



C-ME Grow Six Weeks Series Community Engagement and Outreach Tuesday, September 1, 2026

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Learning Objective

Explain the relationship between community outreach and Gospel proclamation and develop practical strategies for engaging communities through acts of service while intentionally sharing the message of Jesus Christ.

Biblical Foundation

- Matthew 28:18–20 — The Great Commission calls believers to go, make disciples, baptize, and teach.
- Luke 19:10 — Jesus came to seek and save the lost.
- Matthew 9:35 — Jesus entered towns and villages teaching, preaching, and healing.

Key principle: Jesus practiced ministry through both presence and proclamation.

1. Know the Community Before You Serve

Who lives around your church?

What are the greatest needs and challenges?

What schools, hospitals, shelters, organizations, and community resources are nearby?

What populations are underserved?

What are community leaders and community members saying?

What ministry opportunities already exist?

Evangelism Question: What are the greatest needs or challenges in your church's community?

Community Needs Assessment

Intentional outreach begins with listening. A comprehensive Community Needs Assessment can help churches move from:

Assessment → Prayer → Service → Evangelism → Discipleship → Transformation.

2. Move From Community Need to Ministry Response

- **Listen** — What is the community telling us?
- **Identify** — What actual need or opportunity exists?

- **Connect** — Who is already working in this space?
- **Respond** — How can the church meet the identified need?
- **Relate** — How do we move beyond transactions and build relationships?
- **Witness** — Where are natural opportunities for faith conversations?
- **Continue** — How will relationships continue after the event?

Examples of Presence: Showing Up

Food ministries • School partnerships • Health fairs • Neighborhood cleanups • Prison/reentry ministry • Senior outreach

3. Outreach Opens Doors. Trust Opens Hearts.

People are more likely to receive the Gospel in environments where they feel safe, seen, heard, and valued.

- Ask questions without judgment
- Share struggles without shame
- Seek help without stigma
- Explore faith without fear
- Experience genuine belonging

The Six Windows of Community Engagement

Window	Meaning	Local Church Example
Light	Hope	Community prayer ministry
Visibility	Understanding needs	Community needs survey
Transparency	Trust	Open communication
Ventilation	Healing	Recovery, counseling, and support groups
Protection	Safety	People feel safe, respected, and cared for
Emotional Security	Belonging	Small groups and belonging opportunities

What should the community see through the “windows” of your church? Integrity, Compassion, Care, Unity, Humility, and Genuine Love.

4. Outreach Must Be Intentional

Different populations have different needs. Effective community engagement requires churches to understand whom they are called to reach and develop appropriate ministry pathways.

Examples of populations churches may intentionally reach: People who are incarcerated • Families affected by incarceration • Returning citizens • Men in the community • People affected by HIV/AIDS • At-risk youth

5. Community Engagement Requires Partnership

The church does not have to create a new program for every need. Sometimes the most effective ministry is finding who is already doing good work and asking, “How can we partner with you?”

- Schools
- Food banks
- Shelters
- Hospitals/health organizations
- Senior facilities
- Community nonprofits
- Neighborhood associations
- Local government/community services
- Other churches

Partnership is not outsourcing ministry; partnership expands the church’s capacity to serve.

6. Community Engagement Opens Doors

Presence	Relationships	Trust	Conversations	Opportunities	Proclamation
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Presence builds relationships → Relationships build trust → Trust creates conversations →

Conversations create opportunities → Opportunities lead to Gospel proclamation.

7. Gospel Proclamation

Community engagement prepares the soil. Proclamation plants the seed.

- Sharing the message of Jesus Christ
- Telling the story of His death and resurrection
- Sharing personal testimony of God’s work in our lives
- Teaching and preaching God’s Word
- Inviting people to faith, worship, and discipleship
- Helping people understand how the Gospel relates to their lives

Presence and Proclamation Work Together

PRESENCE	PROCLAMATION
Shows Christ’s love	Explains Christ’s love
Builds relationships	Shares the message
Meets physical and emotional needs	Addresses spiritual needs
Opens doors	Walks through the door
Demonstrates the Gospel	Declares the Gospel

Evangelism Question: How is your church intentionally creating spaces where people in your community feel seen, heard, valued, and connected?

8. Follow Up: Outreach Doesn't End When the Event Ends

1. Provide a simple, voluntary way for people to share contact information, prayer requests, or needs.
2. Within a few days, reach out by call, text, email, or personal contact.
3. Follow through on requested prayer, resources, or assistance.
4. Check in, listen, pray, and demonstrate genuine concern.
5. Invite the person into a meaningful next connection: another outreach event, Bible study, small group, Christian Education and Formation opportunity, worship, or a conversation about faith.

From Training to Action

- **Identify** one significant need or challenge in your church's community.
- **Partner** with at least one school, nonprofit, community organization, or neighborhood leader to learn how your church can help.
- **Plan** at least one outreach opportunity that responds to an identified community need.
- **Build relationships** and look for opportunities to share the love and message of Jesus Christ.
- **Proclaim** the Gospel as God opens opportunities.

My Church's Next Step

1. **Community needs we will focus on:**

2. **Potential community partner:**

3. **Outreach opportunity we can plan:**

4. **How we will build relationships after the event:**

5. **How we will create space for Gospel conversations:**

6. **How will we know if our outreach made an impact?**
