others what you are doing to express your faith, or email friends and invite them to also participate in the lobbying activity.

(Steve Charman)

Week 16 - 2nd September

Tidy a Local Communal Space

Organise a group from your church to go out, in the next couple of weeks, to a local park, communal green space or street that your church is on and tidy it up. Try to wear the same coloured T-shirts so you can be identified. This is a great way for all ages to be involved. Don't forget to say, if asked, that you're from the local church and that you want to bless the community.

(‘50 ideas for Mission’ - Methodist Church website)

Week 17 - 9th September

Pray for Your Local School

Over the next two weeks nominate one person from your church to get in touch with your local school and ask if there is anything you could pray for. Alternatively get the names of the teachers from the school's website and put them in the church prayer book. Send the school a card from the church, telling them you are praying for them.

(Bernard Vause)

Week 18 - 16th September

Write a letter

Write a letter to your local newspaper praising someone or a local group for the work they do. Let everyone know what a great job they are doing and how they are making a difference to your life. Sign off by adding the name of the church you attend.

Week 19th - 23rd September

Invite someone to church next Sunday.

29th September is 'Back to Church Sunday' where thousands of people will be invited back to church. Ask God to show you who you can ask to come along with you to worship (don't forget to offer to pick them up).

Week 20 - 30th September

Pray for a friend each day this week

Spend time each day praying for a friend/work colleague. Ask God to be very real to them and bless them. If you feel confident enough let them know you are praying for them and ask if there is anything they would like you to pray for.

Week 21 - 7th October

Work on your Faith Vocabulary

How do you communicate your faith? What is the most comfortable way for you to do this? What words are best for you? Do you need to start using others? Are there words that are not comfortable for you? What could you use instead? What other modes of communication could you use? Be creative & give it a go!

(Charlotte Rumble)

Week 22 - 14th October

Year of Evangelism Menu

Meet up with a few people from your church and look at the newly produced 'Year of Evangelism menu'. You should have a copy in your church or you can find it on the district website on the resources page (www.lancashiremethodist.org.uk). What could you and your church do over the coming months?

Week 23 - 21st October

Learn & Share Memory verses

Find some Bible verses to quote to yourself when you need motivation, a starting point for prayer or space in the busyness. Formulate a list of 'power verses' - bits of scripture that help you personally. Meditating on and speaking the Word of God aloud strengthens our spiritual muscles and can be shared with others when encouragement or wisdom is needed.

(Charlotte Rumble)

Week 24 - 28th October

Sharing in Mission Together

Get involved with Christian projects outside your church or denomination. Many people are involved in foodbanks or debt counselling which involves working with friends from other churches. Are there ways in which you could offer support to a local group?

Week 25 - 4th November

Be an Encourager

Build others up with the words you use. Speak gracious words into the lives of others.

Week 26 - 11th November

Be Present

Don't hide your faith but drop it naturally into conversation. Make it known that it's an integral part of your life demystifying it. Be ready to talk about what you believe if people begin to ask.

(Charlotte Rumble)

Week 27 - 18th November

Be Generous

What local community group or charity could you support this Christmas? Ask them in what ways you could help. If it's goods or money, ask a few of your friends to contribute too. If it's time, book it in your diary now!

Week 28 - 25th November

Be Open

Be aware of needs and pray on them. Ask God how you should respond on them and be ready to do so.

Week 29 - 2nd December

Send Christmas cards to local residential homes.

Within your church arrange for a group to send Christmas cards to local residential homes with personal messages of love, prayers and Christmas cheer!

Week 30 - 9th December

Just Ask!

Think about someone you could invite to your church carol service. Either take an invitation (or create one if you don't have any) and ask them. If they can come plan to pick them up and sit with them during the service.

Week 31 - 16th December

See What God is Doing and Join in.

As you walk around this week see what God is doing in your family's / friend's / colleague's lives or in the wider world and see if there is anything you can do or say to help them experience God's presence, hope, peace and love even more.

Week 32 - 23rd December

Make Someone Feel Good

Leave a small anonymous gift for someone. Let them know why you want them to feel good about themselves.

(the inspiration from this comes from this years Boots Christmas TV advert! Log onto <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51Yfr8ZKFXE> to watch it)

Week 33 - 30th December

Reflect

Think about what has happened in your life over the past year and give thanks to God that whatever you have experienced He has been with you. How have you grown in your relationship with Him? Are you more confident about your faith than you were a year ago? What things would you like to change/develop? Offer all your thoughts to God in prayer.

Week 34 - 6th January

Commit

Which 2 or 3 three people can you commit to pray for regularly this year? Write their names down on a small piece of card that you can keep with you. Decide when you will pray for them. Arrange to meet up with them in the next couple of weeks & listen to what they, and God, are saying to you. Whenever you come across a way to share your faith ask God to help you put it into practise with these folk.

Week 35 - 13th January

Join an Interest Group

What are you interested in outside of church? Is there a hobby group that you could join? Why not either join one or use the one you are a part of to share your faith.

'We were given the challenge at church about joining a group in the community so that we could be witnesses. So two friends and I joined a water aerobics class once a week at the gym. Three years later and the relationships and conversations are awesome!' Kerry

(‘50 Ways to Share Your Faith’ iPad app)

Week 36 - 20th January

Read a Book

Get a group together and commit to reading a book on mission/ evangelism/ sharing your faith. Arrange to meet up a couple of times with each to share what God has been saying to you and pray for one another to put what you've learned into action.

(Some helpful books for you to read:

'Reimagining Evangelism' Rick Richardson, SU Press

'More Ready Than You Realise' Brian D McLaren Zondervan)

Week 37 - 27th January

Arrange to give out Red Roses around Valentine's Day

Plan ahead to give out roses to local businesses in your community (choose only those close to your church building if there are a lot!). Attach a luggage label to the flowers with a hand-written message which says 'Just in case you didn't get a valentine's card, we want to let you know that you are loved & cared for.'

When we did this in Durham we took some roses into the local bookmakers. A mature woman, who was a member of staff, turned to her young male colleague and asked if he had made up with his girlfriend. It was strange how it was this woman who confronted him over his need to apologise and admit he was wrong. I guess they made up?

(Anita Shaw)

Week 38 - 3rd February

Share Your Story

Over the coming week pray for an opportunity for you to share what God means to you with a friend or work colleague.

Week 39 - 10th February

Show God's Love

Surprise a friend or colleague with an unexpected card or act of kindness which would demonstrate God's love for them. Don't be afraid to say that it's because you want to show & share God's love with them.

Week 40 - 17th February

Sharing in Mission Together

Get involved with Christian projects outside your church or denomination. Many people are involved in foodbanks or debt counselling which involves working with friends from other churches. Are there ways in which you could offer support to a local group?

Week 41 - 24th February

Pray for One Another

Commit yourself to pray for 2 or 3 members of your congregation this week. If you know them ask if there is anything specific you can pray for. (Don't forget to ask how they got on next time you see them).

Week 42 - 3rd March

Start Something in Lent

Rather than commit yourself to give something up this Lent why not take on something - praying for a friend/colleague every day or meeting up with them once a week to see how they are doing or share why you are a Christian with someone once a week.

Week 43 - 10th March

Be Open

Make a conscious effort this week to see what God is saying to you and showing you. Where is He at work in your life? Where is He at work in the lives of those around you? How might He want you to respond to those people you come in to contact with each day? Is there someone that you need to spend time with listening & sharing how much God loves them?

Week 44 - 17th March

Be Hopeful!

Who are the people that you been praying for to receive and experience God's love, peace & new life? Take heart that God hears your prayers. Commit yourself to pray for them every day this week. Be specific in your prayers. Listen to what God is saying to you about them.

Week 45 - 24th March

Be Courageous!

Following on from last week, make plans to speak to the person you were praying for about God's love. Once you've made your plan - do it!

Week 46 - 31st March

Be Generous!

Arrange for your church to give the gift of an Easter egg to local businesses in your community. Drop them off with a little note saying that it is a gift from your church. If you feel brave enough ask for any prayer concerns they may have and use them as part of your prayers on Easter Sunday.

Week 47 - 7th April

Be Welcoming!

Offering hospitality is a great way to get know people and sharing your faith. Who can you invite round for dinner during the next fortnight?

'At our church, we are currently running a 'Look Who's Coming to Dinner!' campaign in which we invite a friend who doesn't attend church over for dinner. We engage them in general conversation. We are not asked to convert them or Bible-bash them in any way, just offer genuine hospitality. Each time we have someone to our home we ask others to pray for us and the hospitality we give, that it may be truly Jesus-centred. When something is surrounded by prayer, God will work

Sandy (50 Ways to Share your Faith app).

Week 48 - 14th April

Be Thankful!

Who has made a positive impact in your life over the last few weeks? Let them know! Write a card, send an email, make a phone call telling them what they have done & why it has meant so much to you. If you are brave enough tell them you will be praying for them.

Week 49 - 21st April

Textify

Send an encouraging text to a friend or colleague. It's a particularly good way to encourage Christian friends or to reach out to those who are not yet Christians in a low lever but effective way. Easy and non-intrusive to let someone know you are 'lifting them up' through a text. They get the message and there's no awkwardness or pressure to respond but the message gets through.

Week 50 - 28th April

HALO (Helping And Loving Others)

As we come to the end of our year of evangelism we're encouraging & challenging every church in our district to bless their community in some way—and all on the same day!

On Saturday 14th of June we'd like your church to reach out into your neighbourhood by sharing God's love in practical ways.

Why not get a small group together to see what you could do. For ideas & resources log onto www.lancashiremethodist.org.uk and click on 'District Mission Day'.

Week 51 - 5th May

Learn & Share Memory verses

Find some Bible verses to quote to yourself when you need motivation, a starting point for prayer or space in the busyness. Formulate a list of 'power verses' - bits of scripture that help you personally. Meditating on and speaking the Word of God aloud strengthens our spiritual muscles and can be shared with others when encouragement or wisdom is needed.

Week 52 - 12th May

Let's Celebrate!

Do you have a 'good news' story to share? Have you had a significant conversation with someone about God & your faith? If so, why not tell someone. Arrange to have a time during worship when people can share their stories to encourage others. Commit to pray for one another for more confidence & opportunities to make God's love known.