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# COMMUNITY CONNECTION IDEAS FOR FALL

Autumn is on the way! Families are returning from vacation and school begins soon — that means it's time for your church to start planning fall events to attract and connect with people in your community. If you're like most, it can be hard to think of new, creative ways to get your members involved so you can make the most impact in your neighborhood.

**Here are some quick ideas to help get the creative juices flowing!**

# PARTIES & PICNICS



1

## **Tailgate Party**

One of the best parts of Fall is the start of football season. Get in the spirit and support your local team(s) either in your church parking lot or at a local game. If your town has a high school or college where football is a big deal, hold the tailgate party at the school.

2

## **End of Summer outdoor party or community picnic**

Pick a fun theme: Chili Cook Off, County Fair, Carnival, etc. Have a variety of games, contests, and food so everyone can be involved and have fun.

3

## **Ethnic Food Festival**

If you live in a diverse community or have families in your church from different parts of the world, plan a special event where people can come learn more about these areas by sampling favorite foods, hearing unique music, etc.

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## **Back to School block party for underserved kids and/or schools**

Offer shoes, clothes, and school supplies. Make it fun with games, music, and food.



# COMMUNITY SERVICE



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## School supply drive

Families on a tight budget often have a hard time getting their children the supplies they need (and want). Planning a school supply drive allows individuals to donate supplies that you can distribute through local charities or even the schools themselves.

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## Food drive

Many churches already collect food to donate to a local shelter or to have on hand when someone comes with a need. But have you ever thought about offering special meals or food baskets on the weekend? Many families rely on public school lunches to keep their children fed -- offering something on Saturday and Sunday could be a big help to many people in your community.

7

## Labor for your neighbor

Plan a special service weekend to help disabled or elderly community members do basic maintenance around their homes and yards.

8

## Neighborhood beautification

Many communities have neglected parks, run down schools, or areas with lots of litter. Put together teams to go out and help clean these areas up, paint the school, plant new flower beds, or set up a community garden. Talk to your city about getting started.



# COMMUNITY SERVICE



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## Habitat for Humanity build

This is a great way to invite friends to get involved before you actually invite them to church.

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## Car care clinic for single moms or the elderly

Help your neighbors keep their vehicles safe and on the road.

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## Health clinic day

Work with a local medical group to provide flu shots, immunizations for school, blood pressure screenings, etc.

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## Host a blood drive

A blood drive is a fantastic way to draw your community to your church. Head to [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) to learn how to host a drive.

# SAVE OUR SCHOOLS



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## **Bless the teachers**

Welcome teachers back to school by hosting a free breakfast in the teacher's lounge of your local school.

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## **Sponsor a classroom**

Stock a classroom in an underserved school and commit to resupplying it all year.

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## **Concession stand volunteers**

Schools are always looking for parents to volunteer in the concessions stands during sports games. Sending a small group or several individuals from your church to volunteer is a great way to connect with parents and school officials in your community, and to start demonstrating that your church wants to participate in community events.



# SPECIAL EVENTS & GENERAL IDEAS



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## **Family movie night**

Everyone loves going to the movies! Turn your church into a theater and have some fun with theater-style refreshments. If the weather is good, turn your movie night into a drive-in night and show the movie outside!

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## **Honor Our Heroes Service and Lunch**

September 11 is Patriot's Day. Plan a special service the Sunday before and invite local first responders to come be honored at your church. Host a special lunch after the service. Ask your local fire and police departments if they can bring some of their trucks and equipment for the kids to look at and tour.

18

## **Host a special speaker or comedian in your church**

Publicize the appearance so everyone is invited.

Visit: [OutreachSpeakers.com](http://OutreachSpeakers.com) for ideas.

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## **Grill give-away**

Work with a local business to host a BBQ in the parking lot and have people enter to win a new grill. Make sure to have coupons for the business and invitations for your church on hand, too!

# SPECIAL EVENTS & GENERAL IDEAS



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## Participate in community events

Work with your community to participate or support local events like 5K fun runs, parades, and art festivals. Encourage your members to join in, hand out water bottles, clean up trash, etc.

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## Host a special sermon series

Find a hot topic in your community or something that will appeal to your neighbors and plan a sermon series. Some ideas: family relationships, parenting, financial freedom.

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## Teen Lock-ins

No one wants their kids out on the streets late at night, so be the cool place to hang out for the teens in your community. Host all-night supervised lock-ins, game tournaments, basketball, etc.

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## Join National Back to Church Sunday

This annual event encourages churches to reach out and invite everyone to come to church for a special service that is geared toward visitors.

Visit: [BackToChurch.com](http://BackToChurch.com) to learn more.

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## Host a family retreat weekend

Book spaces at a campground or retreat center and offer seminars for parents and activities for the whole family.