

Ideas for Making Contacts

These ideas can be used for phone calls, written notes, or e-mails ... to children, youth and adults ... for chronic absentees, guests/prospects, and regularly attending members.

“Guilt trips” seldom encourage people to come to church and more often drive them further away.

Remember, your responsibility as a Christian is to minister to the individual, express God’s love through your genuine care and concern, and keep the lines of communication open.

1. **Time Change Reminder** – Call on the Saturday before time change as a reminder to change clocks.
2. **Bible Study Topic** – Highlight the topic for an upcoming session/unit based on the “life question” ... the “so what” for their life.
 - Ex.: “In February, our Bible studies focus on the essential activities that keep us close to God, such as prayer and Bible study. What I like is that we talk about some very simple and practical ideas on how to do them.”
3. **Ask for a Prayer Request** – Ask how you/your class can pray for them in the next week.
WARNING:
 - Don’t ask unless you actually intend to pray for them.
 - Be prepared to follow-up with an inquiry about how the situation is going (In other words: don’t forget you asked for a prayer request!)
 - Ask if you may share the request with your class or if he/she wants you to keep it confidential.
4. **Share a Prayer Request** – Ask the person to pray for a prayer request from someone else in the class.
5. **Special Event** – Invite them to a special church event such as: Easter music, children’s program, Christmas Advent Service, Parent/Baby Dedication.
6. **“Happy Birthday”** – Call to wish a Happy Birthday; have a little fun and sing the first phrase when the person comes to the phone (you don’t have to be musical!)
7. **“Congratulations”** – Call with congratulations for a job promotion, a job well done, a Little League victory, an honor at school or work.
8. **Health Concerns** – When you hear/know the person or a family member is ill, call to see how they are doing and to express your concern and support.
9. **Offer Help** – When appropriate, call to offer a meal, help with childcare, transportation to the doctor/grocery, leaf raking.
10. **Party Invitation** – Call to offer a personal invitation to a Sunday School party.
11. **Service Project** – Ask the person to join you as part of a class service project. Yes, even prospects!

Prospects/guests and chronic absentees may be more likely to participate first in a project before they begin to attend class or come to a party!

12. **Share (good) News about Your Church** – Talk about excitement in Vacation Bible School, a person baptized, something good that happened to you, where you saw God at work in the last week.
13. **Request an E-mail Address** – Enlist someone in your class to send periodic e-mail. If you don’t have an e-mail address for someone, call to let him or her know what your class is doing and ask if they would be willing to be added to the mail list.
14. **Give them a Job** – Ask the person to be responsible for a one-time or short-term task in your class or department: bring treats, make 3 reminder calls (see #1 above!), set up chairs.
15. **“Thank you”** – Call to say thank you for a thoughtful act, a kind and/or encouraging word.
16. **“I appreciate you”** – Let the person know you appreciate *them* and their commitment to a worthwhile cause (outside of church), their willingness to take a moral stand, their faithfulness at church, their Christian witness.

Multiple contacts are always easier when you have a specific purpose for each contact with the same person.

Telephone courtesy says:

- Identify yourself immediately.
- Put the person at ease by stating the purpose of the call; don’t leave them guessing.
- Other conversation may flow naturally from this beginning. If not, the person still feels comfortable because the “purpose” of the contact has been accomplished.