

Summer 2013 "Live Love" Ideas

These suggestions can be done as a family, individually or with a small group. You might want to print a few in your church bulletin each week.

June

- In honor of National Doughnut Day (the first Friday in June) hand out free doughnuts to anyone shopping at a Salvation Army store. National Doughnut Day honors Salvation Army "Lassies" who volunteered during WWI. Often doughnuts were cooked in oil in the soldier's metal helmet.
- Buy a grocery gift card then hand it to a customer waiting in line. Or be anonymous and give it back to the clerk with instructions to use whenever they feel it is needed.
- Smile Power Day is June 15th. Give everyone you see a friendly smile. A smile makes the world a happy place and it's contagious. However, a smile must be sincere. Flash a toothy smile to everyone you encounter. A smile is so powerful that it can add years to your life, improve relationships and reduce stress.
- Place a single flower on random windshields with notes that say "Have a nice day."
- Make or provide cut flowers to be delivered with Meal on Wheels.

"Kindness begins like a ripple of water"

July

- Celebrate National ice cream month by visiting a Dairy Queen (or similar restaurant) and offering to pay for the order of the guests behind you. Or purchase a \$10 gift card and hand it to someone as you leave. Tell them you are sharing God's love with them in a practical way.
- Cheer Up the Lonely Day is July 11th. Lonely people usually live alone and have few friends. They may be elderly. Cheering up lonely people is easy to do. When you visit, bring happy things to talk about, a child's drawing or cookies to share. Keep the conversation upbeat. Play a game together. When you leave, give a hug. Cards and calls are okay but what a lonely person really needs is face to face time with other people.
- Tell a veteran you appreciate what they have done for our country.
- Keep an ice chest filled with bottles of water in your car while you shop this summer. Pray, then pass them out to whomever you feel is in need: construction workers, police, fire fighters, sanitation workers, gardeners, joggers or people walking their dog. Be sure to let them know it is given freely and that you are sharing God's love with them in a practical way.
- Leave diapers & wipes on a changing table in a public bathroom or deliver to woman's shelter.

"Sharing God's love makes your heart glow."

August

- In honor of National Picnic Month, invite a family to join you for a picnic. Ask someone new at church, in the neighborhood or at work so you can get better acquainted.
- Be Kind to Humankind Week is August 25-31.
 - Motorist Consideration Monday – Be patient with other drivers on the road.
 - Touch-a-Heart Tuesday – Let people know you care about them, just the way they are.
 - Willing to Lend a Hand Wednesday – Be ready to help with any task that is asked of you, large or small.
 - Thoughtful Thursday – Think small – small considerations really matter to people.
 - Forgive Your Foe Friday – Forgive and forget for your sake as well as theirs.
 - Speak Kind Words Saturday – Consider your words well so as not to hurt others.
 - Sacrifice Our Wants for Others' Needs Sunday – Do something to bring joy to another person and set aside your own desires.
- Share a periodical you love with your whole town by offering to pay for a subscription (\$10-\$30 a year). If you can't decide on a title, ask your librarian what is on their wish list.
- Remember the name of a customer or service worker that you see frequently and greet them by their name the next time you see them.
- Write a thank-you note to a mentor or someone who influenced your life in a positive way.

**We encourage your whole church to participate
in these suggestions together.**

Community wide garage sale: Choose a central location, such as a park, to host a garage sale to benefit a local charity or cause (not the church general fund). Offer to pick up larger items. Make it a fun community event by providing free hot dogs, cookies & music. Display posters about your church activities (perhaps designed by kids) but be sure they are not in anyone's way. Church brochures should be available only upon request.

Local Service Projects: Contact your city hall and ask if your church can help with any community service projects. Suggestions: cleaning the streets, picking up trash on the highways, painting a wall or a mural on an unused building, gathering items and organizing a food pantry, planting a community garden, mowing, trimming, painting benches and fixing up a playground, etc.

God Smiles: Take baskets of bubbles, sidewalk chalk, crayons, a clean joke book etc. to people that live near the church. Tuck in a little note inviting them to church. Explain that you are celebrating summer and that God likes to see us smile and have fun together.

Parade and Festivals: Many communities have parades and festivals in the summer. Your church may want to create a float or just walk in the parade. Pass out a short invite to your church with candy attached. All ages can participate: young children in strollers, older folks can ride lawn tractors. Costumes add to the fun!

Free Popcorn: Rent or purchase your own popping machine. At carnival, fairs, etc. set up where are people walking and offer free small bags of popcorn to everyone. Make a poster with your church name, emphasizing that this is simply a small way of showing God's love to the community.

Collect School Supplies for Local Schools: If your community doesn't have a school supply drive you can collect at your church and take them directly to the school. Teachers will be happy to receive items to pass on to kids who come to school without them or to use later in the year. If you don't know what to buy, check the school lists posted at the stores or contact a teacher.

Ways that kids and teens can Live Love this summer.

- Sort your clothes, setting aside those you have outgrown or no longer wear. Donate them to the Salvation Army or to a family you know could use and appreciate them.
- Offer free babysitting while a mom shops to give her some time to herself.
- Purchase and pass out Silly Bandz to kids at a local park.
- Create cheery cards with encouraging words and drop them by a nursing home, veterans home, homeless or domestic abuse shelter, etc.
- Bake cookies and leave with a thank you note for the mail carrier, church secretary or janitor.
- Plant flowers or a tree in a local park, after getting permission of course.
- Organize your church nursery. Clean the toys -- fix or replace those that are broken.
- Offer to transport the children of busy parents to and from lessons and sports activities.
- Invite an older person to your home for a meal. Find out what they did during the summer months when they were a child.
- Send your pastor a funny story or joke via email or text to brighten their day.

*"If there is any kindness I can show,
or any good thing I can do to any fellow being,
let me do it now, and not deter or neglect it,
as I shall not pass this way again."*

~ William Penn

**Passing this along with our prayers for you as you Live Love in your church and
communities this summer. IAYM Christian Education Board, 2013**