



THE ULTIMATE EASTER GUIDE



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WELCOME TO THE ULTIMATE EASTER GUIDE!

Easter can be a huge step toward fulfilling your God-given mission to make disciples. Sadly, most churches stop short of this because they often don't have the resources to pull it off.

So, how can you maximize your Easter service but also create a long-term strategy for discipling the new people in your church?

It all starts with a plan. A plan to engage your community. A plan to offer them an amazing experience as your guests. And a plan to follow up and provide them with opportunities to connect.

Sound overwhelming already? Don't worry, we've got your back! We've done all the planning and designing for you, and we're providing free training and printable resources to help your team nail hospitality and follow-up. And, if you've used our kit in the past, you're going to love the new resources we're offering this year.

We believe that this year can be the best Easter yet! All you have to do is take the next step.

Get free access to the full video series and all the accompanying resources at churchmarketinguniversity.com/easter

CMU PRO SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Want to take your church's visitor plan to the next level? Start with the CMU Pro Scholarship Program. CMU Pro gets your church access to all our kits and courses. Apply for your scholarship at churchmarketinguniversity.com/scholarship

START HERE:



Prayer: It's easy to get excited and jump into planning, but remember the battle is won in prayer! Pray for open hearts and clarity as you preach the gospel and show the love of Jesus this Easter.



Refocus Your Perspective: Start with Mother's Day in mind. (It's actually the next big event in most cultural settings, where churches see the 3rd highest attended weekend of the year!)

GOAL

A great goal to consider for Easter is to develop ongoing discipleship through ongoing relationships.

ANALOGY TWIST

Unlike what has been said in the past, Easter is no longer our "Super Bowl", but week one of the Playoffs. Life change is our new "Super Bowl" which changes our approach to how we view Easter.

BIG EVENTS

Many churches hold big events every year but rarely see the impact of church growth and discipleship relationships from them.



Rethink your Energy, Resource & Leadership Management: if everyone in the church is completely drained after Easter (because it's historically been your "Super Bowl") it diminishes long-term impact because your volunteers, staff and team have nothing left in the tank. This twist helps you as a church marketer avoid the "next week crash"!

Register for the Grow Your Church Easter Workshop.
The CMU Team will coach you through your plan
to get the word out this Easter.

PRO TIP

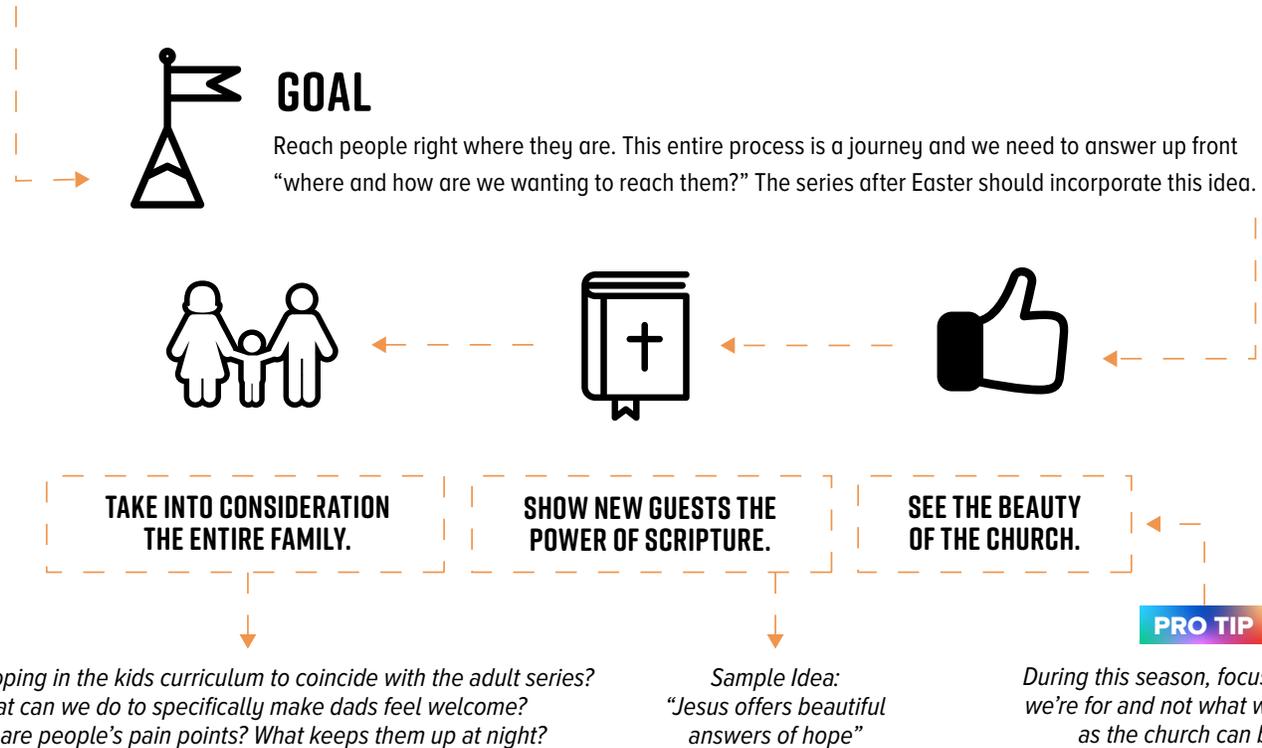
Have enough of your Mother's Day plan ready so that your team is pumped up about the plan and so that you can promote it during your Easter weekend services. Are you providing giveaways? Donating to a local nonprofit? Hosting a free photo booth for families? Need some inspiration? Check out our free list of ideas inside of the Mother's Day Kit in CMU.



GROW YOUR CHURCH
EASTER WORKSHOP

THE NEXT SERIES AFTER EASTER

What is your church doing between Easter and Mother’s Day to cultivate relationship and discipleship?



5 WHY’S APPROACH

The 5 Why’s approach: By the time you’ve asked the question “why” 4-5 times, you can typically get to the root answer of why they should care.

This sermon series development process continues moving us toward big impact over simply another big event.

Even if you don’t plan in “series”, other approaches such as expositional preaching can still present themes for your team that can answer questions like “why should our guests care?”



BONUS IDEA

Easter can be a great time to kick off a new series, instead of it being the culmination of multiple weeks or even a stand alone weekend. It creates natural buy in with a cliff hanger to get everyone coming back for the next week (week 2).



KEY QUESTION

What if Easter wasn’t so different from every other week? Not that we don’t make extra effort here, but we want to ensure guests don’t feel like its a completely different church when they come back the next week.

Sermon Series Samples to Get You Thinking:

The Fight (i.e for your family, for your marriage, for your faith, etc.)
Big idea: Ultimately, Jesus won the fight.

What Happens When I Die?
Big Idea: accessible, intriguing answers to the questions everyone wrestles with.

Margin
Big Idea: Worry, fear, anxiety are all impacted by the margins we build into our lives spiritually, emotionally, socially and more.

YOUR EASTER FOLLOW-UP STRATEGY

1

GETTING CONTACT INFORMATION IS KEY FOR ANY FOLLOW-UP STRATEGY

Sometimes having everyone fill out that connect card reduces visitor anxiety. An incentive like a donation to the local food bank, etc. for each card filled out can really motivate guests and alleviate barriers.

2

EQUIP YOUR VOLUNTEERS FOR SUCCESS

Start working with your lead volunteer team and staff to do anything in advance so that you aren't overloaded the week of Easter. Hand sign "thank you cards" in advance so they can be personalized and sent out the day after Easter (it's critical time isn't lost) and purchase supplies and organize anything that can be done early!

3

FOLLOW-UP SEQUENCE

Consider surveys, emails, text messages, welcome parties and any other components that will be vital to building relationships with those new families. Focus on the vital pieces first and don't ask too much of them like a membership class.

* Always plan with the idea in mind "what is the next connection point for our new guests?"

If we're still shooting for big impact, a 4-8 week follow-up strategy is completely appropriate. Take time and effort to fully onboard new families in a personalized way that makes them feel welcome.

DONE-FOR-YOU INSIDE THE ULTIMATE EASTER KIT



Honor your volunteers, make them feel just as appreciated as your guests feel welcome. Consistently remind them that they play a huge role in helping people accept the gospel. Praise them for a job well done. And, if possible, provide them with a token of your thanks, like a gift card to a local coffee spot or an appreciation dinner.

YOUR GAME DAY PLAN



HOSPITALITY IS CRUCIAL!

Look for moments to connect and get to know people.



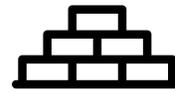
HONOR YOUR VOLUNTEERS

Make them feel just as appreciated as your guests feel welcome.



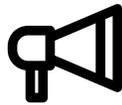
KEEP THE FOCUS ON JESUS

Man, this may feel like a “duh moment”, but it’s easy to drift in the midst of all the planning and is always a great reminder for all of us.



BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Don’t forget, this weekend may be just a starting point so keep investing in relationships for the long haul. Another reason why getting contact information is key.



SIMPLIFY YOUR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Simple and clear on purpose to really hit home the main point you want your church family and guests to really grasp (i.e. invitation to come back, next steps component, etc.).



SUNDAYS FOLLOWING EASTER

With all of your planning above, don’t forget to use the Easter momentum to lead into your next sermon series and Mother’s Day.



REINFORCE THE NEW WIN

Our goal is not only record-breaking attendance for Easter but also for a greater number of returning guests the following week. This highlights our theme for lasting impact.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Be sure to collect guests information through kids pre-registration, kids check-in, or print/digital connection card.



Find the plan in the
Ultimate Easter Kit

CRAZY IDEA!

If your kids pastor got \$1,000 for every kid that comes back the next week, what lengths would they go to? Now, we know...we know...that’s probably a little overboard, but the idea does bring up the point to consider - what will your team be willing to do to achieve the win?

YOUR EASTER MARKETING PLAN



Invite Cards

A great starting point for timing is to think “5 weeks out” for all of the elements inside your plan. Give these to the entire leadership team of your church! (theme: leaders go first) This strategy also allows you to gather stories so that 4 weeks out from Easter you can hand invite cards out to your entire church family and share how it’s going so far with the leadership team (idea of gaining momentum).

Think unconventional here and don’t overwhelm. Hand out one invite card to each person. No bundles! Keep it simple. Repeat these steps each week leading up to Easter via your various communication channels. (i.e. share impacting stories, provide more invite cards, etc.)



Direct Mail

Does it still work? Is it still relevant? Short and simple, absolutely. Research shows a layered marketing approach can take up to 7 interactions with a brand before someone will respond. It’s a very specific approach that allows you to hit every home in a given community. Organizations like www.outreach.com are amazing resources to get you off and running, but here is a preview of one of the resources at your disposal from the USPS while planning who receives your direct mail piece called EDDM (Every Door Direct Mail). Sticking with the theme of big impact, praying over your direct mail pieces is an often overlooked but essential component.

“Churches that did direct mail over a 4 year period saw a 43% higher commitment to Christ in their congregation.”- Jason Daye



Door Hangers

This approach continues spreading the word, but can also build momentum and engagement with your volunteers who are out in the community inviting families to join you.

Door hangers also dovetail perfectly into the layered marketing approach when direct mail, invite cards and more are all going out and overlapping for families being invited! The dozen challenge- Hang door hangers in your volunteers’ neighborhood on the 12 houses immediately surrounding their home. (comparatively little effort needed)

Pro Tip: 7-14 days is the sweet spot to have door hangers and direct mail pieces hitting mailboxes and door steps. And, small groups or even Sunday school classes are easy access points to utilize people’s time when they are already involved!



Social Media

Idea: Create a simple, compelling video from you or your pastor inviting everyone to join you. The key is then having your leadership team share, comment on it and tag friends to build momentum. In the meantime, if you have an email list share a link to the video in a short, succinct note to spread the word in a straight forward approach.



**“Hospitality really is your church’s front porch”
Jen Obremski // Summit Park Church**

BONUS TIPS

Training your new visitor hosts to spot the signs of a new visitor and how to interact in a welcoming (but not overwhelming way) is essential.

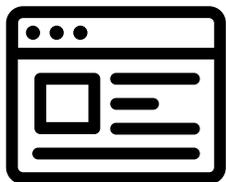
If your guests have at least one familiar face to find, it can make all the difference in coming back the next week.

Easter is the starting point for building relationships and hosting visitors with excellence is key to achieve that long-term impact.

Families with kids already have a lot going on, not to mention being in a new environment, so going the extra mile to offer online kids pre-registration or even just walking them to their kids’ individual classroom are memorable experiences for those parents!



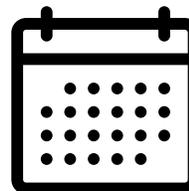
ULTIMATE
EASTER KIT



GET EVERYTHING UP ON YOUR WEBSITE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Blog post, dates, times, etc.

SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is a big reason to do this.



COMMUNITY CALENDARS

Message boards, chamber of commerce, News stations, radio stations, community organizations, newspapers, etc.

Create a list of urls up front for this and all future events.

Links back to your website also help with SEO.



GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE

You can now create a post that promotes your business inside Google.

This now shows up in the sidebar for organic searches.

This helps boost your rank when you're engaging with Google and thinking of your end user.



PRESS RELEASE & PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Using a template to relay information internally and externally creates a consistent communication tool that simplifies everyone's workload.

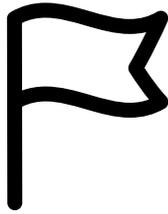
If a local media station picks up your story, have them link back to you to continue boosting your SEO.

Any photos uploaded to your website should be consistently named which will help Google connect the dots to your entire online digital presence (i.e. Summit Park Church Kansas City Mo Easter Egg Hunt).

More tips and tricks on this at our Easter Ads Bootcamp.



Sample Documents: Campaign Planning Tool and Easter Planning Checklist downloads available inside the Ultimate Easter Kit.



EVENT REGISTRATIONS

Safety is key

Pre-registration can help mitigate some of those concerns or even unnecessary long lines.

Make sure this makes sense for your event before you set this up (i.e. a fast pass for family photos, etc.).

Check out our Easter Ads Bootcamp for more about how to market your Easter service.

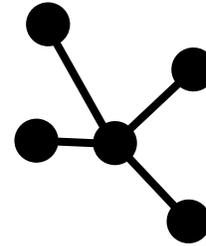


ONLINE KIDS PRE-REGISTRATION

We're a culture that loves to do things beforehand and online.

This option is a huge component of a marketing system for your church.

Example: Facebook ads where you can tie in actual metrics to how well this is working.



COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Who can you partner with in a proactive way to further your mission to impact the community?

Easter is often a time when local community organizations are open to partnering with churches to make a difference.

HERE'S A GREAT LIST TO START CONSIDERING:

*Elementary School PTO // Boys and Girls Club // YMCA // Senior Citizens Center
First Responders // Local Parks // Chamber of Commerce // City Officials*

Professional Sports Teams (i.e. athletes, mascots, apparel, even just the logo can provide credibility)

Other local churches (what a powerful way to promote the big "C" church when more than one faith community comes together for families in your neighborhood!)

Social Service Providers (healthcare professionals, resourcing organizations, etc.)

Local Businesses (for volunteers, Gift in Kind donations, publicity, etc.)





Facebook



Want to launch the
Automatic Invite System™?
Learn more at [HERE](#).

FACEBOOK LIVE

Think of you or your team going live anytime you can peel back the curtain and give an exclusive insider view into your church's world.

Planning meetings, stuffing eggs, event set up the day of your event.

Make it personal. It really helps people connect with you on a personal level.

Facebook Live is great because people expect it to be organic and not overly produced. (All you need is your phone!)

Change up your background so your live sessions don't get overlooked or become white noise.

RUN ADS INTO INSTAGRAM STORIES

Retargeting campaigns - you can retarget people who have already responded favorably to a previous ad set. Or if this is your first ad, use that audience for a Mother's Day promotion.

This also pushes your layered marketing approach forward. By now, people who see your Facebook ads may also be getting a mailer, invite card from a friend and then even a door hanger. When done over several weeks, your approach can be subtle without being pushy.

With Facebook there are so many options to consider, but don't feel paralyzed. The biggest thing is to get going and learn along the way.

Boosting a post? Lock down your geographic location to maximize your advertising budget.

Spend money on posts that are already gaining momentum formula (Facebook Posts with engagement + boosting that post = gasoline on the fire).

Post-Easter Community Event

Idea: Family Movie Night: license a community showing of a movie with refreshments. This could be a bridge event to Mother's Day or your next big service.

Community Collaboration

Special speaker or artist. Give your guests another opportunity to engage that's not just another church service.

This goes back to your resource management approach. Ideas like this won't work unless your team is pacing themselves.

Pro Tip

Stephen Covey in *The Speed of Trust* (2010) refers to 3 areas that are a part of any event or project (quality, speed & cost). The catch is that in most scenarios you can only pick two. For example, if you have a limited budget and are specific on the excellence of your event you have to plan farther in advance. And vice versa. With all of your Easter planning, keep the big goals in mind as you execute your marketing strategy and determine up front which two out of the three are most important. (Hint: we all work in the church world so quality and cost usually win out for the two fixed areas.)



Downloads and Resources:

Connect Card Tips - Best practice tips on how to perfect your connect cards.

Mother's Day Ideas - With the premise that you begin planning Easter with Mother's Day in mind, we wanted to get you headed off in the right direction.

Perfect Follow-Up Plan - An executable strategy that outlines your ideal follow up plan this Easter.

Campaign Summary: A customizable document for event planning of all shapes and sizes.

Event Planning Checklist: An editable excel sheet that walks you in detail through the event planning process for any of your upcoming events.

Additional CMU Resources:

Need help planning your budget out? Check out our [Marketing Budget Worksheet](#) inside the Ultimate Easter Kit.

Want some graphic design samples to look over? Check out our [Ultimate Easter Kit](#) for posters, invite cards, door hangers and more.

You can always check out our strategic partner too at: <https://outreach.com>.

We also have communication scripts for you that will help you email and announce your Easter service in the [Ultimate Easter Kit](#).

We pray that this kit helps focus on the impact, refreshes your spirit, and frees you to take the time to dream and pray about what God wants to accomplish through your church this Easter! To Him be the glory!