

# **Reaching the World As God Brings Them to Us**

## ***Evangelism in Resort & Leisure Settings***

Written by Many  
Compiled by Derek G. Spain  
Resort Evangelism Strategist, BCNY



Baptist Convention of New York  
6538 Baptist Way  
East Syracuse, NY 13057  
[www.bcnysbc.org](http://www.bcnysbc.org)  
800-552-0004

Terry Robertson, Executive Director/Treasurer  
Richard Taylor, Evangelism Division Director

**Forward**

**Richard Taylor**

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## Evangelism Should Be Fun!

*Following the example of Jesus to share good news in resort & leisure settings*  
By Derek Spain

Too often when people hear the word “evangelism” they begin to feel intimidated, overwhelmed or unprepared for the task. Yet when we look at the ministry of Jesus, He displayed joy everywhere that He went. And that joy was seen in the way He ministered to people. In Matthew 9, we are given a summary of His ministry in the Galilee region:

*Then Jesus went to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness. When He saw the crowds, He felt compassion for them, because they were weary and worn out, like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.” Matthew 9:35-38 (HCSB)*

### CROWDS

**Jesus saw the crowds.** He noticed the crowds of people everywhere He went. He did not ignore the crowds. He did not get frustrated with the crowds or send them away (the disciples wanted to do that!). He did not stay within the walls of the temple or the synagogues. He was out among the people. He knew what the crowds of people needed – they needed Him. And, Jesus had the amazing capacity to see the individuals within the crowds, the individuals who needed His love, His healing hand, His salvation. If you take a quick glance at Matthew chapters 8 and 9, you will see that Jesus encountered many different people who had many different needs:

- He cleansed a leper (Mt 8:1-4)
- He healed the centurion’s servant (Mt 8:5-13)
- He healed Peter’s mother-in-law and others at Capernaum (Mt 8:14-17)
- He called some individuals to be His disciples (Mt 8:18-22)
- He displayed His power over the winds and waves to build up His disciples’ faith (Mt 8:23-27)
- He drove out demons from two demon-possessed men (Mt 8:28-34)
- He forgave the sins and healed the body of a paralyzed man (Mt 9:1-8)
- He called Matthew to be His disciple, and He dined at Matthew’s house along with some tax collectors and sinners (Mt 9:9-13)
- He answered questions about fasting from some of John the Baptist’s disciples (Mt 9:14-17)
- He restored a young girl to health and heals a woman who had been bleeding for 12 years (Mt 9:18-26)
- He gave sight to two blind men (Mt 9:27-31)
- He drove out a demon so that a mute man can speak (Mt 9:32-34)

Wow! Jesus saw all of these needs, and He chose to meet the needs. Do you see the needs of people in your area? Who are the crowds in your community? Are they locals, tourists, others? How can your ministries reach outside the walls of your church building and meet

them where they are? This is what resort & leisure evangelism is all about – meeting people where they are and pointing them to Jesus Christ.

Many of the people in a resort & leisure setting are there because they are on vacation, on a business trip, or for some other reason. They are in the area to enjoy the wonderful opportunities in your area. They are there enjoying nature, sporting events, or other recreational activities. They are there to have fun. Let's take the gospel to them where they are having fun.

## COMPASSION

**Jesus felt compassion for the people.** When Jesus saw the crowds He was moved with compassion for them because He saw that they were weary and worn out, like sheep without a shepherd. The word compassion literally means “from the gut.” Because of the people's lost, helpless, harassed condition, Jesus had such a strong internal emotion that it forced Him to action. He did not just feel compassionate – He demonstrated His compassion by preaching, teaching and healing the people. Using the example of Christ, we can see the blueprint for effective ministries of compassion:

- **Preaching** – proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ wherever we go. What is more compassionate than telling someone who is lost how to be found? Using our personal testimonies, evangelistic Scriptures, and effective evangelism tools, we proclaim the gospel boldly, with gentleness and respect. Many times people are incredibly open to a gospel witness while they are in resort & leisure settings because they are more relaxed and able to think about important things (rather than just the hustle and bustle of everyday life).
- **Teaching** – teaching the Word of God. By passionately and compassionately teaching God's Word, we deliver God's timeless Word to people, which can lead them to salvation and to spiritual growth and to abundant life in Christ. Resort & leisure settings provide some incredible opportunities for teaching God's Word, many times in the heart of God's creation.
- **Healing** – ministries of healing. We pray for people to be healed in every way. We pray for people to be physically healed, for marriages to be healed, for people's finances to be healed, for people's emotions to be healed. The greatest healing that a person has for their soul to be healed through saving faith in Jesus Christ. Touching people's lives at their point of need – where they need immediate healing – opens up the door for us to share a gospel witness with them.

When most people think of ministries of compassion, they immediately think of ministries such as soup kitchens, clothes closets, homeless shelters and the like. These are vital ministries and may be just the type of ministries the Lord leads you to begin. But, we hope that the pages of this book will inspire you to think outside the box and discover all of the creative ways that God might use you and your church to serve people and share Christ in resort and leisure settings.

One final note about the reason Jesus felt this compassion. He felt such strong compassion for the people because they were weary and worn-out, like sheep without a shepherd. The spiritual leaders of Jesus' day – the shepherds – were not leading the people to a real relationship with God. Only Jesus could give that to the people. In our day, we have the good news of Jesus that He offers eternal life to all who will trust in Him. Too often even the religious leaders of our day are not pointing people to Jesus. They may be performing religious activities but this form of religion is leading people to feel weary and worn-out, not alive in the way that Jesus wants people to know Him and experience abundant, eternal life. Let's share this great news with others that they can know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

## CALL

**Jesus issued a call to His disciples.** He looked out at the crowds of people through His eyes of compassion and called His disciples to action. He saw that the opportunities for evangelism and ministry were everywhere, and that many workers were needed to work in the harvest field. He issued a call to pray, a call to give and a call to go.

- **A call to pray.** Jesus told His disciples to pray to the Lord of the harvest to raise up workers for the harvest field. We need to pray with urgency and expectancy, asking God to raise up workers to join us in sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Will you commit to pray?
- **A call to give.** Romans 10:15 tells us that those who go to proclaim the gospel message are sent. How do we send others? One way is by providing the needed resources so that they can do all that God wants them to do to share the gospel message. Bibles and other evangelism resources will need to be purchased. A part-time or full-time leader of the ministry may be needed. The church or association should prayerfully consider what God would have them do to partner with Him to reach the harvest field.
- **A call to go.** An amazing thing happens between the end of chapter 9 of Matthew's Gospel and the beginning of chapter 10. At the end of chapter 9, we see the disciples gathered as it were in a prayer huddle, praying that God would send out workers to the harvest field. At the beginning of chapter 10, we see Jesus gathering the disciples together to send them out on a missionary journey. What do we learn from this? This is what we learn: sometimes you are the very answer to your very own prayer. God may be calling you to be part of a ministry you have never even dreamed of before. Will you go with Him wherever He send you? He may be calling you to go around the world to be a missionary for Him. Or, He may be calling you to go to the resort & leisure areas near you to share the gospel with people from all over the world. Wherever He calls you to go, will you go with Him?

## EVANGELISM IS FUN!

Recently some teenagers and adults were doing ministry with us at our local ski mountain. We were giving away goody bags (sandwich bags filled with gum, candy, lip balm, band aids, a gospel tract, and a card about our ministry), engaging people in conversations about Christ, giving away hand warmers, and more. We were helping out as volunteers at a snowboard race. As we traveled up the ski lifts, one of the young men said to me, "I never knew evangelism could be so much fun!" Praise God for that. Praise God that He expanded this young man's vision for how He is at work in our world. May God open our hearts to see the crowds, feel the compassion of Jesus, and respond to His call by going wherever He calls us to go. And the place He calls us to go may be closer than we think!

## WHY A CHURCH SHOULD CONSIDER EVANGELISTIC MINISTRIES IN RESORT & LEISURE SETTINGS

- To build a strong Christian witness through serving
- To carry the gospel outside the walls of the church building
- To go "on mission" with God as He brings people to your area
- Because sometimes people are more receptive to the gospel while they are relaxed in a leisure setting

- To reach children, youth and adults with the gospel in powerful, effective and creative ways
- To build up the kingdom of God

## **THE TOOLS YOU NEED**

This manual is intended to give you the tools you need to begin and carry-out evangelistic ministries in the resort & leisure settings near you. Within the territory of the Baptist Convention of New York, every year millions upon millions of people visit here from all over the USA and all over the world? Let's see where God is at work and join Him in this wonderful opportunity to serve others and share Christ with people from all over the world, right in our own communities.

How should you use the manual? You may want to read through the manual from cover to cover. Or, you may choose to read the various articles that relate to ministry opportunities in your setting. The articles were written by veterans of ministry, people who have been serving the Lord and sharing Christ in resort & leisure settings for decades. Glean from their wisdom and let us help you. Our Evangelism Division of the BCNY is here to serve, equip and assist you in following God's plan for your church and your life to share the good news of Jesus Christ with people who desperately need Him!

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### **Is This Kind of Ministry in the Bible?**

*A Biblical foundation for evangelism in resort & leisure settings*

By Chris Stewart

Often times we find ourselves in federal, state, or private secular facilities doing resort and leisure ministries. When given permission to go into such places, there are often limitations made. One of the main limitations is, "We don't want you coming in here pushing your beliefs on our guests." Basically, this means they do not want us to start an evangelistic conversation.

On the other hand, resort and leisure settings are places where people go for refreshment and to quench an inner thirst a setting very similar to one we find Jesus in at Jacob's well. John 4 is a record of the events that took place there. We can use Jesus' example to know how we can do evangelism in resort and leisure settings without openly starting an evangelistic conversation.

Jesus started by putting himself where the woman was. He did not require her to come to his territory. Nor did He force his way into her territory. Instead, He met her in "neutral" territory. Also, Jesus let the woman know He, too, was there because He was tired and thirsty, just as she was. The woman, therefore, was not likely to have put up barriers that would have prevented or negatively prejudiced her hearing the Spirit's call.

Resort and leisure settings are "neutral" territories. People enter such places often hurting and seeking but at the same time allowing their "guards" to drop. They want to find others there like themselves. When we go to these settings, we must be willing to meet people where they are. Without trivializing the gospel, we must present ourselves in a fashion that

compliments the setting, letting others know we are there for similar reasons as they are. Jesus shows us that it is okay to sit by the well for a conversation rather than stand on the well to “preach.”

Jesus also illustrated that we do not have to start a spiritual conversation to have an evangelistic conversation. Jesus knew the woman at the well needed to talk about such matters, but He also knew that she was not expecting to do so. Therefore, He allowed her the freedom to move the conversation in that direction. By simply answering her questions with leading responses, He opened the door for her to ask Him to tell her about His “beliefs.” In resort and leisure settings, people are not necessarily expecting to discuss spiritual matters. Nor are they necessarily willing to listen to what you have to say. However, if they are the ones asking the questions, they will want to know the answers. By witnessing to people in this manner, we can operate within the limitations of not “pushing our beliefs on the guest.” We are giving the guest and/or employees the opportunity to engage us in spiritual and evangelistic conversations.

These are but two things Jesus can teach us about doing evangelism in resort and leisure settings. Take the time to reread John 4 and other accounts of Jesus ministering and witnessing. Allow the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to see unique ways of turning the limitations of man into opportunities to get people more interested in hearing the good news of Jesus Christ.

*This article was originally entitled “A Biblical Starting Point,” and was written by Chris Stewart, Director, Ocoee Resort Ministry, Cleveland, TN. Used by permission NAMB.*

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**Who Are All These People?**  
*The mission field all around us*  
By Derek Spain

In resort and leisure settings, you will encounter many different groups of people. Understanding the different life situations and needs of each of these groups will help you to effectively design ministries to share the gospel with them.

**Get to Know the People!**

If you are truly going to follow Christ by loving God and loving your neighbor as yourself, you must spend time getting to know the people in the setting where ministry will be taking place. As you get to know them, you will learn much from them, you will begin to understand the needs and ministry opportunities, and you will better discern God’s will for how to share the good news of Christ in the resort & leisure setting. Nothing can take the place of taking time to really get to know them. Join local organizations. Walk around town. Talk and listen to people. Pay attention to what they say to you.

## People in the Resort & Leisure Community

- Natives
  - People whose family is from the resort area for generations
  - They have either chosen to remain in the area or they have not had the opportunity to move out of the area
  - They are generally very knowledgeable of local history, culture
  - They can explain how the community has changed (or not) through the years (generations)
- Locals
  - People who have moved into the area – or whose family moved into the area years ago – who now call this area “home”
  - They have chosen to live in this area, possibly for a variety of reasons: job opportunities, quality of life, family, etc
  - They have become friends with many people over time
  - Note: in some communities the terms “locals” and “natives” is used synonymously, and refers to those who are natural born in the area (or whose family was born in the area generations ago)
- Transplants
  - People who have moved to the area recently
  - Many transplant themselves to the area because of job opportunities or for the quality of life in the area
  - Many transplants move out of the area within a few years
- Tourists
  - Guests to the area, taking advantage of recreational opportunities
  - Usually in town one week or less
- Workers
  - Many workers in resort & leisure settings live in nearby communities
  - They may work long hours, split shifts, etc
  - Many have two or more jobs in the area
- Seasonal
  - These people live 2-6 months in the area, and have another home somewhere else, usually in a different climate zone and perhaps in a different culture
  - They may or may not have employment while they are in the area
  - They enjoy the quality of life during the season they choose to live in the area
- Transients
  - Those who have come to the area seeking employment or recreation opportunities, but who will probably not be here very long
  - Usually they remain in the resort & leisure setting one season or less

Questions to Consider:

1. What are the needs of each of these groups of people?
  - a. Physical needs
  - b. Social needs
  - c. Financial needs
  - d. Spiritual needs
2. What time(s) are these groups of people available for ministry?
  - a. For Bible studies
  - b. For worship services
  - c. For ministry opportunities
3. How are these various groups of people connected to others in the community?
  - a. To business leaders
  - b. To the school system
  - c. To local sports programs
  - d. To community civic clubs
  - e. To various community groups (art center, afterschool programs, etc)
4. What types of ministries would be most effective to meet the needs of each group?
  - a. Family programs?
  - b. Youth/children's ministries?
  - c. Creative arts?
  - d. Sports ministries?
  - e. Worship services?
  - f. Bible studies?
  - g. Community events?
  - h. Others?
5. What do the groups of people perceive are the greatest needs of the community, and how can churches/ministries meet those needs?

**Serving and Sharing Christ**  
*Keys to long-term effectiveness in resort & leisure settings*  
By Derek Spain

**Who is the Greatest?**

Following Christ is completely different than the way the world operates. Take the issue of servanthood, for instance. Listen to Jesus' words:

*Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

**Mark 10:42-45 (NIV)**

When we as Christ-followers display our faith through serving others, and being willing to do the most menial of volunteer tasks, the world notices. One of the most effective ways to introduce a new ministry to the community is to identify a community need and then volunteer your time to help meet that need. A ministry of service will open up the doors for the gospel in amazing ways.

**5 Important Qualities**

When we serve at community events, we have 5 standards for each of our volunteers. We share these our volunteers in our training time, so that they will represent themselves, our ministry and the Lord Jesus very well. They are these:

1. We Show Up.

When we give our word that we will show up for a volunteer assignment, we show up. Even if there is bad weather or great weather and other volunteers are not showing up, our ministry team is always there.

2. We Do Our Job.

Sometimes our jobs are exciting. Sometimes they are boring. But every job is important to the event organizers. When we do our job well, the event goes well. This gives us a great platform for a gospel witness.

3. We Have a Great Attitude.

We should display the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). Your attitude will either point people toward Christ or point them away from Him. Our attitude should be same as Jesus' (Philippians 2:5).

4. We Don't Ask for Free Stuff.

We want people to know that our motives are pure. We are not volunteering for what we can *get*. We are volunteering for what we can *give*. If all of the volunteers are given something free then our volunteers can take it also. Otherwise, we do not ask for free stuff.

5. We Smile.

Related to #3, if our attitude is Christ-honoring, we want our face to show it. A smile will reflect God's glory when no one else around you is smiling. A cheerful face can point people toward Christ.

### **Serving Adds Value to Your Community**

Community leaders take notice when your ministry serves the community, and serves the community well. So many organizations – even community service organizations – are always asking local businesses and individuals to give financially to support their organization. When you as a church or ministry offer free service to the community, and you provide a solid group of volunteers to serve, this establishes a strong witness for Jesus Christ. As you serve, your ministry begins to get a positive reputation in the community, which brings glory to God. As you serve, doors of ministry and evangelism begin to open. And, because your ministry is such a valuable component to the event's success, you will continue to be invited back over and over again.

One example in Lake Placid is the way in which North Country Ministries (NCM) serves at the Ironman triathlon race. NCM partners with mission teams and multiple churches from the Adirondack Baptist Association to provide more than 200 volunteers in a four-day span of time to serve at pre-race needs and at aid stations on race day. By providing such a large and dedicated group of volunteers, NCM has established a solid witness for Christ. Throughout the days of the event, hundreds of gospel contacts are made. NCM has a booth in the Expo area where athletes and their families stop by for snow cones, face painting and the Prayer Station. Everyone is invited to the pancake breakfast sponsored by NCM on the day before the race, where believers sit down across the table from the athletes to share their testimonies and hear the athletes' stories. And, more than 200 people show up for the Ironman Prayer & Celebration Service on the evening before the race, where they hear great music, testimonies by Christian athletes, and a gospel presentation. All of these ministries have developed through the years as a result of partnership through serving.

### **From Serving to Sharing Christ**

At events, people talk about everything: the event, the weather, where you're from, etc. Here is a typical conversation about serving that leads to a gospel witness:

Question from someone: "So why are you guys serving?"

Answer from us: "At our ministry, we love God, we love people, and we love sports."

Q: "That's interesting."

A: "There's another way we describe our ministry. We are followers of Jesus Christ. When He was on the earth, one of the things He did was serve people. So, we are out here serving in His name."

Q: "That's interesting."

A: "But serving was not the most important reason Jesus came. He came to die for our sins on the cross."

Q: "Really?"

A: "Absolutely. Could I tell you about how I realized that Jesus died for me?"

Q: "Sure"

A: [Shares testimony in 1-2 minutes] and then says, "Has anything like that ever happened to you?"

So you can see that it is not difficult to go from a conversation about serving at an event to the sharing the gospel clearly. We always share the gospel boldly, with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15). And we leave the results of the conversation to the Lord.

## Seed Planting

*Making disciples and expanding the kingdom of God through resort & leisure ministries*  
By Derek Spain

### Seed Planting Ministry

Evangelistic ministries in resort & leisure settings are seed-planting ministries. You may not always see the final results of your labors. This side of eternity, you may never know how your witness to an individual affected them for eternity. The size of your local congregation may not grow as a direct result of your outreach efforts. But the kingdom of God will grow as you sow seeds for the kingdom. Also, the people in your local churches will grow in faith, obedience and Christlikeness as they serve the Savior by sharing Christ with others. They will grow stronger as disciples of Jesus Christ.

And the beauty of being faithful to God is that He blesses in unexpected ways. When we sow seeds of the gospel into people's lives, we never know whom God may bring our way. We may encounter someone whom God has been working on for years, drawing them to Himself. Our witness for Christ may be just what he needs to hear so that he can say "Yes!" to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of his life.

In Mark 4:1-20, Jesus tells His disciples a parable that is applicable to us today in resort & leisure settings:

*Again He began to teach by the sea, and a very large crowd gathered around Him. So He got into a boat on the sea and sat down, while the whole crowd was on the shore facing the sea. He taught them many things in parables, and in His teaching He said to them:*

*"Listen! Consider the sower who went out to sow. As he sowed, this occurred: Some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Other seed fell on rocky ground where it didn't have much soil, and it sprang up right away, since it didn't have deep soil. When the sun came up, it was scorched, and since it didn't have a root, it withered. Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns came up and choked it, and it didn't produce a crop. Still others fell on good ground and produced a crop that increased 30, 60, and 100 times what was sown."*

*Then He said, "Anyone who has ears to hear should listen!"*

*When He was alone with the Twelve, those who were around Him asked Him about the parables. He answered them, "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to those outside, everything comes in parables so that they may look and look, yet not perceive; they may listen and listen, yet not understand; otherwise, they might turn back— and be forgiven." Then He said to them:*

*"Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any of the parables? The sower sows the word. These are the ones along the path where the word is sown: when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word sown in them. And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: when they hear the word, immediately they receive it with joy. But they have no root in themselves; they are short-lived. When pressure or persecution comes because of the word, they immediately stumble. Others are sown among thorns; these are the ones who hear the word, but the worries of this age, the seduction of wealth, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. But the ones*

*sown on good ground are those who hear the word, welcome it, and produce a crop: 30, 60, and 100 times what was sown.”*

**Mark 4:1-20 (HCSB)**

So you see, it is not our responsibility to make a person believe in Christ. It is our responsibility to sow the seeds of the Word of God. Evangelistic ministries in resort & leisure settings seek to do just that, in effective, relevant, Christ-honoring ways.

When Jesus was asked what the kingdom was like, listen to His answer:

*He said, therefore, “What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to? It’s like a mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds of the sky nested in its branches.”*

**Luke 13:18-19 (HCSB)**

And the apostle Paul writes:

*I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.*

**1 Corinthians 3:6-7 (HCSB)**

### **Expanding the Kingdom**

For our ministry to be one that makes disciples and expands the kingdom of God, we must be intentional about sowing seeds of the gospel, about teaching and proclaiming the Word of God. There are many ways to sow seeds of the gospel. That is what this training manual will help you discover. When we sow seeds of the gospel, we can trust God to give the growth. And because God is the One who gives the growth, God is the One who gets the credit! Let us be part of a worldwide harvest of souls as we sow seeds of the gospel with people who come here from all over the world.

For your church to begin reaching out with the gospel in resort and leisure settings, you will not be building up your own kingdom. But you will be advancing God’s kingdom. And that is what Jesus calls us to do.

*Then Jesus came near and said to them, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*

**Matthew 28:18-20 (HCSB)**

### **Shine As Lights**

Jesus tells us to let our lights shine for Him.

*In the same way, let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.*

**Matthew 5:16 (HCSB)**

It is not about us. It is about Him. It is not for our glory. It is for His glory. Let us be faithful to sow seeds of the gospel and to do good works for His kingdom, so that God may get glory and His kingdom will advance.

## Ready to Give An Answer

One of my favorite verses in the all of the Bible is this:

*In your heart set apart Jesus as Lord. And always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope that you have. Do this with gentleness and respect.*

**1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)**

When He is the Lord of our lives, people will ask us questions about why we have such hope in Him. When we tell them (in a way that is gentle and respectful) that our hope is in Jesus, His kingdom advances! Let's be ready to give an answer so that God's kingdom can advance.

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## Where Do We Get Started?

*Steps to beginning evangelistic ministries in resort & leisure settings*

By Chuck Clayton and Sam Schlegel

Leisure — “free time; time off from work; discretionary time; the activity, or inactivity, pursued during one’s free time; freedom from time-consuming responsibilities or activities; qualitative rest or reflection.”

Leisure is a word that means many things to many people: relaxation, recreation, time away from responsibilities, play, time to recharge batteries or get things back into focus, recreation. People spend their leisure time in all sorts of ways, in all sorts of places. Leisure has become a significant influence in the United States during the past 40 years. This has been the first time in history when leisure has been available to the population as a whole and not just the privilege of the very wealthy. Recent studies indicate that the average American enjoys about 130 leisure days each year. In comparison, a privileged citizen of first-century Rome could look forward to only half that many days free.

The extent of the impact of leisure on American culture can be examined by looking at business statistics. In 1985 travel/tourism was the nation’s second largest employer with 4.5 million related jobs, and the third largest retail industry with \$255 billion in income. By 1995 travel and tourism accounted for more than \$400 billion in annual spending, and recreation and related activities generated an additional \$300 billion per year. In 1997, the United States welcomed over 48 million international visitors who spent an estimated \$75 billion while here. Each year resort/leisure businesses produce billions of dollars in federal, state, and local tax revenue. That is why state travel and tourism commissions budget millions in ongoing efforts to entice visitors to leisure attractions in their states.

Obviously, leisure is an important facet of life in North America. Therefore, ministry and outreach to people in leisure settings and lifestyle groups should be an important priority for those who want to impact our culture and society with the good news of Jesus Christ.

“Resort/leisure missions” is not a term that refers to playing at missions, but rather it means a serious commitment of missions outreach to people found in the play and leisure areas of life. Resort/leisure missions are Biblical missions carried out to reach persons of various lifestyles found in all types of resort and leisure settings. A “resort/leisure setting” is defined as any private, public, commercial, or government administered location or special event, established or set aside for people to spend leisure time, whether away from, or near to, their primary residence.

The resort/leisure setting of ministry may be a city park, a festival marketplace, a county lake, a local campground, or a weekend flea market. Or the resort/leisure setting could be a world renowned destination ski area, ocean beach resort, historic site, national park, commercial leisure attraction, or special event. Wherever people gather on leisure that is a setting with a potential for resort/leisure missions.

A number of Christians are already involved in reaching out with the gospel to people who live, work, and visit in resort/leisure settings. These individuals and churches are seeking ways to minister in Christ’s name not only because of the many human needs that soon become evident in such leisure settings, but because leisure itself may provide the best opportunity for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with people who may never attend anyone’s church. People on leisure tend to be open to new ideas and relationships and the nature of resort/leisure settings often encourages friendly dialogue and discussion.

In addition, our whole society needs a healthy understanding of what leisure is truly supposed to be. As people who have experienced the fullness of life that comes through waiting upon the Lord, Christians have the responsibility of helping those around us discover that true leisure is far more than filling discretionary time with empty and meaningless diversions and selfish and destructive pursuits. Through our contact with the leisure aspect of contemporary culture, we can demonstrate those central truths of Scripture that give meaning to a balanced and Biblical view of work, leisure, and rest.

## **A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO RESORT/LEISURE MISSIONS**

This paper should be thought of as a tool designed to enable those using it to see more clearly the people and settings with whom God is working, and then to respond appropriately to these opportunities for outreach as Jesus would. The prayerful study and application of the concepts presented in this strategy for resort/leisure missions should help those using this resource tool to:

- Clarify overall ministry objectives-understand what is the basic purpose of being on mission
- Understand the need to stop, look, and listen-watch and see what God’s priorities are: where He is at work
- Identify the “touch points” of possible ministry contact-find those special needs, aspirations, and opportunities that call for a biblically-based response.
- Establish specifically what God would have us, as His children, to be doing-answer clearly and boldly the questions:
  - “What would Jesus do in this setting?”
  - “How would He have us, His body, respond to these ministry opportunities in the light of the Father’s will?”

- Communicate to God's people both the geographic and ethnic settings of the Father's activity-discover the places and people groups with which He would have us work.

Since the strategy concepts and ministry ideas presented here are based on approaches that have already proven effective in reaching people in leisure environments, this material should prove particularly helpful in developing outreach to people with lifestyles that include a significant focus on leisure.

*"The strength of a man consists in finding the way God is going, and going that way."*  
- Henry Ward Beecher

## **THE PROCESS FOR IMPLEMENTING RESORT/LEISURE MISSIONS**

### **Understand the Biblical Basis of Missions**

To most effectively reach people in leisure settings and lifestyle groups with the good news of Jesus Christ, it is first necessary to have a solid foundation upon which the specific structures of ministry and outreach will be based. This foundation is down only through a clear understanding of the biblical basis of missions.

Missions, in any setting, is the redemptive enterprise of God wherein He "sends" first Himself and then those who go on His behalf to alienated people in order that these people might be reconciled to God Himself, then to themselves, and to one another. Jesus is the ultimate expression of the missionary heart of God, having been "sent" by the Father to "save His people from their sins." And as the incarnation of God's love on mission, Jesus modeled the servanthood nature of those who would go out on His Father's behalf. He identified His ministry as that of a servant in Luke 4, lived as a servant from His baptism through His resurrection, and commissioned His disciples to be the same kind of "sent ones" as He had been (See John 20:21).

Jesus challenges all of His disciples to a lifestyle of being on mission—"as you go," instructing them to witness (See Luke 24:48, Acts 1:8), proclaim (See Mark 16:15), and disciple (See Matt. 28:19-20). The verbal expression of the gospel is to be authenticated by the servant lives of His disciples. The world is to know the reality of the Incarnation even into this present age through the loving compassion and concern of the church, the body of Christ.

And the nature of the church's ministry on behalf of the kingdom of God is incarnational, being Christ's body about the business and concerns of the Father (See John 20:21; Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12:12-31; Eph. 4:1-16).

We are reminded that it is the Father's desire that all people everywhere be restored to a right relationship to Him through Christ (See 2 Cor. 5:14-21; 2 Pet. 3:9). This outreach of the gospel is to be extended to all people regardless of nationality, education, location, lifestyle or any other differentiation. We are told that the good news is to be proclaimed to the whole realm of God's creation (See Mark 16:15). In fact, the Bible says that every part of the created order is longing for the restoration of humankind through the liberating transformation of each person through the new life possible in Christ (See Rom. 8:18-25).

The missions activity of Christians is to begin within the context of a local body of disciples and extend itself in ever increasing outreach to the entire world (See Acts 1:8). The Spirit of Christ gives to every disciple specific enablings (See 1 Cor. 12:4-11), which, when developed, become the means of an effective ministry of reconciliation in the name of the Lord Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17-21). In order to be understood, the message of Christ's redemptive love must be communicated in a manner and language that is clear and meaningful to those

who receive it. Therefore, the Lord calls out from His church certain individuals and enables them with specific cross-cultural skills to be “apostles” within particular settings, cultures, or lifestyles. These “sent ones” are given to the churches in order that they might facilitate the entering of new mission settings and equip the members of local congregations to be on mission as the Spirit of Christ directs them (See Eph. 4:11-13). All members of the Body of Christ have the promise of the abiding presence of their Lord through the empowering of His Holy Spirit as they go out into the world as ambassadors of His kingdom (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8). As people in a new group or setting respond positively to the gospel and commit themselves to the lordship of Jesus Christ, they are often brought together through the leading of the Holy Spirit to become a local and indigenous body of believers witnessing to the reality of God’s reconciling power and presence in their particular setting (See Acts 2:41-47).

Just as there are no classes or groups of people whom the redemptive message of God’s love in Christ does not seek to reach, there are no areas and aspects of life with which the Father is not concerned. And this includes the leisure side of life. The issue of humankind’s need for rest is addressed by the Bible from the beginning (See Gen. 2:2-3; Ex. 20:8-11). A time for rest and reflection is seen not only as a vital part of people’s relationship to God (See Psalm 37:7-9; Isa. 40:29-31), but also a key aspect of their relationship to the basic necessities of daily existence (See Lev. 25:1-12; Matt. 12:1-12; Mark 2:23-26). Jesus Himself experienced the need for rest and authentic leisure as time to reflect upon and know the reality of God’s renewing grace (See Luke 22:29-46; John 4:6). As His disciples, we are reminded to take time out from our busy schedules (See Mark 6:31) and to trust in the Father’s care and grace (See Matt. 6:25-34). And out of this personal experience of the true value and meaning of leisure, God calls us forth to be His leaven in a culture that is so heavily influenced by limited, and often shallow, ideas and concepts of leisure, and yet has so little time for real rest and reflection.

### **Understand the Leisure Setting**

Each leisure setting is different. Even two lake areas, two festival marketplaces, two campgrounds, two flea markets, or two ski areas in the same vicinity will have their own distinctives. Therefore, it is important that each leisure setting be examined for its own specific nature and characteristics.

#### ***Who is in the Leisure Setting?***

The population of a resort/leisure setting is more than its visitors or guests. There are those residing at or near the leisure setting or attraction who own and operate businesses, serve as managers and administrators, work for governmental agencies, or are employed in service-related industries. And there are probably a number of people who work, live, or visit in the leisure community at different seasons of the year. The different groups of people found in leisure settings vary widely in their personal interests and characteristics. In fact, there are some types of people who might be found in a typical leisure setting that can be overlooked in a causal examination of the area. This is often true of those people who seem to be the same as the majority of the population and yet who have interests and/or lifestyles that are quite different.

Since an understanding of the population of a particular setting is essential to the development of an effective leisure ministry, the time and effort spent in getting to know the people will be a valuable investment in the long run. A good method to use in discovering the distinctive nature of a particular resort/leisure setting is to do a survey using a format similar to the one that immediately follows this strategy. Some of the things that can be revealed by a thorough survey of each leisure setting are:

- The dominant focus or expression of the leisure lifestyle core group in this particular setting
- The composition of the population of the leisure community by length of stay, e.g., year-round residents, seasonal people, transient visitors
- Other demographic distinctions that can best be used to describe the various population groups in the community, i.e., age, marital status, economic status, employment, ethnicity, religious orientation, and so on
- Any distinct lifestyle subgroups that may be found in this leisure setting

### ***What is the Impact of Leisure on the Community?***

Major leisure settings often have a distinct population with a core group whose lifestyles are primarily devoted to leisure and the benefits that might be achieved from its promotion. These distinctively leisure lifestyles will have a definite influence on the culture, mindset, behavior, and values of everyone and everything in a community strongly dominated by leisure. Leisure-oriented lifestyles may not have so obvious an impact in those leisure settings which primarily appeal to people who seek to enjoy leisure activities only occasionally. However, the leisure orientation of contemporary society is so strong that its influence will be present in subtle ways even in these settings. Some of the implications of this leisure orientation in contemporary life are:

- Those who are a part of a leisure lifestyle usually get their sense of identity from the way they play, rather than from their work or an allegiance to an ideal or some type of Supreme Being.
- Most of those who have adopted a leisure lifestyle have an orientation towards a child-type ego state, at least in their leisure pursuits. They focus on the benefits of fun, pleasure, entertainment, and enjoyment.
- Material and economic benefits are usually the primary considerations for those providing services to those on leisure. However, many service and management personnel in leisure-oriented businesses choose such occupations so they can also enjoy the leisure benefits.
- Many people who do not maintain a leisure lifestyle also enjoy the benefits of leisure. They may, for example, focus on the benefits of rest, relaxation, or renewal. This would even be true of people who are seriously committed to a work ethic and view leisure as a way of improving the quality or quantity of one's work output.

### ***What Attracts People to this Setting?***

It is important to identify those attractions and activities which draw people to this particular leisure setting. These might be recreational opportunities, sightseeing in areas with historic and geographic significance, special events, festival shopping, restaurants, hobby and trade conventions, family reunions, and just about anything else that would entice people to spend their leisure time in a specific place. In order to understand what goes in to attracting people to a particular leisure setting, it is vital to know how people spend their time in and around each part of the leisure environment, and how long they stay in the area. For instance, if a setting has a special event as a primary part of its appeal, the scheduling of that event can affect the types of people that attend. As an example, an Oktoberfest celebration held in the middle of the week would not be expected to attract many families with school-age children.

### ***What Other Dynamics are at Work in this Leisure Setting?***

Every leisure setting or community has its own internal dynamics. People with missions leadership responsibilities should seek to understand these dynamics as much as possible:

- Who are the key decision makers and influential individuals and groups within the leisure community?
- What sort of image does this leisure environment have? What identity has it established for itself? Is this the same image as the one that its leadership or management seeks to promote?
- Where and how does this leisure setting market itself? (e.g., family, singles, seasonal, year-round)
- Where do most of the people who visit this setting actually come from?
- What human services already exist in the leisure setting?
- What religious orientations and/or activities already exist in the leisure setting?

### **Identify Perceived Needs and Aspirations of the People**

The meeting of people's physical needs or personal aspirations will not be the main objective of missions outreach. However, needs and aspirations are "touch points" where people can be awakened to the presence of Christ's body in their midst. Through such ministry actions, people can see God at work in their lives. And so, an important key to beginning and sustaining a resort/leisure missions endeavor is the development of ministries that meet the needs and aspirations of the people in that particular setting. In order to design such ministries, the real and perceived needs and aspirations of the leisure lifestyle populations must be clearly identified.

- Each component of the leisure community may have a different set of perceived needs and aspirations. Each significant group should be examined. It is important that what people seek after, or desire for themselves, be considered in addition to the usual listings of physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. This is especially true in those leisure settings that contain upwardly mobile groups. Those who are more affluent may not consider themselves as having needs, but they usually will acknowledge aspirations. It is also important to consider the temporary concerns, as well as the ongoing needs, of each different group of people.
- Obtain the perspective of organizations or groups in the leisure setting such as: chambers of commerce, business associations, condo owners associations, service clubs, service groups (e.g., ski patrol, lifeguards, etc). At the same time, find out all you can about these organizations: why they exist; what their basic purposes and objectives are; how they see themselves in relationship to the other parts of the community, as well as to visitors in the area; and soon.
- Interview human service personnel who relate to the leisure community (e.g., law enforcement; medical and mental health; school counselors and administrators; social service, housing, employment, and other government agencies). Find out the strengths of these agencies and organizations and how well they are able to meet the needs of the community. Pay particular attention to those areas where a Christian ministry could compliment the existing services available to the community.
- Consult with pastors and other religious leaders in the community to learn about how they see the significant needs and aspirations. Find out what ministry is already being provided in the area. Listen carefully to their response to the possibility of a new mission endeavor in their midst.
- Some of the best clues to needs, aspirations, and other touch points in a particular leisure setting will come from personal observations and spontaneous conversations with people who live, work, or visit there.

## **Develop a Statement of Mission Purpose**

A statement of mission purpose is a single statement that expresses the reason for the existence of the resort/leisure missions ministry. This mission statement sets forth the common ground upon which all who participate in a resort/leisure missions endeavor are to base their particular ministry response. It will tell to all who read it:

- “What we see as God’s will and purpose for us”
- “What we are really trying to do”
- “Who intends to do what for whom”

The statement of purpose should be broad enough to include the full scope of all that the mission endeavor seeks to do, but also be narrow enough to define the limits of its ministry. Based on this mission statement, specific objectives can be formulated and developed, e.g., evangelism, ministry, and starting and growing congregations. These objectives should express the major intentions of the ministry, and move the project towards fulfilling the stated purpose of the resort/leisure missions endeavor.

## **Envision Ministries to Fulfill Purpose and Objectives**

This is the dreaming stage. The missions leadership will now be familiar with the leisure setting, and will have identified potential touch points for ministry—both the real, as well as perceived, needs and aspirations of the people. With the stated purpose of the resort/leisure missions endeavor clearly in mind, various creative and innovative approaches for meeting needs and addressing aspirations should be considered. Do not let concern for the possible lack of resources or other potential limitations hamper the scope of your brainstorming.

This process of envisioning ministries will be especially significant if it is shared by those who will be called upon to commit themselves to the beginning and continuation of the ministry. It might be helpful for those who are involved in the project (church missions development council, associational missions development program, leisure missions committee, etc.) to consider the following question: “If this ministry was to follow through without any human limitations and do what we feel God would have us do in response to the observed needs and aspirations of the people in this leisure setting, what all would we be doing?”

Remember, at this point of envisioning potential ministry possibilities, premature consideration of the availability of resources or other perceived limitations could seriously restrict the brainstorming process. It is hoped that all who participate in this time of dreaming will be people who are open to the creative and innovative possibilities for ministry that the Holy Spirit can, and does, reveal to the people of God.

The listing that follows shows some dreams from other leisure settings that became realities. It is only meant to be used to get the ideas flowing. People in each leisure setting should dream about and discover the many other possibilities that fit their particular situation.

## **Possible Resort/Leisure Missions Projects**

- Late night Bible study for employees of leisure-oriented businesses

- Contemporary Christian concerts
- Information center for visitors and guests
- Day camp for children of employees or visitors
- New congregation to relate to the leisure community
- Hostel for transient guests and visitors
- Listing of “bed and breakfast” accommodations operated by Christians
- Campground creative worship service
- Performing artists circulating through the leisure setting (e.g., mimes, clowns, puppeteers, illusionists, street drama/guerrilla theater)
- Demonstration area at arts and crafts festival
- Counseling center available to all segments of the leisure setting’s population
- Chaplains for shopkeepers and merchants
- Cup of cold water booth with Scripture selections and free information available
- Christian dinner theater
- Worship walk at scenic attraction
- Recreation programs for youth and others
- Senior adult activities and/or support center
- Scriptures as gifts to international visitors
- Hospitality/welcome center booth at special events
- Trading libraries at public or private marinas

### **Develop a Ministry Design**

#### ***Determine Priorities for the Resort/Leisure Ministry***

Probably many opportunities for ministry will have now been envisioned. Now the missions leadership must set some priorities, for it will be necessary to focus attention on those ministry opportunities that are the most important. Priorities should be set on the basis of two considerations:

- What are the first things that must be done to begin meeting the objectives of the mission endeavor and ultimately fulfill its purpose?
- What are the most pressing human needs and aspirations observed in this leisure setting that require a biblical response?

It is best to begin with one or two projects that will contribute to the objectives of the ministry, rather than attempting to meet all needs or beginning too many projects at once. Some dreams may have to be postponed until roadblocks can be removed or changed. It should be remembered, however, that the presence of seemingly insurmountable obstacles has sometimes led to the development of more appropriate and effective ministries than would have otherwise been attempted.

#### ***Calculate Resources Needed to Conduct Ministry***

For each ministry project contemplated, the missions leadership needs to determine what resources will be needed: personnel, facilities, equipment, logistical support, supplies, finances, and so forth. Restrictions, regulations, and other constraints must be taken into account when determining potential ministry assets and liabilities. Governmental regulations on the use of facilities, types of activities prohibited by the management, ministry directions not acceptable to the missions support base, and similar concerns can all have a significant impact on the particular focus of the missions endeavor.

Some essential resources, such as good will and trust, are not as tangible as the others, but they may well be the most important. Relationships must be developed with the secular leadership of the leisure setting and community, as well as with the missions administrators who are responsible for denominational resources. In both arenas of interpersonal

relationships, the leaders of local leisure missions projects will probably be called upon to “pay their dues” before they are fully accepted by the persons who have responsibility for the setting where the mission endeavors are proposed. In many cases, it will be necessary to prove that expressed concern is genuine and that those who would minister in a particular setting have a sincere commitment to its people and culture.

### ***Plan the Actual Ministry Design***

Action plans that contribute to the established objectives of the leisure missions endeavor should now be set. These will be the actual ministry activities by which the mission work will be done. Each of these action plans (goals) should be:

- Specific – The ministry activity should clearly contribute to a stated objective of the missions endeavor.
- Measurable – Every member of the missions team should know what the desired outcome of the missions activity is, as well as how and when they can tell that the objectives have been achieved.
- Attainable – The action plan should be realistic and workable.
- Relevant – The activity should clearly contribute to the objectives of the missions endeavor.
- Trackable – Each goal or action plan should be something that can be observed and evaluated in light of the established objectives.

It is helpful to develop job descriptions or covenants for each person working in the ministry so that every member of the team will know what is expected of them. The resort/leisure missions project director, for example, usually would be given the assignment to develop missions awareness, model concepts and styles of ministry, equip and supervise the staff, and administer the overall missions project. Other staff persons, whether paid or volunteer, should each have a clear job description that outlines the duties and expectations of his or her service.

Any type of missions enterprise functions best when it is sponsored by a local congregation situated as close as possible to the missions setting which works cooperatively with other mission-minded congregations in providing the resources needed for the ministry endeavor. When a missions enterprise is conducted in a setting where there is no local body of believers ministering to a particular group of people, it should intend to lead to the formation of a new Christian fellowship. As people in a group or setting respond to the gospel of Christ, they can become a local and indigenous body of believers in that particular setting. This new group may take the form of a Bible study group, a prayer fellowship or network, or even formally organize as a mission congregation.

### **Prepare for Ministry Activities**

#### ***Enlist Ministry Personnel***

Seek out Christians who are willing to use their skills and spiritual gifts to accomplish the missions activities of the ministry. Those members of the church (or churches) sponsoring the mission work who have expressed interest in the leisure setting should be encouraged to be open to God’s leadership regarding their participation in the leisure mission ministries. Christians who already have a relationship to the ministry’s sponsor or who live close to the missions setting should have the first opportunity for involvement in the project, since it will be their community and neighbors who will be a primary focus of ministry outreach.

Other Christian individuals and groups with specific gifts that can contribute to the objectives of the resort/leisure ministry may also respond to the opportunities for volunteer missions service. Those enlisted from outside the sponsoring church or association might include volunteers assigned through the North American Mission Board (NAMB):

- Adult volunteers serving in either Mission Service Corps (MSC) (one year or longer) or Missions on Short Term (MOST) (one week to one year)
- Recent college graduates serving in the two-year US/C-2 program
- College students serving as summer or semester missionaries, Innovators
- Older high school students in mission youth groups or serving individually as Sojourners

All missions volunteers need to commit themselves to the stated purpose and objectives of the leisure missions endeavor. This is true whether they are an individual or part of a large group; whether local or coming from a great distance; and whether recruited through state conventions, Baptist Student Unions, NAMB, and Woman's Missionary Union, or discovered through a direct partnership linkage. Further, it is important that all volunteers identify themselves as a part of the local missions project and its sponsors. This is particularly true of those coming as a group from outside the local area.

#### ***Train Volunteers for Ministry***

Orient all individuals and groups participating in the ministry to both the mission project and the leisure setting. Specific training should be provided for any ministry activity expected of a volunteer working in the resort/leisure ministry. All ministry personnel should be encouraged and equipped to best use their gifts and abilities in contributing to the objectives and goals of the missions enterprise.

#### ***Secure Resources Needed for Ministry Activities***

Insure that the materials, equipment, and supplies required for all ministry activities will be on hand or readily available when they are needed. If resources need to be ordered, make sure that the orders are placed well enough in advance to receive these materials in time for orientation and training. Ministry personnel should be familiar with the actual materials they will be using in the various ministry activities. In addition, having items on hand before they are actually needed can help reduce the amount of stress on those responsible for the ministry. And it is usually easier to arrange for storage ahead of time than to search and scavenge for essential resources at the last minute.

#### ***Provide for Logistical Support***

Arrangements should be made for the necessary support of ministry personnel and activities. This includes the feeding and housing of volunteers, transportation, scheduling, communication, publicity, and such other things that are essential to the smooth running of the project.

### **Carry Out Ministry Activities and Plans**

#### ***Maintain an Attitude of Dependence on God***

Individually, and as a team, those serving in the leisure missions project must remember that ministry activities are to be conducted under God's leadership and in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is often easy to become caught up in the hurry and pressures of carrying out the various aspects of the ministry and lose sight of the One for Whom, and through Whom, all the effort is actually being done.

### ***Continue Being Sensitive to People***

Ministry is concern for people in the love of Christ. The activities are always secondary to the people they are designed to serve. Take care lest the activities or performances become ends in themselves. The purpose of the ministry is not to carry on a certain amount of activity, but to impact people with genuine love based on the gospel of Jesus Christ.

### ***Conduct Quality Programming***

Most people in leisure settings are from those segments of society that usually expect and experience quality in their leisure pursuits. Therefore, it will be necessary to provide a similar level of quality and expertise in any Christian ministry designed for them. In addition, there may be situations where people will not respond to a specific service or ministry unless they can pay something for it because they question whether anything of quality could be free.

### ***Be Open and Flexible***

People on leisure do not fit into molds. The most expected feature of a leisure setting is the unexpected. The secular population is not likely to approach play with Christian values and morals in mind. Without compromising your own standards, maintain a nonjudgmental attitude. Be ready to adapt to new circumstances that may arise.

### ***Provide Supportive Supervision for Ministry Personnel***

Supervision is the process of facilitating success in both task performance and personal growth through the carrying out of ministry activities. All personnel, whether paid or volunteer, should have supportive supervision designed to help them accomplish their ministry objectives and to grow and mature in their personal pilgrimage. Conferences and workshops are provided by NAMB to help equip mission leaders in the principles of supervision and the effective and creative utilization of volunteers.

## **Provide Follow Up for Ministry Activities**

### ***Follow Up on People Ministered To***

Disciple those who become Christians through the outreach of the leisure ministry for as long as they are in the leisure setting. Help them become involved in an active and loving congregation or fellowship if they will be in the local area for awhile. Encourage them to seek out the fellowship of other Christian believers if they move to another area. Develop systems of referral for those who are open to Christian ministry but are leaving the leisure setting. This is especially important for those people who may not have made a commitment to Christ, but who have an interest and openness to the gospel. Continue to demonstrate genuine concern for those people who do not seem to respond to ministry activities with a commitment to Christ.

### ***Develop a System of Communication***

Regular communication with those who participate in the resort/leisure ministry activities will enhance the ongoing impact of the missions endeavor. People who have been the recipients of the ministry's outreach will feel that the care and love shown to them was real and of a lasting nature. Volunteers who are serving on the leisure missions team will be encouraged to continue their involvement, and others who have contributed to the work will be reminded of the value of their investment in the ministry.

### ***Build a System of Evaluation***

All ministry activities, procedures, and personnel should be evaluated regularly. Conduct ongoing evaluations during the course of the missions endeavor. Do an in-depth evaluation at the conclusion of each project or season. In all of this, look to see how God is working in and through the various facets of the ministry. Be flexible and adjust your priorities to make

the most of those situations where progress is being made. You may want to incorporate additional activities and reduce or remove some others. Continue to remind yourself of all the dreams and visions for the ministry that came out of the envisioning process.

### ***Report on Mission Work***

Provide a faithful accounting of the use of ministry resources and report on ministry activities to all who have contributed to the ministry. Make an annual report and evaluation for all sponsors and missions agencies involved in the project. Be sure to keep the Association of Resort and Leisure Ministers (ARLM) informed about your work. Doing so makes it possible for ARLM to better assist you with various aspects of your ministry, as well as tell others of your successes. The lessons that you learn during the course of ministry in your particular leisure setting can help others who are seeking to reach out to similar people and places.

### **Incorporate Resort/Leisure Missions Into Long-Range Mission Strategy**

Working through the church or associational missions development council, establish a long-range plan for developing resort/leisure missions in your setting as a part of the overall missions strategy of your church or association. Include a two-year, five-year, and ten-year focus in your planning. Consider mission statements, action plans, personnel needs, calendar deadlines, finances, and so forth.

*Adapted from the resort missions strategy developed by Chuck Clayton and edited and expanded by Sam Schlegel. The original title of this article was "Resort/Leisure Missions Strategy." Used by permission NAMB.*

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### **Our Church Can Do That!**

*Developing resort & leisure ministry through your church*

By Billy Hutchinson

### **Every Church Has the Opportunity**

Every family does it. Not matter how rich or poor, how small or large, people find time to play. There is no better place for a church to reach people than when they are at play. People at play are almost always open to new ideas. We often fuss about our members who go on vacation or who take personal time to play. Instead of fussing, we should get them excited about sharing Christ wherever they go!

The love of Christ may be shared by youth or adults at festivals, golf courses, beaches, or any other vacation area. The people of Davis, N.C., developed a ministry directed to the

thousands of fishermen who come to the community each year. The youth at Spring Garden Baptist Church in New Bern, N.C., share Christ at a festival with families as they walk by. The people of Shoreline Baptist share Christ with families on vacation at the Brunswick County beaches. Christians who travel away from home carry with them opportunities to share their faith while they are at play. Every town and community has leisure events and locales such as street fairs, little league games, social events, golf tournaments, fishing tournaments, campgrounds, beaches, and mountains. There are people who will be in need of a special touch from the Savior at these events. Your willingness to reach out to them at such events may be the only opportunity they have to meet Christ.

### **Understanding the Resort and Leisure Setting**

People in resort settings are at rest and play. They have saved their money for the trip or event and they plan to enjoy it. We often forget that people in resort and vacation settings often have every minute planned out so that they get the most out of their time away from the regular schedules of life. However, they are always looking for new and interesting opportunities for fun. What an opportunity for us to bring the exciting message of Christ to them. You would not minister to a camper in the same way that you would a golfer. Hunters have down time at night. Beach-goers want peace and quiet when the sun is shining, and excitement and activity at night. Snow skiers are focused on hitting the slopes, but they have a lot of down time as they wait to board lifts. Festival and fair goers enjoy roaming around, and they love to take free stuff away with them. As you begin your resort ministry, consider the type of people you will be sharing the gospel with. Focus your energies on finding methods that best communicate God's message to them.

Never forget the dynamics of a resort setting. You have people who live in the setting. They have special needs that should not be overlooked by all the visitors. This is their community, so don't forget them. Activities geared toward residents will make them supportive of your ministry and it will also involve them in your work with tourists. Seasonal workers come and go, depending on the need and employment trends of the resort setting. These people make their living in the setting, and many work on Sundays and other times when church relationships are built. These workers need pastoral care and Christian relationships just like regular church members. Expand your church to meet their needs. It will be a blessing to them, your church, and to you.

### **What Can My Church Do To Reach People at Leisure?**

Every church should be aware of the activities occurring in their area. Anywhere there are beaches, mountains, resort complexes, golf courses, parades, festivals, campgrounds, or parks there are opportunities for ministry. The goal is to reach people "where they are, when they are there." You should reach out to not only the people on vacation, but also to the employees of the resort and local area residents.

- In beach, mountain, or campground areas, you might offer a first aid booth. Stock it with sunscreen, bandages, first aid ointment, and drinking water. When someone approaches you for help, offer gospel tracts, Bibles, or other information about the ministries of your church and area.
- At a parade, your church could sponsor a float that carries an encouraging message to the community.
- At most parades, vendors have booths with food and drink for sale. If your church sells refreshments at a parade, serve drinks in cups imprinted with a biblical message. Serve food in imprinted bags that spread the message of Christ.

- Your church could offer a first aid booth in conjunction with a rescue unit.
- If the festival in your area rents booths, secure one for your church. These offer wonderful opportunities for children's ministry. You could have a puppet show, a sing-along, or any number of other ideas that would provide opportunities to share Christ with families.
- More people are engaged in sports activities, such as golf, hunting, tennis, bowling, and horseback riding than ever before. Take advantage of these activities! There are many national ministry groups with planned programs to share Christ with those who are involved with these activities, such as: Christian Golfers Ministry, Legacy Outdoor Ministries, and Equestrian Ministries International. Each of these groups offers directed tools to share Christ while participating in the activities.
- Anywhere you have a gathering of people, you have an opportunity to witness and minister. Every leisure setting lends itself to a simple worship setting, whether it is on the beach, snow skiing on the slopes, campground services, golf course vespers, and vespers for festival and fair workers or chaplains for events. Don't try to take a formal worship experience to the beach. Make the service casual. Plan the service with consideration to your setting, and dress like those you will be ministering to.

### **What Scriptural Basis Is There for Resort and Leisure Ministry?**

Jesus performed His first miracle at a social function: the wedding at Cana (see John 2:1-11). Jesus spent much of His time ministering to the crowds everywhere He went, from the cities to the seaside wherever people gathered, not just in the church house, but on the streets and the byways where people lived! Jesus looked at the crowd and saw individuals. In Luke 19:1-10, Jesus pulled Zacchaeus out of the crowd to minister to him. Jesus' disciples were ordinary people working and playing in the areas He traveled. Acts 1:8 (NIV) says, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." This verse teaches us that we should take the message of Christ to people everywhere even on vacation and at play and not sit and wait for people to come to us.

### **What Benefit Will Resort and Leisure Ministry Bring to Our Congregation?**

We never know what God has in store for us. Renewed, purpose-driven individuals have risen up to do things they never volunteered to do before, after helping with a resort ministry. Churches, Sunday School classes, youth groups, and adult groups get excited and begin looking for additional ways to reach people after they have a positive experience at a campground, fair festival, or beach worship. New churches have been started in places where special ministries were needed, from resort beach worship to fellowship groups at a golf course. How can you measure the benefits of doing what God called you, as a Christian, to do? He has called you to reach people, wherever they are, when they are there.

### **Developing a Ministry Plan**

- Determine priorities for the ministry
  - What do you hope to accomplish?
  - Who do you want to reach?
- Calculate resources needed to conduct the ministry
  - What resources are needed (i.e. money, manpower, tools, materials, etc.)?

- Plan the actual ministry design
  - In order to design the ministry, you must know who you are trying to reach and what you hope to accomplish.
- Prepare for ministry activities
  - Enlist personnel and volunteers. Involve people who believe in resort ministry. They will be supportive.
  - Train personnel and volunteers. Most people are nervous about new experiences. Some simple training and prayer time with your volunteers will make them more comfortable and effective in ministering. If you teach them what to expect and how to react, they will teach others.
  - Secure resources and provide for the logistics needed for the ministry activity. A good leader will never allow people to go into the field without what is needed to accomplish the goal. Be sure that all your materials are in place and that people are in place, and that all the bases are covered with where you are going. Be sure to contact those who control the area you hope to minister at (i.e. campground owners, golf pros, etc.), and that they are well informed and supportive of the effort. These steps must be taken ahead of time. However, even with careful planning, things may not go as you planned. Remember, blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape. Be prepared for change! It will happen!

### **Carry Out the Ministry Activity Plan**

- Pray with your team of volunteers.
  - Maintain an attitude of dependence on God. He will lead you and honor your efforts to reach others with His love.
- Be sensitive to people.
  - Always be aware of people's needs. As they relax, you may discover special ministry needs and opportunities.
- Be sensitive to your helpers and volunteers.
  - Your helpers may find themselves in situations where they need your help. Be aware of what they are doing, be sure that you are at the ministry locations before they need you, and remember blessed are the flexible.

### **How Can My Church Implement A Resort and Leisure Ministry?**

- Find out who is interested in doing what.
  - If your church has a missions committee or missions development team, they can head the search for mission or ministry evangelism opportunities. Your church could also conduct a commitment survey to determine where the interests of the members are. At this event, you could have people share what they enjoy doing, as well as tell about events that take place (or are going to take place) in your community. Write these activities down. Find people who are interested in each area and put them to work. Have people minister at the activities they most enjoy (i.e. campers at campgrounds, golfers on golf courses, boaters on the water way, and hunters with hunters, etc.). Recruit volunteers who are good with people. Anyone who is not

enthusiastic about the place or activity of service could have a negative effect on the mission or ministry.

- Have each group develop a mission statement.
  - Who do you wish to reach and what do you hope to accomplish? A mission statement will give the ministry team focus in planning and implementing the ministry.
- Have the team brainstorm about ways to reach people.
  - This will build spirit and excitement for the work to come.
- Inform your church leaders and congregation about what you are planning.
  - Promote the event and enlist prayer support from your fellowship.
- Obtain permission, if permission is needed.
  - While you can witness anywhere, some places, both private and public, have rules about what can be done or distributed on the property. Find out who makes decisions for the ministry locations and deal with that person. Speaking to this person before you proceed with your ministry will save you a lot time and effort. Be sure that your group obeys the rules at the ministry location.
- Plant the seed.
  - Remember, people in resort and leisure settings are there to relax. Therefore, they need to be approached in a relaxed manner. Simple things work best. Give them things they can take away and think about. If you plant the seed, God will make it grow!

### **When to Begin**

If you have at least one person willing to minister in a setting they love, you are ready to begin. Christ didn't wait until the crowd was large or until His disciples felt the time was right. He ministered when and where the people were, and so should our churches!

*This article was originally entitled "Developing Resort and Leisure Ministry through Your Church," written by Billy Hutchinson, pastor and resort missionary in VA. Billy is the Executive Director of Christian Golfers Ministry. Used by permission NAMB.*

**Our Association Can Do That!**  
*Developing resort & leisure ministry through your association*  
By Sam and Betty Anne Schlegal

*The following pages are adapted from the proposal presented to the St. Johns River Baptist Association executive committee for the first resort and leisure missions program to be conducted in St. Augustine, Fla. This association is made up of a wide variety of churches, from large, relatively cosmopolitan, congregations on the coast to small, rural, churches inland. This proposal sought to explain why and how the ministry would be done in as clear and simple a way as possible. It was readily received and approved, and an updated version is included in this manual as an example of how a resort and leisure ministry might get underway.—Editors*

## **FIRST COAST RESORT MINISTRY**

St. Johns River Baptist Association Resort and Leisure Ministries

### **DEFINITIONS**

*First Coast Resort Ministry* is the name under which the resort and leisure ministry activities of the St. Johns River Baptist Association are conducted and marketed in the community-at-large. This name was selected to establish an identity as a local ministry focusing on the resort and tourism areas in and near St. Augustine. As such, it has helped to open doors and reduce suspicion when offering our resort and leisure ministry programs and activities to people in commercial and government settings.

First Coast Resort Ministry (FCRM) is primarily concerned with sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with all people in secular resort settings and locations, rather than the promotion of those doctrines and beliefs that are uniquely Baptist. Therefore, a specific denominational identity does not appear in the name so that opportunities for ministry will not be prematurely or unnecessarily closed. However, sponsorship of FCRM is clearly expressed in all contacts and promotional materials as a cooperative effort of all of the Southern Baptist churches in St. Johns, Putnam, and Flagler counties who are members of the St. Johns River Baptist Association.

*Resort and leisure ministries* communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ through mission ministry approaches to people involved in resort settings or leisure lifestyles. The purpose of these ministries is to express the love of God and the care of His churches to people who visit the resort settings and to those people, both seasonal and permanent residents, who work in the resort and leisure industries, activities, and special events of such areas

### **PURPOSES**

- To involve churches and individuals in the St. Johns River Baptist Association and other mission volunteers in Christian outreach and ministry in the tourism and leisure areas of the association, particularly in St. Augustine and the beaches where more people are engaged in leisure pursuits.
- To provide opportunities for worship, Bible study, and Christian counseling among tourists, campers, owners and employees of resort and leisure businesses, boaters, people at special events, and those in other resort or leisure settings.
- To provide day camping, recreation, creative arts, and special programs and performances for people in resort and leisure areas in an effort to minister to their needs and to share the gospel in appropriate and meaningful ways.

- To coordinate the efforts of other Southern Baptists and Christians who desire to be involved in cooperative resort and leisure ministry in this area.

#### **PROPOSED POSITION DESCRIPTION**

##### ***Director, First Coast Resort Ministry***

(Volunteer position)

1. Coordinates the planning and programming for the associational resort and leisure missions program.
2. Is accountable for the expenditures that are related to the program budget.
3. Trains and supervises all volunteers and staff, including student summer missionaries and others assigned to the program by the Florida Baptist Convention, the North American Mission Board, and other approved sources of personnel.
4. Encourages the churches in the association to actively support the program and to involve their members in its activities.
5. Coordinates the training and activities of individuals or groups who have been invited or approved to assist with the ministry.
6. Report to the Associational Missions Development Council and the director of missions on a regular basis.

#### **PROPOSED POSITION DESCRIPTION**

##### ***Ministry Associates, First Coast Resort Ministry***

(Student summer missionaries)

1. Is actively involved in the resort and leisure ministries program of the St. Johns River Baptist Association for the nine-week assignment period, under the supervision of the director of First Coast Resort Ministry.
2. Shares his or her Christian faith with people in resort and leisure settings, as well as with the church volunteers who work with them.
3. Serves in an informal chaplaincy role with owners and employees of resort and leisure businesses and events.
4. Conducts or assists with such programs as day camping, recreational evangelism, worship, Bible study, as approved by their supervisor. Supervises the work of volunteers serving with them on projects.
5. Helps recruit volunteers from among the churches and channels them into programs and activities in which they can be trained for service.
6. Serves as part-time volunteers in the Anastasia State Recreation Area, in selected community events, and in other settings, in an effort to minister to others and to help open avenues for future ministry endeavors.
7. Helps coordinate special performances and programs in resort and leisure ministry settings and special events.
8. Helps identify Christians in resort and leisure settings and encourages them to be supportive of each other and their personal ministries in their marketplaces.
9. Is available to speak to church youth and missions groups about their mission work and their personal call into missions.
10. Makes regular, necessary reports to their supervisor, the Florida Baptist Convention, the North American Mission Board, and their state student ministries programs.
11. Accepts responsibility for other related tasks as assigned by their supervisor.

*Adapted from material prepared by Sam & Betty Anne Schlegel. The original title of this article was "Sample Ministry Proposal: Associational Resort Program." Used by permission NAMB.*

**Chaplain to the Community**  
*Opening doors of ministry through chaplaincy*  
By Eric Spivey

Chaplaincy in resort and other leisure settings represents a steadily growing opportunity for ministry to people who work and play in such areas all around the country. Resort chaplaincy plays an important role in ministry programs in Gatlinburg, Tenn.; Branson, Mo.; North Lake Tahoe, Calif.; and Myrtle Beach, S.C. Through this introduction of resort chaplaincy, we will discuss the responsibilities of resort chaplains and how to establish a resort chaplaincy program.

Resort chaplaincy can be defined as a non-denominational counseling and program service to people in resort business settings. This general definition allows many different types of resort chaplaincy programs to emerge. Each ministry must interpret the definition to meet its own particular needs, goals, and resort. Presently, several types of resort chaplaincy programs exist.

### **TYPES OF CHAPLAINS**

These types include:

1. Full-time chaplain within resort.

This program works best within a large resort, attraction, or theme park. It includes a formal agreement between the resort and the ministry. Through this agreement the company provides the chaplain total access to its resort and employees. The chaplaincy program between Dollywood and Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries represents an example of this type of program.

2. Full-time chaplain outside resort.

This program works best in a resort community with a strip or main street. In this program the chaplain provides ministry services to many different resort businesses in one particular area. Mountain Country Ministries in Branson, Mo., represents an example of this type of program as it provides chaplain service to the theaters, restaurants, and motels in the Branson area.

3. Bi-vocational chaplain.

This program works best in small resorts and attractions, but can be used in any situation. With this program the chaplain works as an employee of the resort while still providing chaplain services. The chaplain benefits from this arrangement by validating his or her presence among the employees. Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries provides a bivocational chaplain into The Track, a go-cart amusement part, every summer.

4. Layperson chaplain.

This program works well in areas with many large resorts. It also makes a good outreach ministry for a resort church. In this program the layperson provides the program services to the resort and as much relational ministry as possible. In Tahoe City, Calif., First Baptist Church selects lay people to be ski chaplains during the ski season. Through the layperson chaplains, the church ministers to the many ski resorts that surround them.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAPLAIN

Although each of these types of resort chaplaincy programs differ in set up, every resort chaplain carries similar ministry responsibilities. A resort chaplain is defined as a minister who is equipped by experience, attitude, and training to offer pastoral ministry programs in resort settings for people of all religious faith as well as those who claim no church affiliation. The specific responsibilities of a resort chaplain can include:

### 1. Be the chaplain.

A resort chaplain must have the freedom within the resort to minister. As a ministry sets up a chaplaincy program with a resort it needs to establish the person as the chaplain. This means being able to go where the employees are, such as break areas or behind the scenes.

### 2. Serve within the framework of the resort.

The chaplain must never interfere with the work of the employees and must always follow company policy. This establishes trust between the resort and the chaplain. Mike Elrod, General Manager at The Track in Pigeon Forge says, "The chaplain must remain low key . . . always asking before doing something." The chaplain does this by establishing a liaison within the resort to help interpret company policy.

### 3. Visitation.

The chaplain establishes ministry relationships within the resort through visitation. The chaplain should visit all areas of the resort to extend the ministry presence to all employees.

### 4. Witnessing.

The chaplain's essential responsibility must be to share the love of Jesus Christ to the individuals at the resort. The chaplain does this through the ministry relationships as well as ministry programs.

### 5. Crisis ministry.

The chaplain provides crisis ministry at the resort. The chaplain must respond with a presence of ministry whenever a death, accident, or other situation occurs at the resort.

### 6. Personal counseling.

The chaplain develops a system of personal counseling to employees and guests. Counseling takes on many roles within the resort from formal counseling sessions to informal opportunities to give a listening ear. The chaplain must also recognize where his or her experience ends and be willing to refer people to professional counselors.

### 7. Pastoral responsibilities.

The resort chaplain ministers to many people who slip between the cracks of the local church. People ask resort chaplains to perform weddings and funerals because they are the only minister the person knows. Full time resort chaplains need to be ordained. Being able to perform weddings and funeral increases the chaplain's validity within the resort.

### 8. Develop and maintain programs of ministry.

The chaplain establishes and maintains ministry programs within the resort such as worship services, Bible studies, and recreational activities. These programs give resort employees and guests the opportunity to experience God while working and

playing at the resort. The ministry programs also help to establish the chaplain at the resort.

#### 9. Monthly report.

The resort chaplain makes a monthly report to the resort and to the ministry to show the progress of the chaplaincy program. This record of the number of programs, ministry opportunities and visits helps indicate the growth of ministry over the years and helps in the evaluation of the chaplaincy ministry.

### **BEGINNING A RESORT CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM**

With this understanding of the responsibilities of a resort chaplain, let us now look at a systematic approach at beginning a resort chaplaincy program.

#### ***Secure Information***

A resort ministry must first secure adequate information about the resort to begin establishing a chaplaincy program. Do everything possible to get to know the resort. Go there as a visitor, do research on the size of the attraction, the number of employees and where they come from. Find out who owns the park and learn the names of top management. It is vital to understand the resort in order to determine the type of resort chaplaincy program needed.

#### ***Discover an Advocate***

The next step requires the ministry to discover and secure an advocate within the resort. An advocate is someone who will be on the side of the chaplaincy program within the resort. This is not absolutely necessary to establish a chaplaincy ministry, but it helps tremendously. An advocate can be found in or through a local church. The advocate helps secure information about the resort, such as the names of top management, company policy, and company terminology. The advocate also works as a supporter of the chaplaincy ministry and programs within the resort. When beginning worship services at a resort it is reassuring to know that there will be at least one person in attendance.

#### ***Plan of Action***

After gaining as much information and support as possible the ministry must decide on its plan of action. There must be a decision about what type of chaplain will be needed. Will the chaplain work best full-time or will the resort be expected to provide a job? Will lay people be adequate for this ministry? There must also be a decision about what type of person will be needed for the chaplain position. Does the chaplain need to be male, female, or does it matter? What special qualifications will the chaplain need to have? Will there be a need for the chaplain to be endorsed by the North American Mission Board or other agency? How long will the chaplain commit to the chaplaincy program? The ministry must also decide on the types of programs it wants to offer. Is it feasible to have an employee worship service? Now is also the time to decide possible times for the programs and where they could be located. Finally, there must be a decision on the transition to the chaplaincy program. Who can fill in until a permanent chaplain is found? Where can a chaplain be found?

#### ***Meet with Resort Management***

The ministry must decide on a clear and complete plan of action for the resort chaplaincy program it wants to establish. With this plan of action, the ministry now must convince the resort management to allow the resort chaplaincy program. Here are some tips in doing this:

1. Go to the top first.

It may take time to get to the top management, but keep trying. Without top management's commitment to the chaplaincy program, it will not work.

2. Have clear ideas about the program.

When approaching management, explain the plan of action clearly. Be very organized and know what you are talking about.

3. Develop a written proposal for the chaplaincy program.

Present a written proposal of the chaplaincy program to the resort management as part of the presentation. This proposal should include:

(1) Objective—to establish a chaplaincy program.

(2) Definitions—define local ministry, its sponsors, and its purpose. Define resort chaplain.

(3) Relationships—state the type of relationship with the resort that is being proposed. State what would be required of the resort and the ministry.

(4) Qualifications—state whether the chaplain will be ordained or not. State what type of education will be required.

(5) Responsibilities—state the expected responsibilities of the chaplain (visitation, worship service, Bible study).

4. Use company terminology.

This needs to be included in the written proposal as well at the presentation.

5. Be professional.

These are business people. Come prepared or nothing will be accomplished.

6. Timing is important.

Because resorts are seasonal, approach management at a less busy and stressful time of the year. This allows the resort to spend more time and energy on the chaplaincy program.

7. Be flexible.

Listen to what the resort wants from the chaplaincy program. Work to mold the chaplaincy program around the resorts needs, wants, and ideas. Rejoice with any advancement into the resort.

8. Remember, it works!

Be confident in meeting with management that resort chaplaincy is a quality product. The needs of the resort are there, so point them out, exercise boldness. Be willing to explain how the resort can benefit from the chaplaincy program (better image, employees, and product). Use national chaplaincy references from successful ministries, companies with resort chaplains, and the North American Mission Board's chaplaincy evangelism team. There is everything to gain and nothing to lose.

### **Important Things to Keep in Mind about Chaplaincy**

With all of this done, and a bit of divine grace, a new resort chaplaincy program will be off the ground. As the ministry begins, the chaplain needs to keep a few things in mind. The chaplain must first get exposure for himself or herself, for the chaplain position, and for the ministry programs offered. When working with one resort this can be done through the

company newsletter, announcements on bulletin boards, and orientations. When working outside of a resort, work to get exposure in the local media, distribute cards and brochures to area businesses, and speak at orientations or employee gatherings during the year.

Another thing a new chaplain will want to do is get to know the resort and local area as soon as possible. Learn the company terminology. Know where everything is located. Become an expert about the resort and the company. This can be done by going through a company orientation, from the advocate within the resort, and from employees.

Finally, the new chaplain must work at learning names, people, and situations as soon as possible. As the new chaplain does this, he or she will earn the trust of the employees and the resort. Once this trust has been established true ministry will begin.

*Adapted from material by Eric Spivey in the 1993 National Resort Ministries Conference notebook. This article was originally entitled "Resort Chaplaincy: An Introduction." Used by permission NAMB.*

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**Now That's Creative!**  
*Creative Ministries Overview*  
By David Buckner

**Purpose:** To get people's attention in a non-threatening way in order to tear down walls and meet either realized and/or unrealized needs.

**Plan:** To place Christian volunteers in strategic locations where high foot traffic is expected, while doing creative ministries in order to gather a crowd and then fulfill the purpose.

**Places:** Beaches, campgrounds, festival areas, fairs, malls, nursing homes, children's homes, world/national events (Olympics, Super Bowl, NASCAR, etc.), race tracks, ski resorts, and so on. Basically, if there are people that you know are going to be in a spot and you can gain permission to do some type of performance ministry . . . DO IT.

**Specific Ideas:**

- Balloons
- Face painting
- Juggling
- Mime
- Drama
- Music
- Lip sync

- Interpretations
- Dance
- Puppets
- Performance

There is no such thing as an exhausted list of creative ministry ideas. Anything that gathers attention that can be used for ministry would somehow fall under the title of creative ministry. From feeding bread to seagulls, to handing out hot chocolate, to flying kites, to skillfully working a yo-yo . . . it all can work. If you have other creative ministry tools and abilities, by all means, feel free to use them for His work.

For more info on the specifics of implementing the above creative ministry ideas, visit [http://www.namb.net/site/c.9qKILUOzEpH/b.241238/k.AC56/Resort\\_\\_Leisure/apps/nl/newletter2.asp](http://www.namb.net/site/c.9qKILUOzEpH/b.241238/k.AC56/Resort__Leisure/apps/nl/newletter2.asp).

\*\*If you have any questions about the above list (that you WILL be adding to), please contact ARLM at [www.arlm.org](http://www.arlm.org) and someone will put you in touch with a resort ministry leader who has experience in that particular area.

*This article was written by David Buckner, currently serving in ministry in Louisville, KY. Used by permission NAMB.*

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**Check This Out!**  
*Attention getting ideas for resort & leisure settings*  
By David Buckner

This is just a start on a list of things that can get positive attention from people. Add to it. Experiment with it. Delete things from it. Whatever you do, remember to contact ARLM and let us know any good ideas that work well so we can pass those ideas along.

- Angel sticks
- Backpack coffee/hot cocoa dispenser
- Balloon art
- Big clock(s) (displaying world times)
- Big screen TV's
- Big thermometer
- Bonfires
- Bubbles
- Caricatures
- Clowning
- Colored sand craft
- Contests

- Coupons to local establishments
- Crazy hats
- Dance
- Drama
- Face painting
- Fake lanyard ID photo/accreditation
- Food art
- Food coloring in the snow
- Free classes for various home improvement skills
- Free postcards home
- Group activities (chicken dance, etc.)
- Helium blimp
- Hula-hoops
- Interactive games (inflatable)
- Interp/signing
- Juggling
- Karaoke
- Lip Sync
- Live (trained) animals
- Live percussion
- Maps of the world
- Mascot-type costumes
- Medal count board
- Mime
- Mural giveaway done by a professional
- Music performance
- Nerf toys (boomerang, basketball, darts, etc.)
- Origami
- P.E.A.R.L. pins
- Pin trading
- Pipe cleaner art
- Polaroid stickers
- Public mural
- Radio station remote
- Sidewalk chalk
- Silver man
- Slingshot (water balloon)
- Sports drills
- Stilts
- Stunt kites
- Tattoo stickers
- Unicycle
- Videos
- Wall map they can stick a pin in
- Wooden cutouts for pictures
- Yoyo tricks (individual or team)

\*\*If you have any questions about the above list (that you WILL be adding to), please contact ARLM at [www.arlm.org](http://www.arlm.org) and someone will put you in touch with a resort ministry leader who has experience in that particular area.

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**Evangelism 101**  
*The basics of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ*  
By W.C. Garland

Whatever or wherever your particular assignment, we encourage you to continually share your faith.

**Basic Witnessing**

**Why?** The Bible says so. Do not receive the grace of God and become a spiritual dead end street. Pass it on! (See 2 Cor. 6:1.)

**What?** Witnessing can be defined simply as one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread. Share Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leave the results to God.

**How?**

- Personal Testimony. “Let the redeemed of the Lord say so” (Ps. 107:2, KJV).
  - Keep it *fresh* through prayer, Bible study, meditation, and worship.
  - Keep it to the *point*:
  - Do not dwell on your sin—talk about Jesus.
  - Do not talk about salvation—talk about Jesus.
  - Do not talk about the church—talk about Jesus.
  - Let it be *natural*, not forced or fake.
  - Let it be *positive* and happy!
- Prepared Presentation —
  - A-B-C gospel presentation
  - Roman Road
  - *How to Have a Full and Meaningful Life*
  - Other specialty tract, gospel portion, or marked New Testament

Responses will vary. There may be:

- Indifference—remember, they are not rejecting you.
- Negative—let them share a previous bad experience. It can be a spiritual catharsis for them that will open their hearts to God.
- Positive—Praise the Lord! Follow through, lead to a commitment, and give assurance.

**When? Where?**

Everyday, everywhere, as you go, as a minister, as you can. "Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season" (2 Tim. 4:2, NIV).

## Preparing a Personal Testimony

- An effective personal testimony should be:
  - Carefully, prayerfully planned
  - Clear and to the point
  - Concise, but comprehensive (90-120 seconds)
  - In everyday, non-churchy language
  - Up to date, not ancient history
  - Positive, magnifying God's saving grace
- An effective personal testimony should avoid:
  - Rambling, disconnected, negative thoughts
  - Over emphasis on past sins and cheap gutter talk
  - Technical, churchy terms
- An effective personal testimony may be developed from the following facts:
  - What my life was like before I received Christ.
  - How I realized I needed to receive Christ.
  - How I received Christ and became a Christian.
  - How Christ has helped me, and is helping me day by day.

## Worksheet: My Personal Testimony

"I want to share with you the most important thing that has happened to me."

- What my life was like before I received Christ:
- How I realized I needed to receive Christ:
- How I received Christ and became a Christian:
- How Christ has helped me and is helping me day by day:

## Simplified Gospel Presentation

**A – Admit** - "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23, NIV).

**B – Believe** - "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31, NIV).

**C – Confess** - "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Rom. 10:9, NIV).

## The Roman Road

Romans 5:8—God loves you

Romans 3:23—All have sinned

Romans 6:23—The consequences of sin

Romans 10:9-10—How to be saved

Romans 10:13—Call upon Jesus

Romans 8:16-17—Assurance of salvation

Romans 8:35—Secure in Christ

### **Things to Remember as You Go Into the World With the Gospel**

- You will never meet a person:
  - Whom God does not love.
  - Who does not need Jesus as Savior and Lord.
  - Whose life would not be better under Jesus' control.
- A successful witnessing encounter is one where you:
  - Make or cultivate a friend for Christ.
  - Give a verbal witness for Christ.
  - Present the good news of Jesus.
  - Invite a prospect to receive Christ.
  - End your encounter in such a manner so as to guarantee future ones.
- Let love prevail—in every situation. Love *will* find a way.

*Adapted from material by W.C. Garland in the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention's summer missionary orientation manual. This article was originally entitled "Evangelism 101: Basic Witnessing for Summer Missionaries." Used by permission NAMB.*

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### **These Are Some Great Ideas!**

*Download the free training resources available on the NAMB website  
By Various Authors*

The following is a list of the articles available for free download on the North American Mission Board website to assist you as you begin and implement effective evangelistic ministries in resort and leisure settings:

If you are viewing this article online, you may be able to click on each link and go directly to the article. Otherwise, visit [http://www.namb.net/site/c.9qKILUOzEpH/b.241238/k.AC56/Resort\\_\\_Leisure/apps/nl/new\\_sletter2.asp](http://www.namb.net/site/c.9qKILUOzEpH/b.241238/k.AC56/Resort__Leisure/apps/nl/new_sletter2.asp) and click on the link to each article.

[A History of Resort and Leisure Ministry](#)

[Beginning A Ski Ministry](#)

[Building A Budget and Securing Funds](#)

[Campground Canvassing](#)

[Campground Ministry](#)

[Chaplaincy/Worship Leader For Winter Residents](#)

[Christian Wilderness Ministry](#)

[Communicating the Gospel in a Secular Setting](#)

[Daily Management of A Resort and Leisure Ministry](#)

[Day Camps/Kid's Clubs](#)

[Developing A Resort and Leisure Ministries Committee](#)

[Developing A Resort Missions Strategy](#)

[Developing Resort and Leisure Ministry Through Your Church](#)

[Family Evening Programs](#)

[Hotel/Motel Ministry](#)

[Interfaith Witness In Resort and Leisure Settings](#)

[Ministries with Waterfolk](#)

[Ministry at Historic Sites and Settings](#)

[Ministry with Lifeguards](#)

[Ministry With Seasonal Employees](#)

[Ministry With Year-Round Residents](#)

[Ocean Beach Ministry](#)

[People on the Fringes](#)

[Preparing Budgets For Resort Ministries](#)

[Resort Chaplaincy: An Introduction](#)

[Resort/Leisure Missions Stimulate Church Growth](#)

[Resort/Leisure Missions Strategy](#)

[Resort/Leisure Survey Guide:](#)

[Sample Ministry Proposal: Associational Resort Program](#)

[Sample Position Description: Destination Resort Chaplain](#)

[Sample Position Description: Pastor/Resort Missions Director](#)

[Sample Position Description: Theme Park Chaplain](#)

[Securing Secular Settings For Ministry](#)

[Special Event Survey Guide](#)

[Special Events Ministry](#)

[Spring Break Ministry](#)

[Starting A Ministry For Special Events](#)

[Starting New Resort Churches](#)

[Strategy Outline for Ministry at Ocean Beaches](#)

[Theme Park Ministry](#)

[Understanding Special Events](#)

[Using Booths In Ministry](#)

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**Who knew there were others doing this kind of ministry?**

*The Association of Resort & Leisure Ministers*

*"For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building" (1 Cor. 3:9, NIV).*

The history of resort and leisure missions is a history marked with strong individuals who were not afraid to follow God's call into the secular world of play. Wonderfully creative ministries have developed across our land because of the willingness of these people to invest themselves for Christ's sake in resort and leisure settings. In the Association of Resort and Leisure Ministers (ARLM), those of us involved in such creative work have come together to enhance our vision for resort and leisure ministries. ARLM stands as a professional effort to accept accountability for our endeavors. In ARLM, we can find, know, and celebrate the wonderful feeling of being at home. In ARLM, we enhance the total effort of ministering in Jesus' name to the resort and leisure people around us.

From its inception, ARLM has been a working organization that seeks to use every member. We offer a new energy for your ministry and your personal development. We need your wisdom and skills. Together, we will seek to communicate the good news of Jesus Christ to those who live, work, and play in resort and leisure settings. Together, we will go forward as the Association of Resort and Leisure Ministers!

### **Vision**

Our vision is to encourage and celebrate the revelation of God's presence in resort and leisure settings. As people who minister in such settings, we join together to enhance the effectiveness of our own ministry and to promote the understanding of resort and leisure ministries. We seek to equip, nurture, and challenge those involved in resort and leisure ministries through the sharing of ideas and resources and by strengthening and undergirding professional and personal growth.

### **Purpose**

Our purpose is to encourage and celebrate the revelation of God's presence in resort and leisure settings. In order to accomplish this, we have joined together as people who minister in such settings to enhance the effectiveness of our own ministry and to promote the understanding of resort and leisure ministries through the sharing of ideas and resources and by strengthening and undergirding professional and personal growth.

### **Objectives**

- **Networking**  
To provide a means of contact and fellowship for people who are actively involved in ministry in resort and leisure settings.
- **Education**  
To celebrate and promote reaching people for Christ in all of the resort and leisure marketplaces of life; and to increase awareness and understanding of the needs and opportunities for ministry to persons in resort and leisure settings and lifestyles.
- **Professional Development**  
To strengthen the effectiveness of ministries in resort and leisure settings by providing opportunities for the enhancement and acquisition of professional ministry skills and by the establishment and promotion of standards for professional competence in resort and leisure ministry.
- **Advocacy**  
To influence decision makers and resource providers on local, associational, state, and national levels to give appropriate consideration and emphasis to resort and leisure ministries.
- **Field Development**  
To encourage and assist in the development of new and existing ministries and methods for outreach to persons in resort and leisure settings and lifestyles.

### **Join Today!**

Membership in ARLM is by application and payment of annual dues. Membership is open to professionals and volunteers who support and provide Christian ministry in resort and leisure settings. Benefits include: personal resources, networking, certificate of membership, fellowships, national conference discounts, résumé distribution, membership directory, education and training, quarterly newsletter, and professional journal.

*This article was originally entitled "ARLM: Moving Forward Together" and may be found on the website [www.arlm.org](http://www.arlm.org) under the Resources tab. Used by permission NAMB.*

## **Appendix: Resort Evangelism in the Adirondacks**

*North Country Ministries is sharing Christ with athletes from all over the world*

By Derek Spain

Based upon the principles discussed in this manual, I would like to explain the way we serve and share Christ through North Country Ministries, a ministry of the Adirondack Baptist Association.

### **MISSION**

Our ministry exists to share the love of Christ with those who live, visit, work, and play in the Adirondack Mountains / North Country region.

### **MINISTRIES**

- Weekly Athletes Bible Study at the Olympic Training Center (attended by Olympic hopefuls in winter sports and other sports). Many of these athletes have begun attending Lake Placid Baptist Church when their schedule allows.
- One-on-one discipleship with athletes.
- Serve at summer and winter sports events in Lake Placid and surrounding communities, in partnership with local churches (typically about 10 events per year). By serving at these events, we have establish a strong witness for Christ in three particular communities (Lake Placid, Tupper Lake, Moriah) and have made literally thousands of gospel contacts. Also, our presence at the events is an encouragement to the athletes who are connected to our ministry.
- Our newest ministry is called "Hospitality to Internationals" and we are doing just that – showing hospitality to the seasonal workers to our area, who are international college students.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

- Most of those who serve in our ministries are members of churches in the Adirondack Baptist Association
- We partner with mission teams from churches throughout the BCNY
- We also partner with mission teams from churches throughout the USA

### **COME JOIN US!**

One of the best ways to catch a vision for how God can use resort & leisure evangelistic ministries in your area is to join us for a ministry event. Give Derek a call or email and set up a trip for some of your ministry leaders.

### **MORE INFO**

For more information on North Country Ministries, visit us at [www.ncministries.net](http://www.ncministries.net).