

# Ministry Planning Document

You've got a great ministry idea! Ascension's leadership and staff want to support your idea and help you create a successful program. Before we proceed in implementing this ministry, ministry event, or larger community event, we want to help you think about some details.

Please use this planning guide to get the ball rolling. It will also help determine what your needs are and what your expectations are. This planning guide will need to be submitted to the church office as soon as you have finished Step 1. This will allow the rector and/or vestry time to review it and communicate with you in order flush out the details and promote a well-planned event. Please understand that submitting this guide does not necessarily mean that your event is approved. This is merely step one in the planning process.

## **Step 1: The Basics**

### **I. What is the Name of Event or Ministry?**

\_\_\_\_\_

### **II. Keeping in mind Ascension's mission statement:**

*To love and worship Jesus Christ through scripture and prayer.  
To love and serve one another through fellowship and community outreach.  
And to prepare and send disciples to grow God's kingdom.*

How does this event or ministry support Ascension's **mission**? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **III. Date**

When do you want your event to take place? If it requires more than one date, we will get to that in step two. Right now, we need to coordinate with the church and school calendar to ensure that your date is available and promotable. If your event is a series, or multiple dates, what is the kick-off date?

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **IV. Target Audience**

Is this a fellowship event? Open to all? Or are you targeting a specific group, e.g. families, homeless, elderly, singles, etc.? Is this church family, community as a whole, or anyone?

Who is your target audience? \_\_\_\_\_

## V. Your Team

In order to have a successful event or ministry, you must have volunteers who know what is going on and can answer any questions that may arise. We understand at this point in the planning stage you may not have all of your volunteers signed up and that's okay. Right now we need to know:

### ***Who are your leads?***

Please list your committee members and their contact information.

Committee Member (YOU) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

This ends Step 1. You should have all the information in Step 1 filled out and be ready to discuss your plan with the rector and/or vestry. At this time, we encourage you to read the rest of the planning document and fill out as much information as you can. We understand that there will be questions and we are fully committed to helping you plan your event. You may submit Step 1 without having Step 2 complete; this will allow us to set up a meeting with you and go over the information you have provided.

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## **Step 2: The Details**

**Duration:** Is this a(n): *(Mark one)*

- One Time event
- Short term (i.e. 6 week class); *If short term:* How many sessions? \_\_\_\_\_  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
End Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Ongoing ministry; *If ongoing, how regularly will you meet?*
- \_\_\_ Once a week      \_\_\_ Twice a year      \_\_\_ Other: *(Please specify below:)*  
\_\_\_ Once a month      \_\_\_ Yearly      \_\_\_\_\_

**Facility Needs:** Is your event being held:

\_\_\_ On campus      \_\_\_ Off campus

If on campus, what rooms/buildings/facilities do you need? \_\_\_\_\_

**Money: Things to think about:**

We would love to say yes to every idea that comes our way, and fully fund it, but we have to be practical. At this time, there is not an abundant church budget and requests for funding will likely be turned down. This is something that you may ask in the meeting with the rector and/or vestry. In the meantime, please consider the answers to the following questions.

- Does this event need funding? Y / N
  - If so, what for? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How is this event being funded? \_\_\_\_\_
- Are you taking collections for an organization? Y / N
  - What is the name of the organization? \_\_\_\_\_
  - Is this organization approved by the rector and/or vestry? Y / N
- Are you accepting donations to offset the cost of your event? Y / N
- Do you have a secure collections space, i.e. don't have a box sitting in the middle of the room unattended? Y / N

**Food: Are you providing food:**

Will you provide food? Y\_\_ N\_\_

Are you cooking? Catering? Volunteer Team? Potluck? These are all things to think about if you want food at you event.

There is not an allocated food budget, except for parish wide events, such as annual meeting, stewardship lunches, and other "big" events. If you are cooking and wish to use the church kitchen, there are terms and conditions that will be discussed at the planning meeting.

What is your food plan? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Logistics:**

How many people do you expect to show up? \_\_\_\_\_

What are your set-up needs, e.g. tables, chairs, TV, etc.? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What about your clean-up needs? Sweep? Spot mop any spills? If there is food, the trash MUST be taken to the dumpster. Is there an event following yours that you will need to remove your set-up?

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This may seem like common sense, but all too often the event is wrapping up and you suddenly realize that no one signed up to sweep the Parish Hall and take out the trash. Now since you are in charge of this event and you have been there since set-up, you're probably tired and realizing that you now have to clean-up is not fun. Make sure you have volunteers/committee members who are committed to your cause. Also, make sure that all your needs are met. Plan ahead!!

Who are your volunteers:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

What jobs do you need help with:

Job: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of People needed for this job: \_\_\_\_\_

Job: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of People needed for this job: \_\_\_\_\_

Job: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of People needed for this job: \_\_\_\_\_

**Communication needs:**

The key to any successful event is attendance. You have to get your word out!!! Would you like it advertised:

*(Please check all that apply.)*

in the Church Bulletin       sent as an email blast  
 in the Tidings                       on Facebook

If you would like announcements made in these places, you need to consider the source in which you are advertising and write appropriately. For example, a bulletin announcement should be no more than 6-8 sentences and be concise, clearly stating objective, date and location, as well as a call for volunteers, if need be.

An announcement in the Tidings can be as long as you like. Want to make a full page ad/flyer? Go for it! It should be full of information and maybe a few graphics to grab the attention of potential attendees. Just remember to check with the church secretary about when the next Tidings is set to be printed, so you can make the deadline. (Tidings follows the church calendar, not a monthly one.)

Facebook announcements should be clear and may contain links to your flyer, or more information. Email blast announcements are subject to approval, unless you would like it to go out in the standard email reminder, and then it should mirror the bulletin announcement.

**Example of a timeline for successful communication:**

Church life is measured in Sundays, so remember when you want things announced in the bulletin to think in Sundays, not weeks. We also know that not every event requires this much time, and some require much, much more planning. This is an example of the most common timeline:

- 6 Sundays out: Have all the information on this form complete and approved.
- 4 Sundays out: Have all communication materials submitted to both office for Facebook, web, email and bulletins.
- 2 Sundays out: Be sure that you have the minimum number of volunteers needed to make the event a success.
- 1 Sunday out: Pray for the ministry to bring glory to God. You can also pray before this!

**What equals success to you?**

This is an important question to ask yourself. This is where you step away from the logistics and the planning and reflect on how you feel. Jot down some notes on what your expectations are, what do you hope to walk away with:

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Sometimes success is in the flop. You have planned a terrific event. Your volunteers are all in place. You advertised everywhere.

*But...It didn't go well.*

So what happened? You may have done everything right, in the right order and at the right time, but the event flops. This is not a reflection on you, your planning, or your volunteers. Maybe you weren't targeting the right audience, maybe there were a lot of personal conflicts that prevented people from getting there, maybe there was a key element missed in planning. There are hundreds of reasons why things don't go as planned. If your event does not meet your expectation, it is not necessarily a failure. There are more things to be learned from failed ventures than there are from success. We don't want you to stop trying, we don't want you to lose confidence. Sometimes an event needs to happen more than once – the first event plants the seeds for a terrific future event! We, the rector, vestry and staff, want to hear about the good, the bad, and the ugly to help us improve.

*It is not the staff's primary job to execute and populate the ministry or event. However, we love supporting you through logistics, communication, and other avenues. You just need to let us know in a timely manner what your needs are! God bless you on your journey!*