



Leading your Church  
into Growth

# *More detail on the 7 Steps of Evangelism*

In an article [Leading your Church into Growth](#) offered '[Seven steps, suggestions or rainbow colours of Evangelism](#)'. These are simple and practical steps on how to do evangelism during the lockdown caused by the coronavirus, and indeed, as the different phases of that lockdown begin to occur.

In this article we go in to a little more details about those seven steps and offer some practical examples that may inspire you to consider what would work in your local context. Please read 'The seven steps...' first if you haven't already done so.



## **Create a contact list.**

- This may mean extending lists of names to include address, telephone, email or whichever contact you need that is missing. Forms are more likely to be filled in if they don't ask for too much information initially, so it is perfectly accessible to use one means of contact to find out others. This may involve ringing people, or emailing them for their full info.
- Encourage church members to ask friends if they want to receive Newsletters and Services and if so to forward contact details to whoever is responsible for administering these.
- You may have lots of groups who use your church hall. Now is a good time to gather contact details of all those who attend.

- If you are streaming services on YouTube Live or Facebook Live you may be amassing comments on your streams. It is a good idea to try and respond to these whilst the live stream is on – to do that you will need to assign someone to comment and respond: you can't do that mid-sermon. It is a good idea to create a comment that you can post in response to comments that have been posted once the live stream has ended. This might be something like: 'Thank you for your recent comment on our service stream. If you would like to be kept informed of what St. Botolph's church is doing, please follow our page/subscribe to our channel/ sign up to our mailing by clicking this link etc.
- Remember that the number of views that you are told that occurred does not necessarily represent people who watched your stream *and* stayed to the end. If you delve into, for example, Facebook analytics on your video, you will be able to see how many people watched for 3 seconds (in effect noting before scrolling past), how many stayed for 30 seconds, and how many stayed for the full stream. At Leading your Church into Growth we often talk of looking for the seeker among the crowd – this is a process you will need to do with your crowd of online viewers. Try and find the genuine seekers and connect with them.
- Send out Newsletters to a bigger group.
- Set up telephone care groups of about 8. Ask them to ring one another each week.
- Do doorstep visits. Remember to focus your attention on newer contacts. Pastoral team members can visit established members.



**Pray for the people on your contact list.** If

you have got hundreds then pray for them as a whole. If you have got a smaller number then you can pray for them individually. Pray that God might open a door for them as they knock and open a door for the gospel mission as he did for Paul. I know of some clergy who have turned their daily walk into a prayer walk around their parish.

Pray for such people, not because you want to recruit them to your church but because you want your church, which is already showing such love to these folks, to be a gentle herald of Good News.



## Invite people on your contact list to something social.

These might include:

- Zoom coffee mornings
- Zoom choir
- Quiz night
- Online gathering of toddler groups. Email a craft activity that uses craft items people are likely to have in their home, and then share a chat online together
- Online youth social. There are online resources for games that are suitable for youth to do on a Zoom call. Simply Google search 'Youth games for video/conference calls' for ideas.
- Online games nights.

The challenge we face is moving fringe on-line members towards the middle, in a time when it's different and difficult to make physical contact. But there are lots of things we can do to develop community.

- Don't forget to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries.
- If you are live streaming your services you can go into breakout groups for a chat after the service.
- If you send out a newsheet, try to put more community items in it. You could interview a doctor, nurse, teacher, care worker, indeed any key worker, asking them what the main challenges are and asking them what you can pray for. You could include a quiz, poems, jokes. In our church services we used to do something called 'Tomorrow at 11' where we would interview a member of the congregation and find out what they were doing on Monday at 11am. It reminded us that we are still church when we are not gathered together, and everyone got to know one another: you can do the online or newsletter equivalent.

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## Why not make one of your Sundays an evangelistic guest service?

Our next big events in the Churches year are Pentecost, then Harvest and Remembrance. We might still be in lockdown for some or all of these.

- Pentecost is a great time to preach the gospel.
- Harvest you could collect food for the local foodbank.
- Remembrance Sunday you could talk about the present battle we are in.
- Good short message.
- Perhaps include a pre-recorded testimony.
- Think of how people will respond.
- Have supply of Start booklets.
- Mention enquirer's course. You can either collect names of those interested and run one when lockdown is over, or run one online. Details of how to do that are [here](#) and [here](#).

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## Encourage your congregation to invite people to your services.

- Firstly, get your congregation praying for growth. Use the Leading your Church into Growth prayer. One of our team got 12 members to send a WhatsApp video of themselves saying a line each, she then edited it together.
- Line your members up to invite. Leading your Church into Growth has an invitational strapline: *'I'm going, it's going to be really good, would you like to come with me?'* This can be adapted to: *'I'm watching the service, it is really helpful, would you like to watch it with me?'*
- In your Newsletters, Services, Quiz nights, etc., don't forget to include and draw in your new fringe.
- Don't forget to advertise things that your church does normally as a way of drawing people in.



**Organise an enquirers group.** With lots of people 'sampling' worship and daily prayers, has there ever been a better time to invite them to take the next step of finding out?

We have devised three ways of doing this using the Start course.

1. You can equip a single person to do their own online enquirers course.
2. You can set up a small virtual group.
3. You can simply send someone a Start booklet and then phone them to find out what they made of it.

Neil Short and Harry Steele have prepared 'Start' for individuals and for small groups. (You can find out more about these on our website <https://www.leadingyourchurchintogrowth.org.uk/blog>).



### **Go for a walk!**

- Walk facing the traffic.
- I visit 4 or 5 people each day. You might focus on the new fringe members; the pastoral team might focus on the existing members.
- Don't forget to knock at the door of 1 or 2 exiting members. They may like to see you!
- One of our team members arranges a set time to meet with people. She takes a camping chair with her and has a good chat whilst staying two meters away.

**Finally: Prepare for the big return. Better to think of a return weekend with lots of smaller events, rather than just a Sunday service.**

- Making the most of the first 6 weeks.
- Lots of the community feel grateful to church for what we have done. The first 6 weeks will be a time of harvest, so we will need to spend as much time as possible with people on the fringe. In order to create this time, it is important to write services and sermons now. I am still looking for themes for the first 6 weeks. Any ideas?

## Services

Relaxation of the lockdown will probably come in stages:

1. Present situation.
2. Churches open for private prayer.
3. Churches open for worship but some feel unsafe to attend.
4. Churches open for worship and all feel safe to attend.

We need to be thinking now about 2. and 3.

*At stage 2: Churches open for private prayer.*

- We need to tap into the relief, thanks and concern which will be in abundance when we get to this stage, but which will dissipate very quickly.
- One option is to set up prayer stations.
- Must have take-away handouts to advertise what is available at your church.
- Make sure that you have warm people on duty who can welcome people and get to know them.
- Be present yourself as much as possible.
- Send out invites to the congregation and specifically the fringe so that you can meet them. You will need to practice safe distancing, but this might be the first opportunity you have had to meet some people for a long time.

*At stage 2: Churches open for worship but some feel unsafe to attend.*

- The safer you make it, the more will come.

- Limit the number in the building. If necessary, run more smaller services.
- Only sit 2 per pew and every 3<sup>rd</sup> row.
- Keep services short.
- Make sure that you continue to keep in contact and provide support for those who feel unable to attend.

## **Socials**

Welcome Parties.

Many vicars will run 'Welcome Parties' every 6 months or so for new members of the church.

At the moment you may have many new people who you could perhaps invite to one of these: those who have come to your online services, but you won't be able to do so for a long time after lockdown is lifted. Here are a few suggestions:

- Have smaller parties but more often.
- Invite a small number to a BBQ in the garden so they feel safer.
- Offer to cook them a meal, or buy a takeaway, deliver it to them, then have a brief chat over Zoom.
- Bake a cake, deliver it to them, then have a brief chat on the doorstep and leave them a letter inviting them to the next Start course.
- Another option is to have a drop-in day at church. Prayer stations set up, but must have the people available that they have seen from your church on YouTube, Zoom etc
- You could try a Zoom welcome party. Invite a few new people with a couple of warm home team group leaders. Their job would be to help keep the conversation going, but not say too much and keep in touch with the group afterwards.
- We have divided our church/community into 15 groups of about 8. Some of these didn't know one another before, but have become firm friends. We could encourage them to have parties and make sure we drop in.

