

# The often-missed evangelism ministry opportunities of Mother's Day

Mother's Day Sunday is the third highest day for attendance in churches in North America, running slightly behind Christmas and Easter. Though most churches know this and work hard to make it a special Sunday, many miss significant evangelism and spiritual growth opportunities for that day—because of the day's exclusive focus on mothers.

Please don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying churches shouldn't honor mothers on Mother's Day. They should; it is an important time to praise mothers and to thank God for them. What I'm recommending is that churches not make mothers their exclusive focus, but that they take advantage of the additional ministry opportunity made possible that day because of mothers.

## Honor moms by challenging them to pray

In addition to honoring moms for all their hard work and faithful service to their families, take time to encourage them with the importance of their prayers. A mother's prayer can not only change an individual life, but can literally change the course of history.

That doesn't always mean that the mom herself will know here on earth the impact of her prayers and the witness of her life. The article: *One Mother's Prayers*, in a variety of PDF formats for you to use, is a powerful, true story of a young man who was far from God in his youth, but whose mother prayed fervently for many years and who live ended very differently than how it began. Whether in your church bulletin, on your website or as a handout in women's ministry groups this piece can greatly encourage moms to pray.

## The unchurched child and/or spouse outreach opportunity

The reason that churches are so full on Mother's Day is not because it is the only time of year mothers come to church. Most of the mothers at the church are regular attendees. The reason so many people come to church on Mother's Day is the unchurched people in the lives of many mothers rarely, if ever, come to church, but they will come on this day to make mom happy. ***This is a great evangelistic opportunity for your church!***

## Following are some ideas on how to make the most of it:

- First of all in your planning recognize that this is a tremendous evangelistic and outreach opportunity. Be planning ahead in what you will say and what communications you have on hand, what you will give out. The suggestions that follow will help. In addition, assemble a prayer team to pray, or add to your prayer list, requests specifically for the unsaved, unchurched and straying family members who will come to church with mom on this Sunday. Pray for sensitivity to their needs. Create attractive invitations for your members to give family members.
- As leader or pastor acknowledge the visitors who come on Mother's Day to please an earthly parent and affirm it was a commendable thing to do. Follow that commendation with a lesson/sermon about how they have a heavenly parent who is longing for them come home in faith even more than their mom wanted them to come to church.

- Be honest that one of the greatest pains in a mother's heart is that her child does not know Jesus. To be apart in life is hard, even as a child grows up, but to contemplate an eternity without those you love—one Sunday in church won't make up for it.

Say for the mom what she would want to say to her child. Be honest that an eternity without Jesus means eternal separation from all we love. Acknowledge this is not easy to say, not at all comfortable to talk about on this happy day, but to not say things that can make an eternal difference is not expressing love. Love is honest about the consequences of a life lived apart from God.

- In addition to the times of conviction, have fun also with visitors and make them comfortable in church—schedule a “Welcome to Our House Brunch for Moms and Adult Children” or an “Visit Your Parent's Sunday School Class Open House” and do a sort of take off on Open House days at school.

- Schedule a very upbeat, outreach oriented Ministry Fair for that day so visitors can experience and explore what your church does on a regular basis. For example, many single adults (the unchurched adult children who come to church only on Mother's Day) often don't have any idea that many churches have fantastic single adult ministry programs. A table with literature, food, and fun people might be just the thing to get them to attend on a regular basis.

Let visiting family members know you want them to come back next week. Put a notice in the bulletin and tell them that this would really make mom happy if they returned.

- For the unchurched husbands to see the men of your church around a literature table that talks about upcoming construction projects, work days, golf outings or sports events and that is staffed by men who reach out, welcome and engage visiting spouses in conversation is an incredible gift to give to the mom who comes every Sunday on her own.

- Challenge visiting adult children and spouses to make this Mother's Day the most memorable one ever for their mom by giving her the gift of faith in Jesus—the one Mother's Day gift that will give her joy forever.

- Be sure you have a clear gospel presentation in your bulletin and as a handout to take home. If you don't have them, check out the American Tract Society web site for some excellent ones. In addition, in your bulletin have a link on your website for those who would like to explore the Christian faith in more detail and have the contact name, number and email of a man for the spouses and both men and women for the children of people they can contact confidentially if they have questions or would like to discuss the Christian faith.

### **New born babies are a joy, but there is a greater joy**

To see their unchurched family members come to know Jesus, to become involved in the church, to begin growing in their Christian life—that is the greatest joy and greatest gift you can give any mom.