

Outreach Coordinator

A ministry description for local church leaders

Introduction

Most of the heroes of the New Testament church were evangelists. The personal ministry of Jesus in saving the lost (the woman at the well, Zacchaeus, etc.) continues to be the primary model; but Peter, Paul, Barnabas, Philip, Steven, Timothy, and John Mark all figure prominently in early church history because they worked tirelessly and effectively to win new converts to Jesus Christ and to make the first century church grow. That pattern has continued through the centuries to our day.

You are called to that noble heritage as you become involved in coordinating the outreach of your local church. You have two thousand years of success on which to build. You have the model of thousands of successful men and women in history. Welcome to the most important task God ever assigned to church leaders—to find God’s lost children and bring them home to the church and to eternal life.

Duties of the Outreach Coordinator

Your job title may be evangelism committee chairperson, personal ministries or lay activities leader, or something else. No matter what the title is, your ministry includes:

- 1. Working with volunteers.** The personnel for outreach in the local church are volunteers, and much of your work is the recruiting, training, and overseeing of this volunteer workforce. Supervising volunteers is not the same as working with employees. Volunteers will do what they enjoy or are convicted to do, not necessarily what needs to be done. Pleading with them from the pulpit or trying to make them feel guilty will not succeed. Personal contacts are more effective than public appeals. Building a support team is essential for long-term success. You will be working with a minority of the congregation. Church growth specialists say that 10% of church membership have the gift of evangelism. That is a worthy objective, but it will take great persuasiveness to achieve even that percentage.
- 2. Planning.** You are the key person in helping the leaders of your congregation develop a plan for outreach and soul-winning. It is your responsibility to get the key leaders together early to set goals. Get ownership for the goals from the church leadership, and they will help meet them. Some wise person said, “Good goals are my goals; bad goals are your goals.” Remember that too many goals are confusing to the congregation and more difficult to reach. Experience demonstrates that most congregations can only handle one, two or three outreach goals at a time, and this “time” usually spans two or three years.
- 3. Education and communication.** Your first goal is to help every church member become aware that he or she is witnessing in his or her own way. Every believer is a missionary to the family members, work associates, neighbors and others that he touches every day, whether he likes it or not, whether he intends it or not. It is a surprising thought to many of our members who “hate witnessing” that they cannot “not witness.”

Your task is to help the church members use the unique opportunities and spiritual gifts that God has given to each to accomplish His will. The teaching tools in The Sabbath School Leader magazine, the materials on spiritual gifts and friendship evangelism are key tools in doing this. You can make use of them each Sabbath during the time allotted. This time may be called “King’s Business” or “personal ministries time” or something else, but whatever it is called it is essential that you communicate with the church members regularly about their witness and opportunities for service. This is a “non-negotiable” part of what it means to be an Adventist church. It is equally important that you make this time interesting and relevant to your members, and not a time of haranguing, selling books, or reading in a ritual manner.

4. Program Management. You will be the manager of a number of programs sponsored by your congregation. Some are denomination-wide, international campaigns. Some are local ideas that a small group of your members have created. Each requires careful preparation, adequate supplies and manpower, and steady attention to detail. Checklists and worksheets to help you manage these projects are published in many different program manuals, handbooks and “how-to” volumes. Remember, every project is a process, not a goal. If you remember this, you will not feel defeated when a project fails. The goal is to save men and women for heaven. If one thing does not work, another will.

Resource Materials

The following resources are recommended for your ministry. You can purchase these by calling AdventSource (800-328-0525), the Adventist Book Center (800-765-6955) or your local Christian bookstore.

A Guide to Marketing Adventism, by Dan Day. Gives practical help on marketing your church in the community.

Christian Service by Ellen G. White, includes the fundamental principles for ministry.

Church Growth Resource Series contains nine separate booklets on a variety of topics by church growth professionals, such as “How to Find and Reach Receptive People.”

Giving Bible Studies, by Calvin Smith. Simple, easy steps to giving Bible studies.

Power Witnessing: How to Witness to Different Personalities, by David Farmer. Explains temperament theory and how to tailor one’s witness to individual personalities so as to appeal to their unique world view.

Practical Guide to Personal Ministries, prepared by the North American Division Adult Ministries. The basic handbook for personal witnessing.

Radical Disciples for Revolutionary Churches, by Russell Burrill. The author explores what it takes to produce church members who want to be participants, not spectators, and proposes a major change in how to “do evangelism.”

Rekindling a Lost Passion: Recreating a Church Planting Movement, by Russell Burrill. The author supplies the nuts and bolts of planting new churches and issues an urgent call to recapture that same passion for the lost that Christ has.

Revolution in the Church, by Russell Burrill. Believing that both pastors and laity have strayed far from their biblically assigned roles, the author proposes a radical change in how Adventists “do church.”

Revolutionized Church of the 21st Century, by Russell Burrill. Experience the explosive power of a church built on relationships.

Search for Certainty Bible Study Guides, by Mark Finley. Presents traditional Adventist doctrines in a clear, carefully-reasoned, faith-building way—30 lessons in a set, available by the set or in packs of 100 per title. (It Is Written)

Sharing Our Faith with Friends by Monte Sahlin, is 244 pages packed with research and up-to-date information on fast-growing Adventist churches.

Who Are the Seventh-day Adventists? by John Seaman. This sharing booklet gives a brief sketch of Adventist history, beliefs, people, church, and mission.

You Can Witness, Yes Even You, by Bob Johnson. An easy-to-use guide for training members to share their faith.

Visit AdventSource On-Line at www.adventsource.org for a complete list of the latest resources available for local church leaders. You can place an order or request a catalog by calling 1-800-328-0525.

For information about additional resources and answers to your questions call the Adventist Plusline at 1-800-732-7587 or visit them on-line at www.plusline.org.