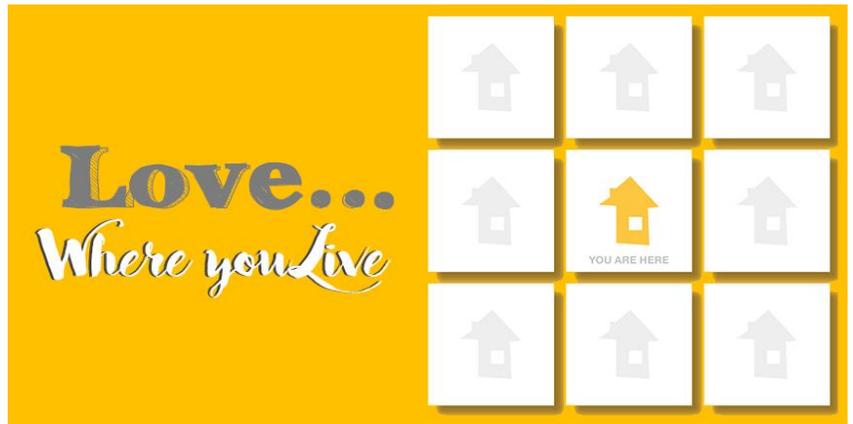


Church on the Drive Neighboring Event Guide

Why are we doing this?

Before Jesus gave us the Great Commission (Matt. 28:16-20), he gave us the Great Commandment (Matt. 22:26-40) to love our neighbors as ourselves. Too often, we don't know our neighbors or could know them better.



Is this going to help people come to know Jesus?

Yes! When we form real relationships with people who live near us, conversations about God and Jesus often follow. Those who don't know God are *not* potential projects, they are potential friends. Our **Love Where you Live** effort helps us get to know our neighbors so that we become friends and are better able to do life together.

Are we doing this to grow our church?

Not exactly. We're doing this to get to know our neighbors better so that we can serve and love them as Jesus asked us to. We want to follow Jesus' commandment. If our church, and/or the greater kingdom, happens to grow, then great!

Why should I host a "neighboring event?"

It will be an opportunity for neighbors to get together, meet each other, have fun, and maybe work together on a common activity.

7 Reasons to Host a Neighboring Event

- To provide an opportunity to know your neighbors and where they live
- To increase a sense of belonging within your community
- To learn a little about each other & know who might need a little extra help from time to time
- To meet neighbors on your block/street and explore skills you could offer one another. They might be able to help you with a gardening problem or lend you that needed ingredient for your recipe!
- To help with safety/crime prevention by knowing who lives around you
- To learn about your community's history
- To have fun – no excuses or reasons are needed to celebrate!

Ok, you've convinced me! So, what do I do next?!

Wonderful! Follow the steps listed on the next pages to get going!



Planning your Neighboring Event



1. Get Started

- If you know a neighbor, get with them and try to plan something together. If everyone is new to you, that's ok! You can lead this event alone.
- Decide what kind of event you'd like to host. This may be determined by the type of neighbors you have. Here are some ideas:
 - Cook Out
 - Pot Luck
 - Outdoor Movie Screening
 - Game Night
 - Ice Cream Social
 - Cookie Exchange
 - Spaghetti Supper
 - Pancake Breakfast
 - Block Party
 - Neighborhood Beautification
 - Bicycle Tune-Up
 - Book Club
 - Tasting Party
 - Luminaries Display
 - Garage Sale
- Start off with a smaller event – you can always grow, but it's harder to shrink it.

2. Determine Logistics

- **Who** will you invite? Use natural neighborhood boundaries where possible. Decide if pets are allowed.
- **When** will the event be? That's up to you and your calendar! We're asking COTD folks to host some kind of neighboring event during the months of November, December, and January. Keep in mind your neighborhood setting & population when determining the hours of your event.
- **Where** will the event be held? Backyard, house, garage, common room in an apartment complex – varies depending on the event you host.
 - Do know that if you block off a street, you will need to contact the city and/or county? Permits may be required if using a public park, alcohol consumption, sound-amplifying, etc.
 - If street closure is involved, you must notify neighbors and post signs.

** Don't let obstacles stand in your way...this is worth it! **
- **What** should we do during the event? Visit & eat – over time, food has always had a very social component in societies. Have games for kids. Take time to get to know one another and point out where each one lives.

3. Spread the word!

- Make a flyer. Include date, time, location, and anything they might need to bring.
- Distribute the flyer at least 2-3 weeks before the event – you can leave in mailboxes, on front doors, or knock and give it to them! It would probably be helpful to send another reminder a couple of days before your event.
 - If you live in an apartment complex or condo unit, it is best to approach the manager.
- If you have phone numbers, email addresses, or are friends on social media, you can contact them that way, too!
- Post signs to remind neighbors.
- Register your event on the church's website (link on our home page).

4. Set Up & Event

- Be sure to purchase or ask neighbors to bring any supplies needed – tables, chairs, plates, cups, napkins, plastic ware, food, beverages, activities, extra garbage cans, etc.
- Set up a sign-in book to develop a contact list for the neighborhood.
- Name tags can be a great help! Suggest that folks write their first & last names and maybe the house number in which they live.
- Line up food tables & be sure activities are clearly understood.
- Maintain home security. Have doors locked for off limit spaces. Have a bathroom policy. Keep spaces well-lit.
- During the event, act as a greeter. Introduce neighbors and make connections.

5. Afterward

- Be sure to clean up, especially if you used a public location. Remember, we want to be good neighbors!
- Share your experience with a pastor or minister on staff. We are excited about hearing about your experiences! This should be a fun, positive experience.
- Build relationships – how will you continue to get to know your neighbors?
- Determine how you can better serve your neighbors and show them Christ's love through your actions.

