The Big Invite 2020

9 Week Preparation Guide

#### Designed for Sunday School/Small Group Leaders

The greatest potential for impacting your community for Christ is through the group’s ministry! Whether they’re a Sunday school class, a small group Bible study, a Connect group, a LIFE group or whatever you may call them, they all share the same mission: to lead unbelievers to Christ, connect them to the local church, and move them to spiritual maturity. During the next seven-weeks you’ll take seven minutes weekly to remind every group member of their primary task.

Do not let this take the majority of your group time.

## 7 Weeks Before Easter (Prepare to Pray)

* The mission of *The Big Invite-Easter* will not be accomplished in our strength. This week we are going to **PRAY**.
* 7 x 7 prayer cards.
* Each group will need to call every person enrolled/connected with their group as well as all the prospects/potential group members.
  + - Take all the names and their phone numbers and make separate lists with 5-7 names on each.
    - Distribute the list to those present and ask them to call all the names on their list this week. Instruct them to say the following, “Hey my name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and go to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church and I’m a member of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ group. We are having a special prayer emphasis and we are contacting everyone to see how we can pray for you. In our next gathering we are going to be praying for all the requests. So how can we pray for you?”
    - Allow them to respond, write the request down, be ready to report that request, and thank them for sharing.

## 6 Weeks Before Easter(Know Your Why)

* + If this is your STARTING week, go back and do the contents of week 7, above.
  + Let’s answer the question of **WHY**. Your group members will never completely buy into *The Big Invite-Easter* if they don’t understand the purpose. So just simply ask the group, “why do you think we’re doing *The Big Invite for Easter*?”
  + Encourage group members to pray for individuals listed on the 7 x 7 cards.
  + After a couple of minutes of discussion, state the purpose: *to bring unbelievers to faith in Jesus, connect guests and new believers to the Church, and begin moving them to spiritual maturity*.
  + Ask: How can you/we help this mission be accomplished?

## 5 Weeks Before Easter *(*Prayer Reports)

* Encourage group members to pray for individuals listed on the 7 x 7 cards.
* Ask the group to share any that they feel need additional ministry attention.
* Ask the group if they have any additional personal requests.
* End this part of the gathering by praying for the requests.

## 4 Weeks Before Easter (Prepare to Win)

* Encourage group members to pray for individuals listed on the 7 x 7 cards.
* Remind the group of the purpose of *The Big Invite-Easter* (restate purpose).
* Ask: **How do you plan to be involved** in achieving this mission?
  + Allow time for discussion.
  + This needs to be their personal actions and attitudes that can help make *Easter* be successful. *Ex: Are we open to new people at church? Do we have some attitude of prejudice that needs to be overcome? Who are you praying for and plan to invite?*

## 3 Weeks Before Easter (Company’s Comin’)

* Encourage group members to pray for individuals listed on the 7 x 7 cards.
* **Many times our** **groups are not ready** for the new people we are inviting.
* Ask: What does our group need to do to welcome new people? Is the culture in our group warm and accepting to all people?
  + Guide the discussion toward specific actions the group can take, instead of focusing on what the church can do. Their insights and suggestions could include…signage on the location of the group, refreshments/coffee during group time, extra chairs, cleaning up the room removing outdated materials, stationing a greeter at the door of the group meeting, nametags, make an effort to speak to newcomers, etc.
  + Consider a 10-second rule; within 10 seconds of walking into any building on your campus, guests should be greeted warmly and walked to their location.

## 2 Weeks Before Easter (Plan to Connect)

* Encourage group members to pray for individuals listed on the 7 x 7 cards.
* Ask your group to plan to connect with guests by planning **a social gathering**. Invite friends, neighbors, co-workers, family and acquaintances to the event. Think personal and relational!
  + - Enlist a planning team for the social gathering and have them report to the group instead of taking group time to do the planning.
    - The goal is to have a gathering focused on fun, food, and fellowship 1-2 weeks prior to Easter. And please remember the purpose of the event is to invite new people.

## 1 Week Before Easter (The Big Invite)

* Encourage group members to pray for individuals listed on the 7 x 7 cards.
* The week before Easter, the group members need to have **specific people they are going to invite to attend Bible study and worship** on <DAY, DATE & TIME>.
* Have a tear sheet on the wall and invite the group to write the name or initials of their invitee. Do NOT leave this on the wall because guests will see it next week!
* After everyone has written a name on the sheet, close the time in prayer.

## Early-Week 1 (Following Easter)

* A follow up phone call within 24-48 hours to encourage the guest and invite them to the 2nd Impression event.
* If the guest made a decision during Easter, invite them to the New Believer/Member event. Plan to meet them out front and walk them to the room and hand them off to the leader.

## Week 2 (Following Easter)

* Follow up with the guest and if they are planning to attend the 2nd Impression event, plan to meet them in the parking lot, hang out with them at the event, and introduce them to other key leaders.