


THE ART OF 
REACHING
with Carey Nieuwhof and Mark Clark

**CHRISTMAS OUTREACH
TOOLKIT**



The Art of Reaching

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods beyond twelve copies for the sole use of the leadership of the team of the specific organization which purchased the course, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

If you wish for more than one login to access course materials, you may purchase the Team Edition which allows access for up to five individuals..

Thank you for respecting intellectual property rights and copyright law. For permission requests beyond the terms of this license, please write to the publisher at the address below.

Carey Nieuwhof Communications Limited
P.O. Box 160
Oro-Medonte ON L0L 2X0
www.careynieuwhof.com
hello@careynieuwhof.com

© 2022 Carey Nieuwhof Communications Limited. All rights reserved.

As our culture becomes more and more post-Christian, we're seeing far fewer times when the holidays of the church and the holidays of culture are in sync.

I once heard a Toronto DJ refer to Easter as "the first long weekend of summer" (in Canada Good Friday is a holiday and schools still take Easter Monday off...a relic from Colonial days). Good Friday and Easter were completely lost on him. It was simply time off.

Christmas is completely different.

Our culture still loves Christmas. Sure, the motives are commercial. But Christmas is the only time of year when you'll hear malls belt out explicitly Christian songs like Charles Wesley's "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing":

*Veiled in flesh the Godhead see
Hail the incarnate Deity
Pleased with us in flesh to dwell
Jesus, our Emmanuel*

If you follow a lot of Christians on social media leading up to Christmas, you probably have noticed how many people lament over the culture's disregard of Christ.

Well, you can see the obstacle. Or, you can see the opportunity. I choose to see the opportunity. There are so many connection points with our culture you'll miss if you only see the glass as half empty.

Our culture pauses for Christmas in a way it pauses for little else in the year.

TV and film celebrate Christmas in all of its expressions. Almost everyone decorates their homes, businesses, and cities.

On December 24th and 25th, the Western world comes as close to stopping as it ever does.

I'm not sure there's any better time than Christmas to connect with those of your friends and neighbors who rarely, if ever, go to church. And, after the pandemic, people will be longing for a return to something familiar.

So, first you'll see 3 ideas on how to make Christmas your best outreach of the year. After, you'll get the exact gameplan & templates your church needs to carry it out.

3 Ideas for Your Christmas Outreach

1. Design an Event For Your Community, Not For Your Members

What's the biggest mistake many churches make each Christmas?

Simple. Too many churches hold a quiet Christmas Eve or Christmas Day service for members and leave it at that. Others will do little to nothing special.

That makes Christmas the biggest missed opportunity of the year.

Unchurched people want to celebrate Christmas. Why can't your church help them?

Here's a hint: if you design your services with the community in mind, your members will love it too. Especially if their friends come and it changes their lives.

2. Experiment With Location & Service Times

Your Christmas event is a great time to test out new venues, new places and new communities in which you might one day have locations. Sometimes stretching yourself calls out the very best in people, challenges them to invite, and it can bring your church into communities in brand new ways in a season in which people are already looking for events to attend.

Sounds like a great combination to me.

Whether or not you'll be in a new location, experimenting with multiple service times is a great way to make attending easier for different crowds.

Young families seem to prefer earlier services so they can get their kids to bed early or have dinner together. Retail workers need a later service.

3. Love Your Community

Love makes a pretty irresistible force when it's unleashed on a city. And generosity makes an impression on unchurched people.

When your church is closely involved in the community, people will notice. Here are three simple ideas to get your thinking about how you can love your community:

- Partner with local initiatives or charities
- Give generously to local food banks
- Participate in parades or community events

Your Gameplan

Step 1: Plan Your Event

Brand the Event Around Your Community, Not Your Church

Simply use the names of the city (or cities) you're in. So for Plano, Texas, it would be 'Christmas in Plano'. Sure, let people know that it's hosted by a church, but people are looking for a place to celebrate and you want them to know you can host them and their family at an event designed for the city.

Create a Webpage For The Event

If someone has to click through 15 pages of your website to find your Christmas services, they'll probably give up. And even if you put it on the homepage of your website, people might get distracted by other buttons and links.

Remember, people have Christmas on their mind, and when the site looks like Christmas and there are free tickets available (see below), it's easier for people to say "I'm in."

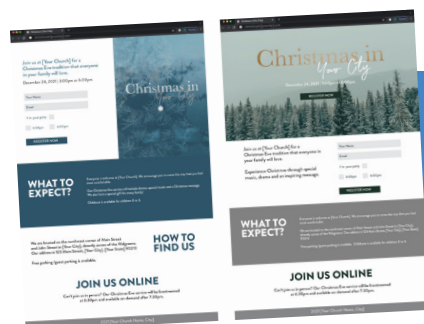
There are a few key elements to include and consider when setting up the webpage:

- Name, date, time and location of the event
- Description of the event
- How to register (if required)

Bonuses:

- Use a vanity URL (a descriptive, memorable and pronounceable URL used to redirect from one location to another)
 - christmasin[yourcity].com
- E.g. theartofbetterreaching.com redirects to <https://careynieuwhof.com/the-art-of-better-reaching/>
- A promotional video
- No top navigation bar

For ideas and inspiration for your event webpage, download the templates file.



[Download ready-to-use templates here.](#)

Decide if People Need to Register/RSVP

Why not ticket your Christmas services? Free tickets of course, but tickets help create demand and help drive people to make a commitment to attending. (Bonus: they also help manage fire code).

Here are two common options for registration:

1. Have people register through a form on your website
 - Create a form and embed it on the event webpage
 - Schedule a confirmation email to go out upon registration
 - Schedule a reminder email to go out the day before and day of
 - Bonus: add a calendar invite by link so people can add it to their calendar

Download the done-for-you templates for a sample confirmation and reminder email.

2. Brushfire is an easy solution.

Step 2: Promote Your Event

Let Your Congregation Know & Give Them Invitation Tools

Did you know that 82% of people would come to church if a trusted friend invited them? Yet in a typical year, only 2% of Christians invite a friend to church. Heartbreaking.

Here are some ideas to make it easy for your congregation to invite friends and spread awareness:

- Full-color card with the details of the event
- Candy canes with the vanity URL tied to them
- Sponsor (or guest write) a local blog
- Sponsor (or guest write) a local email newsletter
- Business-sized cards
- Full-sized posters

And...

Social

Social media can be a great, cost-effective way to get word out about your event. Here's something to keep in mind: the power of social media isn't always in your own following, but leveraging the followers of others.



[Download ready-to-use templates here.](#)

If you can think of unique, engaging ways for people in your church to share with their friends, promotion and invitation gets a lot easier.

Idea: set up a photo booth at your church in the weeks leading up to Christmas. Have props for people to dress up with and a “Join us for Christmas Eve” sign. Then, people in your church can share the message with their followers.

You’ll find free invitation and social graphics in the done-for-you templates.

Step 3: At Your Event & Following Up From It

Invite People Back

Simply invite people back for January. I know inviting sounds basic, but unchurched people may not know that they’re invited unless you invite them. So let people know what series is coming in January and the date, time and location of your services.

How?

- A card you hand out to people
- A follow up email/text
- If people RSVP for the event by email, you’ll already have people’s email addresses to send this reminder to
- Handout information cards, that include an email field, for guests to fill out as they arrive

For a sample follow up email, download done-for-you templates.

Plan a Call To Action

God’s grace is sovereign. We’ve had people commit their lives to Christ during volunteer events and during series about tithing. So God can do anything.

But you need to do your part. Don’t let people walk away bored or with just a warm fuzzy feeling. Challenge them. People will leave mostly unchanged unless you create a different expectation.

So give people an opportunity to surrender their lives to Jesus... it’s amazing how many people do. And when you invite them back and offer them steps to take in the new year, Christmas can be the start of a journey that ends with them surrendering their lives to Christ.

