



The Witnessing Ideas Report

Inside this issue:

The Witnessing Ideas Report	1
Prime Time Corner	2
Community Day	2
Witnessing Ideas	3
Your doubts—God’s Answers	4
Anyway Poem	4
Answered Prayer	5
FBC Birthdays and Anniversaries	6
Book End	6

By Earl Pomeroy

The M.O.R.E. Team put out a call for witnessing ideas and the First Baptist Church witnessing machine created a truck load of them. Without discounting for duplicate or similar ideas, there were One-Hundred-Thirty suggestions. Sixteen individuals submitted one or more ideas and three ABFs submitted lists from class brainstorming sessions.

Congratulations goes to Elizabeth Tarchala, the individual church member who submitted the most ideas. The ABF submitting the most collected ideas was **Faithful Friends**.

Great job everyone who participated.

The ideas fell into six general categories:

1. Relational – sharing what God has done in your life, or praying for someone and letting them know you are doing it.

2. One time encounters
3. Helping in church ministries
4. Involvement in common interests with people outside the church

1. Survey outreach
2. Helping those in need

The single idea chosen as most interesting, in the sense that it is something we all can do, was sharing with someone and connecting with them by offering to pray for a specific need of theirs. This one idea fits into categories 1, 4, and 6. This appeared in some form on multiple lists.

Other ideas found especially interesting and usable by nearly everyone were:

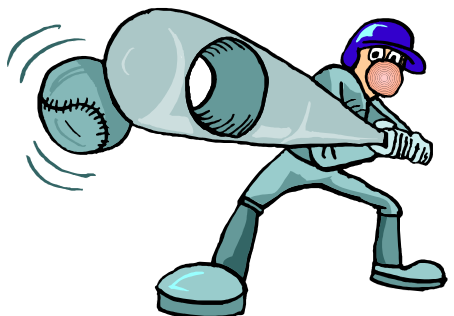
1. Internet witnessing (sharing sermons, videos, Scripture verses, through chat rooms, blogs, and social networking sites.)

2. Buy some gift cards to restaurants and put them in a card with the gospel message and the number of our church. When you see someone on the side of the road who has a sign that says, “homeless” or “will work for food,” give them the card and tell them it has a gift card for McDonald’s or wherever you bought it from. Better yet, if you are not on your way to work, take them there and have lunch with them. Listen to their story, be affected by it, and show them God’s love.

3. Participate in an activity of an unbelieving friend (build a relationship). There were many examples of this on several lists.

Maybe, when you hear the word “witnessing”, you get a knot in your stomach. Look over the categories and ideas one more time. Maybe you’re actually doing it but never attached that word to it before. So don’t make yourself guilty, just go do life. As you go about living, have fun making disciples.

See more details on page 3.



Prime Time Corner

You should have seen the Pilgrims and Indians come into First Baptist Church for Prime Time, November 11th.



They were real workers too. They filled all the shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child. WOW!! What a team.

Then Gail (sorry for the misspelled name last month) pulled out all the stops and served a complete thanksgiving feast. Thanks!

On December 9th the Prime Timers will be taking a trip to Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park to see the *Christmas and Holiday Traditions Around the World* display. This annual extravaganza features the glow of 300,000 lights, strolling carolers, horse-drawn carriage rides and more than 40 international trees and displays.

For this there will be a change in time. We will leave the church at 10:45. We are scheduled for lunch at the Gardens at 11:30. This will bypass the children that come in the morning. Entrance tickets are being underwritten for you. Cost of lunch is individual responsibility. You pick what you want from the menu.

Invite, invite, invite your friends. This is a perfect outreach opportunity. Let's set a goal for 30 people to share this together.

IlaJean

Community Day

Community Day on December 19th will be a unique, one of a kind opportunity. That's the evening for the **Children's Christmas Program**. Do you have an unsaved friend who enjoys seeing children in programs? Invite them to church that night. They will hear the gospel in an engaging way, as told by children. Follow it up with snacks downstairs.

We've been hearing about **Community Day** for a while now. We've heard it in announcements, in the bulletin, in bulletin inserts, in a special family talk by Pastor Phil, in our ABFs, and by word of mouth. Did you catch the excitement? Or were you sleeping?

Community Day is about:

1. Making visitors feel welcome and providing an atmosphere where they can get to know people on a deeper level.
2. Providing *scheduled time to be purposeful* with community.
3. Providing opportunities to invite friends to church with dinner after. If they will not come to church, it's a setting for just inviting them to dinner where they can meet some church people.
4. Building deeper relationships among the congregation and encouraging people to get to know others in the church that they don't know too well by having dinner together.

Community Day happens on the third Sunday of every month. Plan for it.

What are you planning for

Community Day on December 19th?



Witnessing Ideas

Here are some details from the witnessing ideas collection. We won't list all 130 submissions but here are some of the unique and interesting ones that you might find inspiring for yourself.

Start a Bible study / prayer group at school or work or home.

Save the pre-paid return envelopes from junk mail, stuff with a tract and mail.

Use all the opportunities on modern technology, such as blogs, chat rooms, twitter, websites, Facebook and other social networking sites, send or post links to YouTube videos and Christian music, to share your faith story.

Participate in groups that share common interests such as motorcycles, hunting, crafting, hobbies, professional organizations, community service organizations.

Make extra effort to make connection with people in our community that you are praying for and tell them why.

Sit with people who are alone in our services.

Share your stuff through the One-In-Heart ministry board.

Use your talents to serve Christ. Don't wait to be asked, just do it.

Try something that is outside your comfort zone and see what God will do.

When someone thanks you for something you did, give God the credit for the idea.

Invite people to church, especially to concerts and special events.

Invite people, especially unbelieving friends or neighbors, into your home for games, dinner, or desert, just to be together and build relationships.

Offer a cold drink or snack to delivery people who come to your home.

Be on the lookout for needs people have that you can meet.

Put tracts or other Christian messages in your bill payments – assuming you pay on time.

Use the Barnabas Board – send cards to those who are ill or shut in.

Say “God bless you” or “God loves you” as well as thank you to waitresses, clerks, etc. leave a gospel tract and leave an exceptional tip.

Leave a tract in a geo-cache.

Pray for pastors, and church workers daily.

Pay for other's registration fees to conferences, retreats, or banquets.

Volunteer in the community.

Pitch in to help following natural disasters.

Do random acts of kindness like; paying for meals for EMTs, firefighters, and police who come into restaurants when you are there; helping someone whose car is having trouble.

Work in children's ministries or Awana.

Start an exercise group or walking group.

Organize events for kids in your yard.

Give away Christian literature and books.

Take meals to unsaved family members

Share with someone how God carried you through some adversity.

Listen with honest interest to other people's stories of their adversity. Look for ways to help.

Talk about church with people.

When baby sitting, talk to the kids about Jesus.

Go do something with an unsaved friend that they like to do.

Share your garden produce and gardening tips with others.

Pray for opportunities.

Obeys God's promptings.

Pick up hitchhikers and share with them.

Be longsuffering and kind – avoid over-reacting.

Respect other's opinions – listen first, talk later.

Show unconditional love to others.

Live a life that demonstrates the gospel.

Be a consistent patron to service industry people so you can build relationships.

Don't be put off by unbelievers' opinions. Be kind, patient and inquiring.

Go help at a homeless shelter.

Go on a short term mission trip.

Turn your vacation into a mission trip by giving out tracts or Bibles everywhere you go.

Play Christmas music or other Christian music at work – if allowed.

Display Christian themed things in your home.

Say “Merry Christmas” not “Happy Holidays” and send Christmas cards with messages about the true meaning of Christmas.

Have a Christmas or New-Years party for neighbors. It might be the first time they had a really good time and didn't wake up the next day with a hangover. They'll start asking questions.

Your Doubts—God's Answers

Submitted by Dawn Milley

<u>YOU SAY</u>	<u>GOD SAYS</u>	<u>Source</u>
You say: "It's impossible"	God says: "All things are possible"	Luke 18:27
You say: "I'm too tired"	God says: "I will give you rest"	Matthew 11:28-30
You say: "Nobody really loves me"	God says: "I love you"	John 3:16, John 3:34
You say: "I can't go on"	God says: "My grace is sufficient"	II Corinthians 12:9 Psalm 91:15
You say: "I can't figure things out"	God says: "I will direct your steps"	Proverbs 3:5-6
You say: "I can't do it"	God says: "You can do all things through me"	Philippians 4:13
You say: "I am not able"	God says: "I am able"	II Corinthians 9:8
You say: "It's not worth it"	God says: "It will be worth it all"	Romans 8:28
You say: "I can't forgive myself"	God says: "I have already forgiven you"	I John 1:9 & Romans 8:1
You say: "I can't manage"	God says: "I will supply all your needs"	Philippians 4:19
You say: "I'm afraid"	God says: "I have given you a spirit of power, love, and self control"	II Timothy 1:7
You say: "I'm always worried and frustrated"	God says: "Cast all your cares on ME"	I Peter 5:7
You say: "I'm not smart enough"	God says: "I give you wisdom"	I Corinthians 1:30
You say: "I feel all alone"	God says: "I will never leave you or forsake you"	Hebrews 13:5

Anyway Poem

People are often unreasonable, illogical and self centered. Forgive them anyway.	If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous. Be happy anyway.
If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.	The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow. Do good anyway.
If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies. Succeed anyway.	Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough. Give the world the best you have anyway.
If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you. Be honest and frank anyway.	You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and your God. It was never between you and them anyway.
When you spend years building, someone could destroy (your work) overnight. Build anyway.	[Reportedly inscribed on the wall of Mother Teresa's children's home in Calcutta, and attributed to her. However, an article in the New York Times has since reported (March 8, 2002) that the original version was written by Kent M. Keith.]

answered prayer

Isaiah 65:24

This beautiful story was written by a doctor who worked in Central Africa.

One night I had worked hard to help a mother in the labor ward; but in spite of all we could do, she died, leaving us with a tiny, premature baby and a crying two-year-old daughter. We would have difficulty keeping the baby alive; as we had no incubator (we had no electricity to run an incubator). We also had no special feeding facilities.

Although we lived on the equator, nights were often chilly with treacherous drafts. One student midwife went for the box we had for such babies and the cotton wool that the baby would be wrapped in. Another went to stoke up the fire and fill a hot water bottle. She came back shortly in distress to tell me that in filling the bottle, it had burst (tubing perishes easily in tropical climates).

“And it is our last hot water bottle!” she exclaimed. As in the West, it is no good crying over spilled milk, so in Central Africa it might be considered no good crying over burst water bottles. They do not grow on trees, and there are no drugstores down forest paths.

“All right,” I said, “put the baby as near the fire as you safely can, and sleep between the baby and the door to keep it free from drafts. Your job is to keep the baby warm”

The following noon, as I did most days, I went to have prayers with any of the orphanage children who chose to gather with me. I gave the youngsters various suggestions of things to pray about and told them about the tiny baby. I explained our problem about keeping the baby warm enough, mentioning the hot water bottle, and that the baby could so easily die if it got chilled. I also told them of the two-year-old sister, crying because her mother had died.

During the prayer time, one ten-year-old girl, Ruth, prayed with the usual blunt conciseness of our African children. “Please, God” she prayed, “send us a hot water bottle today. It’ll be no good tomorrow, God, as that baby will be dead, so please send it this afternoon.”

While I gasped inwardly at the audacity of the prayer, she added, “And while You are about it, would You please send a dolly for the little girl so she will know You really love her?”

As often with children’s prayers, I was put on the spot. Could I honestly say “Amen”? I just did not believe that God could do this. Oh, yes, I know that He can do everything; the Bible says so. But there are limits, aren’t there? The only way God could answer this particular prayer would be by sending me a parcel from the homeland. I had been in Africa for almost four years at that time, and I had never, ever, received a parcel from home. Anyway, if anyone did send me a parcel, who would put in a hot water bottle? I lived on the equator!

Half way through the afternoon, while I was teaching in the nurse’s training school, a message was sent that there was a car at my front door. By the time I reached home, the car had gone, but there on the porch was a large 22-pound parcel. I felt the tears pricking my eyes. I could not open the parcel alone, so I sent for the orphanage children. Together we pulled off the string, carefully undoing each knot. We folded the paper, taking care not to tear it unduly... Excitement was mounting. Some thirty or forty pairs of eyes were focused on the large cardboard box.

From the top, I lifted out brightly-colored, knitted jerseys. Eyes sparkled as I gave them out. Then there were the knitted bandages for the leprosy patients, and the children looked a little bored. Then came a box of mixed raisins and sultans—that would make a batch of buns for the weekend.

Then, as I put my hand in again, I felt the.... Could it really be?

I grasped it and pulled it out. Yes, a brand new, rubber hot water bottle. I cried. I had not asked God to send it; I had not truly believed that He could.

Ruth was in the front row of the children. She rushed forward, crying out, “If God has sent the bottle, He must have sent the dolly, too!”

Rummaging down to the bottom of the box, she pulled out the small, beautifully-dressed dolly. Her eyes shone! She had never doubted! Looking up at me, she asked, “Can I go over with you and give this dolly to that little girl, so she’ll know that Jesus loves her?”

“Of course”, I replied

That parcel had been on the way for five whole months, packed up by my former Sunday School class, whose leader had heard and obeyed God’s prompting to send a hot water bottle, even to the equator. And one of the girls had put in a dolly for an African child—five months before, all in answer to the believing prayer of a ten-year-old to bring it ‘that afternoon’.

“Before they call, I will answer.” (Isaiah 65:24)

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God is Enough
Always and in
All Ways

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FBC Mission Statement

We endeavor to...

Magnify

The Lord, by bringing people to Jesus Christ and

Membership

In His Family, seeking to develop them to Christ-like

Maturity,

Equipping them for their

Ministry

In the Church.... And their life

Mission

In the world.

December Birthdays and Anniversaries

Name	Happy Birthday to..	Happy Anniversary to..
Louise Green	12/01	
Dustin Kosbar	12/01	
Amber Ritchie	12/02	
John & Lisa Clarke		12/04
Sue Green	12/04	
Elisabeth Tarchala	12/04	
Joshua Zalis	12/05	
Sage Fox	12/06	
James Fleenor	12/07	
Vivian Johnson	12/07	
Ciera Bowden	12/08	
Breanna VanLaan	12/08	
Noah VanLaan	12/09	
Jacob Webb	12/09	
Daniel Kennedy	12/10	
Greg Green	12/12	
Bill Johnson IV	12/12	
Shirley Hossack (Missionary)	12/15	
Dave & Anne Pasquale		12/16
Wayne Postema (M.K.)	12/16	
Pastor Margesson	12/17	
Shirley Carroll	12/18	
Sara Hile (Missionary)	12/18	
Steve & Sue Mayo (Missionary)		12/18
Lane Weeks	12/18	
Billie Hill	12/21	
Oliver Sobie	12/21	
Myrtis Thut	12/21	
Dan Vosovic	12/21	
Todd Mikelson (Missionary)	12/22	
Dennis & Janet Burns		12/23
Steve & Sue Weeks		12/24
Jesus Christ	12/25	
as we celebrate His birth!		
Liane Sobie	12/25	
Fannie Blocher	12/27	
David Milley	12/27	
Deb Thompson (Missionary)	12/27	
Fallen Fox	12/27	
Nick McKay	12/28	
Colton Ritchie	12/28	
Nick McQueen	12/29	
Rick & Lori Raimer		12/30
Francis Miller	12/31	
Sara Onan	12/31	

*I have set the Lord always before me.
 Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.
 Psalm 16:8*