

Good Friday Gatherings

Step-By-Step Prep

Easter Weekend is a unique time to celebrate Jesus! We're making moments Friday, Saturday, and Sunday to join in. You can find more at bwoc.cc. Here is a simple step-by-step prep guide to help you host a Good Friday gathering in your home.

Step 1 - Commit to do this!

Big idea

On Good Friday, we are offering an online service (called *At Home With Believers*) from 7pm to 8pm, including worship and Communion.

You can do whatever you want, BUT this is an opportunity to gather some people in your life around the Good News about Jesus.

Practicing hospitality is one of the ways we actually *express* the Gospel. In other words, it's like a living sermon where we demonstrate Jesus' kindness, mercy, generosity, thoughtfulness, peace...! Plus, you will be blessed by seeing Jesus at work through you!

This is NOT just a watch party! It certainly can be, BUT you will have to put in some effort to personalize this moment for the people in your life. (Ironically, we're encouraging you to keep it simple, because we know that this is a labor of love!)

Identify Your Why

Pray together, and ask the Holy Spirit to help you make a plan...

We want to host a simple Good Friday gathering...

- A) With our family...
- B) With our family and some extended relatives...
- C) With our family and some friends who are also Christians...
- D) With our family and some new friends we do not know that well...

So we can gather around the Good News in a relational way.

Make A Plan

Schedule enough time to make space for your goals...

- 1) 60 minutes - We will watch the online service *At Home With Believers* together, which includes singing worship and sharing communion.

- 2) 90 minutes - We will *also* offer snacks to let our guests know we want them to stay longer. (This unstructured time of “fellowship” can build connection and spark friendships in unexpected ways.)
 - a) We will tell our guests to come early
 - b) We will tell our guests to come on time and hang out afterwards
 - c) We will tell our guests to come early and hang out afterwards

- 3) 180 minutes - We *also* want to offer a meal and some group activities to encourage people to open up and go deeper into the Good News.
 - a) Let’s do something special for the kids
 - b) Let’s have a discussion topic during the meal
 - c) Let’s make space to pray together
 - d) Let’s go for a Passover moment
 - e) Let’s show *The Passion Of The Christ* or *The Chosen* series

Whatever level of involvement you pick is great, but ***own the opportunity*** to gather around the Good News with some people in your life!

Get creative, have fun, make moments, work a plan, believe big! You won’t regret it opening your hearts and your home for Jesus!

Hebrews 10:24 NLT - Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.

Step 2 - Intentionally invite, and graciously include.

Big idea

It takes a lot of moving parts to make a moment for your family and guests. That's why you want to start with recruiting a "home team" that will help you own the opportunity to bless others. Then you'll need an intentional approach to invite everyone AND a gracious response when "everyone" shows up.

Recruit your "home team"

- How can you involve your family in hosting? You want your family to realize and feel like they are serving others. This simple Good Friday gathering will be FUN, but it's not for them. They will have fun planning, preparing, and contributing!
- Consider teaming up with 2 other families in our church community. You will have to lead the charge, but you don't have to do it alone. Invite one or two other friends from Believers World Outreach Church to join your home team. They can come early to set up, be your welcome committee, take a battle station in the kitchen, or host one of the kids activities. If this church is their home church, they already know how to roll up their sleeves and serve! They will love the invitation to get involved!
- IF YOU ARE HELPING - You have to be willing to be a great "second fiddle" and serve the family opening their home to host this gathering. It will be tempting to add more great ideas to the party, but be sensitive to the additional work that always follows a "great idea." Go in with a joyful attitude, and serve alongside that host family! Look for ways to stay a step ahead, and learn from your friends' example of hospitality.

Intentionally invite

- The purpose of this evening is to gather the people in your life around the Good News about Jesus in a *relational*, yet *intentional* way. Striking that balance between relational and intentional can be tricky. If it's all "relational," your evening may drift away on a sea of small chat. If it's too "intentional," your guests may not feel comfortable opening up - thus defeating the purpose.
- That's why you want to KEEP IT SIMPLE! It will be easier to explain and more enjoyable. It takes the pressure off everyone!
- You have to intentionally invite people with no strings attached. This is a goodwill gesture of Christ-like friendship, not a sales funnel into a certain brand

of faith. For people to invite, you can look at your recent text threads, sent emails, social media direct messages, or your prayer map. (Or, consider making a handwritten note to share with neighbors.)

- Bigger is NOT better! Pray and ask the Lord to lead you as you share invitations. Please DO NOT post broad, open ended invitations to the entire church community on social media. Some people may think that every gathering is somehow sponsored by the church, which may not be the case. More importantly, that is not the purpose of this evening.
- Thank you for understanding. If you have any questions, feel free to bring them forward. And if you see anything odd, feel free to speak up in a loving way. We really appreciate the support, and we're believing for the Lord to expand His Kingdom through this approach.

Graciously include

- We encourage you to go deep with a few people or families instead of making up for every party you missed in 2020. Ironically, no matter how simple the gathering starts, they tend to grow! Start with a few, and be prepared for "a few more."
- This is not a block party! You will have to stay sensible in this COVID careful environment. You may need to explain your expectations upfront, so people know whether to opt in or opt out.
- When you are hosting other people, you have to anticipate their needs. For example...
 - Not everyone knows the directions (and the ins and outs) to your house
 - Families with young kids just need extra space to regulate demands as they happen
 - Ask ahead for those with dietary restrictions
- When you gather any mix of personalities, you take on their needs and vibes to a degree, so to speak. Ask the Lord for a gracious way to serve, bless and blend. Remember, this party is not for you. When we graciously include others, we are experiencing the Gospel personally and modeling it to those watching.
- Everyone has a different comfort level and approach to hosting other people, especially when you have to manage your own family members along with extra guests. That is normal. It is always safer to give people permission to come and go based on their needs instead of expecting everyone to participate in everything.

- You may decide to welcome “friends of friends.” (This works really well with young adults!) That’s completely up to you. If you go that route, be prepared to blend personalities and stick to the common ground. You can also lean on your “home team” to host more, too.
- Decide upfront how you will respond when people ask if other people can come as well. Obviously, this is a case by case thing, but reach for the gracious response. Maintain your sense of peace, refuse to be pressured outside of your values, and speak honestly about how you feel. People will respect you for it. Don’t ruin a great evening with regret.

Step 3 - Prepare in advance.

Big idea

We want to encourage you to prepare as much as you before your company arrives so that you can be present to enjoy and serve them when they do arrive. Again, keep things simple, and involve your "home team."

Make a schedule and plan for your Good Friday gathering...

Our Good Friday Gathering!

5:00pm	
5:30pm	
6:00pm	
6:30pm	
7:00pm	At Home With Believers (BWOC.cc) - Worship
7:30pm	At Home With Believers (BWOC.cc) - Communion
8:00pm	
8:30pm	
9:00pm	
9:30pm	
10:00pm	

What about food? _____

What about kids? _____

What about group activities? _____

Step 4 - Have fun hosting! See you online!

Remember to enjoy the people you gather with, expect the Lord's Presence, and take pictures/videos! Tag @bwoc.cc and hashtag #EasterWeekendWithBelievers